

PAUL
OF TARSUS



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Paul of Tarsus

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BY

ROBERT BIRD

Author of "Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth"

&c. &c.



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P R E F A C E.

THIS Life of Paul of Tarsus is written with a fresh aim, and on a new plan. It is intended to be read with the interest of biography and the accuracy of history, in which thoughts, scenes, and events are woven into one.

Children love Jesus, but they do not understand Paul. The figure of Jesus has come down through the ages, clear cut as on a gem, so that artists can paint and authors picture Him; but it is not so with His greatest apostle. His figure is blurred and lost, amid white mists and black shadows. Much has been written about his writings, not much about himself. No artist has ever made of Paul a great picture. A controversialist and theologian by long training, his outline is difficult to draw; and yet his travels and writings are half the New Testament. No one has left his stamp more deeply upon Christianity, or spread it farther; and his missionary work is the model for all. Jesus lit the torch; Paul ran with it into dark lands. And yet to many he is little better than a theological abstraction.

I have already tried in "Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth" to set forth Jesus as the friend of little children, and in this book I would present to young readers the living figure of Paul, not so much as the inspired teacher—that has been often done—but as the Pharisee whose life was changed at thirty from a

fierce and violent hater of Jesus to an ardent lover ; who bore the scars of his old life, and lamented them to the end.

In doing this, I have drawn him in brown cloak and sandals, amid ever-changing scenery, giving shape and colour as with a brush. I have also broken up and paraphrased his writings, so that they are no more presented in long epistles to be passed over, but bit by bit, in their settings, to be taken in with the narrative. In this I may not win the approval of biblical students and theologians ; but if a reasonably close picture has been presented, which interests the young, and awakens their admiration for the life and work of one who did so much for our common religion, I shall be satisfied with having reached an audience to which more learned works do not appeal.

ROBERT BIRD.

May 1900.

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LIFE AND TRAVELS OF PAUL OF TARSUS.

Rough and Smooth Cilicia.

THE ancient city of Tarsus, in which Paul was born, was the capital of Cilicia, a Roman province about twice the size of Yorkshire. It was situated in a wide and beautiful plain, extending from the shores of the blue Mediterranean to the foot of the dark Taurus mountains, with a winding river passing through it. Tarsus is still there, shrunk to a small town, and the river has left it; but some of the thick walls which Paul saw can still be seen, ruined and water-worn, with tufts of yellow grass on the top, and red flowers in crannies, and green with the sprays and streamers of climbing plants. A bridge, through which the child walked and ran, stands lonely and apart, outside the present town. If those crumbling stones could tell what the little boy was like, as he stood one day in the shadow of the arch, shouting to hear the echo—the little barefooted boy who grew to be the great man of whom so much has been written—how gladly we would listen!

Lives change, but we never lose the impressions of our early years, for then our characters are formed and fixed. Within city walls, or in the open fields, the seeds sown in the child's heart bear flower and fruit. The examples of father and mother, the school lessons, the college studies, the noise and stir of the stony streets, the peace and beauty of the flower-strewn fields—these are the fingers that shape the pattern of the cup.

Paul was a city child, city boy, city youth; a student, and a learned teacher of theology and religion. Moulded in that shape, he became a Christian. Into that cup was poured, at thirty, the water of life, the spirit of Jesus.

The coast of Cilicia lies at the very end of the Mediterranean Sea, not far from the island of Cyprus, and only about two hundred miles north of Palestine. Tarsus is not such an ancient city as Jerusalem, but it is older than Rome or Athens, and because of its schools and colleges, it was considered more learned than either of these, and next to the famous city of Alexandria in Egypt. Before Paul's day, tutors were selected from among its teachers for the sons of Roman emperors. Strabo, the famous Latin author, was studying in Tarsus College when Paul lived there, and he has described the city in one of his books. Apollonius, the philosopher, was also a Tarsus student. Aratus, a poet of Tarsus, was so much thought of that Cicero turned his book into Latin, and so it has come down to us; and Paul knew his book, and quoted from it.

Before Paul was born, the city had been conquered and reconquered many times, for it lay upon the only road by which invading armies could come through the mountains to the rich lower countries. It had been fought over by the Greeks and Romans, and now belonged to Rome; but the people still spoke Greek. More than three hundred years before Paul's time, Alexander the Great visited it, and almost met his death through bathing in the icy river; and about fifty years before Paul was born, Mark Antony, the famous Roman general, lived there, and liked it so well that he made it a free city, and the people were so proud that they stamped something about it on their pennies, which Paul often read. The Emperor Augustus also favoured them, and allowed them to have a court of magistrates and a city council; and Nestor, who had been tutor to his son, was chief magistrate when Paul was a boy.

His father was a Jew, and for some service to the Romans he was made a Roman citizen; which was a great honour to receive from the conquerors of his country. It is likely that he was a weaver and maker of tents, for that was what he taught his son to be. Cilicium was the name of strong haircloth used for tent-covers, because it was made from the long hair of the Cilician goats that fed among the hills.

The Romans divided Cilicia into rough and smooth Cilicia, because of its rugged mountains and level plains. Tarsus was in smooth Cilicia, and the plain, extending for forty miles round the curve of a beautiful bay of the sea, spread inland for nearly twenty-four miles to the mountains. And what mountains!—the highest, darkest, and wildest in all Asia Minor. During the most of the year, and even when the sun is hot, their peaks are covered with snow, that can be seen from Tarsus sparkling against the

blue sky ; but the lower slopes are clad with dark-green pines and belts of fir, with oak, ash, spreading plane, sycamore, and walnut growing thick upon the ridges that thrust themselves out into the great plain.

From a deep cleft in the mountains the river Cydnus gushes forth, dashing from ledge to ledge down to the lower country. When Paul lived there, it passed through fields of rich red earth for over twenty miles, receiving many little streams on its way to the sea. Small villages, white farms, and dark mud huts were scattered over the plain of pasture-lands and fields of grain, hedged vineyards, and fruit-gardens, some protected with walls of mud and stone, others by dense prickly hedges. Tapering poplar trees, dark cypress, mulberry, pomegranate, apple, cherry, silver olive grew by the river-side, or cast their shadows round the house doors ; while tall shrubs marked the banks of the little water-courses with branches woven together by the star-like flowers of the clematis, sweet honeysuckle, and wild vine.

And thus, although the son of a Jew, Paul lived far away from his own country, among Greek manners and customs, under Roman laws, in what would now be called an ancient university city, in a fruitful plain between the mountains and the sea.

Tarsus, a Famous City.

WHEN Paul lived there, the river Cydnus was so large that ocean ships could come twelve miles up, and put out their cargoes on the city wharfs. It was built on both sides of the river, and the older part was fortified with high walls and towers for soldiers. Splendid palaces were there, with fine gardens for the rich, and in the narrow paved streets hundreds of houses of brick and wood for the poor, and a wide market-place for the country people, with public baths, racecourse, gymnasium, and an open-air theatre. But greatest of all were the universities. Stoics, Platonists, Peripatetics, Epicureans taught there ; and their teaching, called Encyclopædic, covered mathematics, rhetoric, ethics, dialectics, music, and grammar—everything, from racing and boxing to poetry and speech-making. Poets, historians, doctors, philosophers, lawyers, orators, soldiers had been born there, and gone out to carry the fame of Tarsus to other lands, long before Paul walked its streets. But no one had done more for their city than Athenodorus, who taught Cæsar Augustus, and who, as a favour to his old schoolmaster, got Cæsar to make the city equal

with the best in the Roman Empire. So that when Paul, in later life, said he was a citizen of no mean city, he spoke moderately; for he might have said that he belonged to one of the most famous cities in the Roman Empire, although now it is a sleepy little Turkish town.

We do not know the year when he was born, but we know that Cæsar Augustus was Emperor of Rome, and Herod the Great King of Judea, and that he was younger than Jesus. When he was a babe at Tarsus, Jesus was a little boy living in a quiet glen of Galilee. They grew up at the same time, although far apart; but the influence of the one upon the other is so deep, that the life of Paul cannot be written without looking constantly towards Jesus.

You must not think that he lived away back in the dim ages of the world's history, for we are familiar with nations that rose and fell centuries before he was born. And yet his figure has almost disappeared in the cloud of what he wrote and said. But our school books are full of the lives and writings of men who lived so long before him that their books might easily have served as his lesson books also.

The Egyptians, with their Pharaohs, reaching back for thousands of years; the Carthaginians, with Hannibal, their great general; the Assyrians, with Nineveh; the Persians; the Macedonians, with Alexander the Great; and, last of all, the Greeks, had had their centuries of greatness and decay before Rome became the ruler of the world. And the Romans are so near to us that many of our present laws and customs come from them.

Many famous men whose books we read lived before Paul. Homer, the great Greek poet; Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the greatest of philosophers, were long since dead. Æschylus and Sophocles, the tragic poets of Greece, whose plays we read; Demosthenes and Cicero, whose speeches we imitate; Euclid and Archimedes, whose books on mathematics are in our schools; and Phidias, whose wonderful statues are still seen, had lived and died long before he was born. Even Horace, the witty writer of city verses, and Vergil, the story-teller, whose poems are in our lesson books because of their beautiful Latin, had died only a few years before, and Ovid was still alive. These names, familiar to every English schoolboy, of men whose work we see and whose books we can buy, bring the days of Paul so near that his figure begins to take shape among them. Eighteen hundred years are but a little space in the world's history. Five hundred years ago Chaucer was writing his poems, and Wickliffe translating the Latin Bible into English; one thousand years ago Alfred the Great was King of England, and rebuilding the walls of London;

fifteen hundred years ago the Romans left our country, leaving a wall built from the Tyne to the Solway, that can now be seen; eighteen hundred years ago Paul and Jesus lived.

Paul's father belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, and was proud of it; for Saul, the first king of the Jews, was of that tribe. And although Paul's parents lived in Tarsus, they looked on Palestine as their home, and on Jerusalem as the most beautiful city in the world; for the golden temple was there, where God was worshipped by Jews from all parts of the world. And every year they sent their shekels to Jerusalem, to repair the temple and keep it going; and all the Jews who could, went thither every year to the joyful festivals.

King Herod the Great, although a monster of cruelty, had done much for the Jews. Three temples had been built at Jerusalem and laid in ruins; and as he was a favourite with the Roman emperor, he got leave to build the fourth and finest of them all—the one in which Jesus spoke and Paul worshipped, and which was the last, for it was burnt by Titus not many years after Paul's death.

And thus knowing so much about the place in which Paul was born and the men who lived there, it brings him near to us, and helps us better to understand how he lived and what he said.

His Name.

TARSUS: AGED 1-5.

EIGHT days after the little child was born, his father and mother gave him two names, very solemnly, and with many promises, as parents do now; and the naming was followed by a supper of rejoicing friends. His first name of Saul was dear to the tribe of Benjamin, as the name of their king; and the second name, Paul, was a Roman name, the one best known to us, and by which we shall call him, although I am sure that the dear Hebrew name was the one which his mother used.

He was not baptized, as English children are, but was carried tenderly to the synagogue, where he received the mark of a Jew, called by the long word "circumcision," which means that a small mark was made upon him with a sharp knife.

His parents were very religious, and looked upon this marking of their little babe as of more importance than English parents look upon baptism; for Moses had commanded it, and they

thought no child could enter heaven without it, and this belief gave Paul a great deal of trouble when he grew up. But his father was one of the strictest of Pharisees, and believed in all the commands of Moses being kept exactly as the priests and religious teachers ordered, and that was not easy.

And so we must expect to find the strictness of the father appearing in the son when he too became a man. From the day of his birth he was set apart for the service of God—which means that his mother resolved to bring him up as a very good Jew. Such sweet resolutions are not limited to Jewish mothers; for do not the mothers of England also resolve in their hearts to dedicate their children to the service of God, and lead their little feet in the paths which Jesus trod?

In Tarsus, as in every large Greek town where there was buying and selling, there was a Jewish quarter, of narrow streets, in the poorest part of the city. There the little child was carried about riding on his mother's hip and shoulder, as little ones are carried still, to market, field, and spring; and there his little feet went pattering over the hot stones in the sunshine, as he held by her skirt. As soon as he could walk so far, he trotted by her side to the synagogue, with bare feet in the dust; and there she washed them tenderly, before going in to sit together behind a screen of stone lattice work, where they could see without being seen. There his mother sat covered with a white veil, her dark eyes looking to see his father, as he sat with grave face among the men out upon the stone floor; and there the child heard the teacher read, and pray, and speak, although he did not understand what was being said, for he was only a little child. But his mother thought his feet should be early taught the way to the synagogue, where she believed he would sit when he grew up to be a man, as the greatest teacher of them all. For there are no bounds to the golden dreams a mother weaves round the head of her boy, whose hand she feels in hers, and whose little feet follow her along the path of a holy life.

During these years his mother was his only teacher—these rosy years, when little hands meet answering love, and trusting eyes look into eyes as pure, and the child's heart takes the pattern of the mother who bore him. She knew it was the duty of every Jewish mother to make her child know and love the Bible, by telling him the story of her people, of what God had done for them, and of the great men of her nation. But most of all she told him about the commandments of Moses and his religious laws. Often, with grave face and bowed head, she had listened behind the women's screen in the synagogue to the solemn voice of the

reader, as he chanted the familiar words of the Law, which every Jew knew by heart :—

Hear, O Israel : Our God is one God :
 Thou shalt love Him with all thy heart, and soul, and might.
 The words which I command thee shall be upon thy heart :
 Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children,
 And shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house,
 When thou walkest by the way,
 When thou liest down, and when thou risest up.
 Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand ;
 They shall be as frontlets upon thy brow.
 And thou shalt write them
 Upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gate.

These words sank into her mother's heart, and were a special command to her. Often, too, she had heard the reader chanting in a loud voice to all the people :—

When thy son asks thee in time to come,
 What mean the commandments which God has commanded ?
 Thou shalt say to thy son,
 We were slaves in Egypt, and God brought us out.

And as the dark-eyed mother wended homewards with her child from the synagogue, by the back streets, as women must do, she spoke of what the reader had read, telling him that he was to love God with all his child's heart. Had not the reader said that she was to talk with her son as she walked with him by the way ?

His Mother's Stories.

TARSUS : AGED 1-5.

IN the midst of that city of strangers who taught vain philosophy, and worshipped idols of stone and wood, not alone of God and the ten commandments did this dark-eyed woman speak to her red-cheeked child. He would one day be a man, and she fired his mind with stories of the oppression and the deliverance of her people, and of heroes like King Saul, whose names were heard every day among them. And, like all little children, he liked best to hear tales of daring and adventure, of fighting, and generosity, and wonder.

In warm summer evenings, after the glow of the sunset had steeped the hills with purple, slowly mantling them out of sight,

as the silver stars came trembling over the violet sky, sitting by her side on the flat house-top, the child listened to his mother's voice telling the story of David the shepherd boy, who slew a bear and a lion that had come to kill his father's sheep, and who became king after King Saul. He heard, too, of King Solomon, the wisest of Jewish kings, who, when he was throned before the people, caused a seat to be placed for his mother on his right hand. But it was not of kings only that she told stories. He heard of the ancient prophet Elijah, who hid himself in a cave because of the wickedness of the people, and who was fed by the wild ravens. She told him of the beautiful Queen Esther, the daughter of a poor Jew, who became Queen of Persia, and saved the lives of all the Jews in that kingdom. And she dwelt tenderly upon the story of little Samuel, who, like Paul himself, was dedicated to God by his mother, and was taken by her to live with the priests in the tent of God while still a little boy, and who afterwards was the great prophet who appointed Saul to be king.

On winter nights, as they sat in the house with the door closed, and wooden shutters on the small windows to keep out the cold winds, his mother span blue wool, by the light of a small oil lamp, that was to make the cloth for a garment for him, and told him other tales. Sewing his little coat, and embroidering it round the neck with threads of blue and red, she thought of Joseph's coat of many colours, and told him the story of the shepherd boy who was sold by his brothers for a slave, and who rose to be the chief officer of the great King Pharaoh. And perhaps little Paul fell asleep, as children do when Bible stories are being told, as he listened to the longest story of all—about Moses, the beautiful Hebrew babe, who was found by the Egyptian princess floating in a basket among the reeds by the side of the river Nile: how she brought him up as her own child; how he afterwards stood before the great King Pharaoh demanding that he should let the Jews go free who were slaves in Egypt; and how one night the angel of death passed through the land. And he would hear with wonder and awe that this night was ever after called the Passover, because the angel of death had passed over the Jews' houses; that King Pharaoh next day ordered them to leave his country; that Moses led them out, and at Sinai went up the mountain of clouds and fire, and came down with the ten commandments cut upon two flat stones, which have ever since been called the commandments of God. And his mother told the wondering child that he would have to learn these commandments off by heart when he was older.

He heard, too, of the golden temple at Jerusalem, which his

mother had seen ; of the hundreds of children who went thither, and to which he would one day go. And he heard her tell with sighs, and perhaps with tears, of the hated Romans, who had conquered their beloved country ; and her eyes would glow and her voice tremble as she told him of the Maccabean heroes, who had roused the people to fight the Roman soldiers and free their country—alas ! only to be conquered again by soldiers in greater numbers. And she would tell him, in a hushed voice, that one day the Romans would be driven out by the Messiah, the Saviour of their country, who would consume them with fire and flames proceeding out of His mouth, but that the great day of deliverance would not come until they were a holy people.

There are no tales so true as the tales a child hears from his mother's lips ; there are no heroes so great as the heroes she has praised ; there are no thoughts so pure, no ambitions so high, no passions so deep as those which she plants in her child's mind, at that sweet age when her face is to him as the face of an angel, and her voice as the voice of God. And thus the child Paul learned the history of his people, with mingled feelings of awe and admiration ; for history and religion were woven into every tale which she told.

His Father's Teaching.

TARSUS : AGED 1-5.

FASTENED to the side of his father's house door was a bright metal box a few inches long, and every one who went out or in raised their hand to touch it, and kissed their finger, as they said a few words to themselves ; for in it were some verses of the Bible written upon parchment, and beginning with the familiar words, "Hear, O Israel : God is one God."

Before the little child Paul could speak, as he was carried past this bright box he held out his chubby arms towards the shining thing, being held high enough to touch it and kiss his little hand, as others did.

As soon as he could speak, his mother taught him to kneel with his face turned towards far-away Jerusalem, and, placing his upraised hands together, say the little morning and evening prayers which she had learned from her own mother when a child like him. And when he asked why he must turn his face in that direction, she would tell him that the golden temple was there, and that in the dark chamber, behind the great purple

curtain, God dwelt. And she would tell him of the prophet Daniel, who when in Babylon prayed every night and morning with his window opened towards Jerusalem, and because he would not stop doing so, was cast into the den of lions, but that the lions did him no hurt.

Until the little boy was four, his mother was his teacher, telling him Bible stories, and showing him how to be good by living a sweet and gentle life herself. But you must not think that his father took no share in the training of these early years. He was as anxious as his wife that he should grow up a good child, and he also told him stories from the Bible; but still the burden was laid upon the mother.

The old rabbis said that at five a child's home lessons should start, and that the father was then to be his chief teacher. And at that early age little Paul began the long and weary task of learning off by heart the hundreds and thousands of the religious songs and sayings of the Jews, beginning with the commandments of Moses, and going on through the books of the Old Testament, and through the far larger mass of traditions of what the rabbis had said about the Bible since the days of Moses. He began this life-task at five, and it did not end until he was a man of thirty; and then he suddenly threw the whole mass on one side, as a useless, endless toil. The little child did not begin with picture lesson books as children do now, or even with letters and words. Bible stories were his first nursery tales, and Bible history and Bible prophecies were the delight of his growing years. For the Jews found all their teaching in the Bible, and were discouraged by their teachers from looking into or learning out of any other book.

And the child's first lesson was a verse from Deuteronomy, which his mother or father said to him in Greek, and he repeated over and over again until he had learned it; then he had another verse told him, to learn in the same slow way. And like other little children, he would find them very hard and wearisome to learn, for he would have no idea what the solemn words meant. Here are some of the verses which his dear mother taught him to say, bit by bit, day by day, morning and evening, along with her, until he could repeat them without a mistake:—

What does God require of me
But to worship Him, and walk in all His ways,
To love and serve Him with all my heart and soul,
And to keep the commandments of Moses,
Which God commands me
This day to keep for my good?

And his father would tell him that when Moses gave his commandments to their people, for the first time, as the laws of God, he said words like this, which Paul had also to learn and remember :—

It shall be, if you listen attentively this day
 To the things which I command you,
 To love the Lord your God,
 And serve Him with heart and soul,
 I will give you rain on your lands, the early and latter rain,
 That you may gather your corn, your wine, and your oil.
 And I will give you grass in your fields for your cattle,
 And you shall eat and be full.

And he would also be told that while these were the promises which Moses made to them if they worshipped God, he held out punishments also if they did not do what he told them. And he would teach the little child words like this also, to repeat and learn off from the Bible :—

Take care, lest you be deceived and worship idols ;
 And God's anger be roused, and He shut up the clouds,
 That there be no rain. Then the fields will bear no fruit ;
 And you shall perish off the land which God gave you.
 Therefore lay up these words in thy heart
 And in thy soul.

For Moses had told the people, and Paul's parents deeply believed, that if a Jew was good and worshipped God, He would bless his fields and home ; and if he did not love and worship God, He would surely punish him in field and house : and they taught their little child to believe also.

Preparing for School.

TARSUS : AGE 1-5.

IN the golden mornings and the crimson evenings, as his mother taught the little boy the verses which he was to repeat to his father, she would tell him that Moses, standing in the camp of black tents, under the shadow of the mountain of clouds and fire, told the people that they could choose between happiness and sorrow, in words like these, which he would also have to learn :—

I set before you this day a blessing and a curse :
 A blessing, if you obey the commandments of God,

Which I command you this day ;
 A curse, if you will not obey them,
 But turn aside from the true way,
 To go after idols.

And when he came to learn verses of the Psalms, which English boys learn now, his mother would tell him that they were written to be sung by bands of white-robed Levites and singing boys to the sound of silver trumpets, as they stood on the white steps of the golden temple, while the people listened in the wide, open square below. And this is one about the Jews leaving Egypt, and the cruel King Pharaoh :—

When Israel went forth out of Egypt,
 From a people of strange words,
 Judah became his refuge, and Israel his dominion.
 The Red Sea saw it, and fled ; the Jordan was driven back.
 The mountains skipped like rams,
 The little hills like lambs.

The little boy would much rather have heard these stories from his mother's lips, in her own words, as she used to tell them ; but that would not do. If he wished to be good and clever, he had to learn them as she repeated them ; and we may be sure the little fellow did his very best, whether he understood them or no. And when on Sundays his father took him on his knee, and listened with grave face as he lisped over all the verses that he had learned during the week, the little child's grey eyes would sparkle, and his red cheeks flush with joy, when he saw his mother's pleased face smiling encouragement to him as she heard how well he remembered his lessons. For there are two things which make us all learn well—love for the teacher, and love for what we are taught ; and of these two, love for the teacher is the stronger with boys so small as he. And his father looked grave and solemn, for he considered it a sacred duty to see that his little son learned the verses of childhood exactly as he had learned them from his father long years ago. No doubt he had a hundred questions to ask, as little children have still ; but his father did not give him the long answers which English parents give. He was told that it was so written in the Bible, and that was enough for him.

And so from earliest childhood he was taught to accept everything which the Bible said, and later on he would be told to accept everything which the rabbis said also.

A Children's School.

TARSUS : AGED 5-10.

SIX is an early age for a little boy to go to school, and change the smiling instruction of his mother for the cold and solemn looks of a bearded stranger ; but that is the age at which the little child Paul would go, for so said the rabbis. And what a school ! Not a dry, comfortable place with forms to sit upon, and pictures on the walls, but a small, dingy room at the synagogue, without seats or desks or pictures. He was not troubled with books to carry, for there were no books in his school, not even for the teacher. It was all memory, memory, memory ; rote, rote, rote ! And the little boys in the children's schools of the East learn in the same way still—sitting on the floor, repeating the words after the schoolmaster.

They had not the Bible as we know it, for the New Testament was not then written, and the Old Testament, which was the record of their religion and the history of their nation in one, consisted of a large number of things called books, but which were really rolls of papyrus paper, all written over with a pen and black ink. Copies of them have come down to us, and have been made into our Bible ; but some books which they had have been lost, while others have been kept out of our Bible. Those from which Paul's first school lessons would be taken were Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, called the Pentateuch, or five books. They were written on broad rolls, not unlike our yellow wall-papers, and were kept rolled upon two sticks, and were unrolled only a little bit at a time, at the part which was to be read. But if the teacher were a clever man, he knew every word of these five books, and could repeat any verse that was wanted. These five were also called the Books of the Law, for they contained the laws and rules of Moses, which Paul had to learn during the first years of his school life.

And one morning early, the little boy was taken by his father and mother through the narrow streets of the town to the small, dark synagogue school, and handed over to the schoolmaster. Standing looking in at the doorway, his mother would see him, in his bright little jacket, sitting cross-legged among twenty or thirty other little boys, with his sharp grey eyes fixed earnestly on the master's face, as, with kerchief on head, he sat cross-legged upon a raised platform, almost level with the little fellows' heads. And as she listened she would hear the teacher tell them to repeat

the words after him, and in a loud, sing-song voice he would recite a short sentence, and with hand upraised beckon to the little boys to repeat it with him. And then would rise such a din of shrill voices, shouting so loudly what the master was saying, that she would be unable to distinguish the voice of her own little boy. But she would see, from his eager face and burning-red cheeks, that he was anxious to excel in his first lesson. And then she would turn away and go thoughtfully home, to watch and listen for the sound of him returning. Little boys are apt to think that they are the only ones who find it hard when they first go to school, but there are mothers who can tell us that they have felt very lonely indeed as they sat at home thinking of the little one who has passed out of their hands, and wishing that she had him back again.

But the little boy's learning was not confined to the school. His mother had long ago made him a praying shawl like his father's, but much smaller, with blue woollen tassels at the corners, to wear underneath his little tunic. And he was told never to put it on in the morning without repeating a short prayer which his mother taught him. He was encouraged to ask questions about all the religious acts which he saw his father and mother doing, and he would ask why they watched so carefully for the first sight of the new moon in the blue sky. Why on a certain night did his mother light a candle for each one in the house, and why were the candles increased for eight nights, until all their house was blazing with candles? Why was there sometimes no leaven in the bread, and why did his mother sweep the house clean, and light a taper for his father to search in every corner for crumbs? All these things, and more, he asked; for what little boy does not delight to ask questions? And he received long answers and explanations, which he could not understand, but which would become clearer as he grew up.

And so his education was not left entirely to his school teacher, for he had what is better than all masters—the words and the example of his father and mother of what a good Jew should be.

The Bible Lesson Book.

TARSUS : AGED 5-10.

AT home and at school, the little red-cheeked boy learned that the greatest thing in the world was to worship God with all

his heart and soul and mind, and keep the commandments of Moses, and so live a good life; and little boys cannot do better than get the same thing into their minds still, for nothing comes before it, and it brings all good things after. But Paul learned much more than that out of the Old Testament. The Jews were very proud of the history of their people, and believed that they were the favourite and only beloved people of God, and the little boy had to learn off much of their early history.

He learned those chapters which told that Moses led the Jews out of slavery in Egypt, and that they wandered about for forty years, living in tents, amid the rocks and sands, the vales and the mountains of a barren land; that he brought them to the mountains of Moab, and showed them how beautiful Canaan was, and told them that it would be theirs—so beautiful with green vales and sparkling streams that after the hot desert sands they called it “a land flowing with milk and honey.” And he learned that Moses died on Mount Nebo, and that Joshua, the fighting leader, brought the people across the Jordan river near to Jericho, to conquer the land, because Moses had told them that they were to fight, slay, and destroy all the people of the country—men, women, and little children—sparing no one. And the boy would learn that the land had belonged to the tribes of the Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, and Canaanites, and that Moses said they were to have nothing to do with them or the idols which they worshipped, in words like these:—

When God shall bring you into the land whither you go,
 And shall cast out many nations before you,
 You shall slay them, and utterly destroy them;
 You shall make no bargain with them, nor show mercy:
 Neither shall you make marriages with them;
 Your daughter shall not marry their son,
 Nor their daughter marry your son.
 For she will turn him away from following God.
 You shall break down their idols' altars,
 Dash in pieces their stone pillars,
 Hew down their images, and burn them with fire.
 For you are an holy people unto God,
 Who has chosen you to be a peculiar people,
 Above all that are in the earth.

And if little Paul asked why these people of Canaan were to be so utterly slain and destroyed, and if it was not cruel and unjust to do so, he would be told that it was the command of God. But that reply would not satisfy some little boys and girls that I know,

who have heard of Jesus, and who cannot believe that to slay women and little children can ever be right.

And so Paul was taught to believe that the Jews were the favourites of God, who was their God only, and that they were to keep to themselves, and have nothing to do with strangers; and this made him loving with little Jewish children, but taught him to despise all who were not Jews. He also learned that the idols worshipped by strangers were things to be hated and destroyed; for he had to learn words like these, from the Bible :—

These are the laws which you shall keep and do
All the days that you live upon the earth.
You shall destroy all the places
Wherein the nations worshipped idols,
Their places upon high mountains, and hills,
And under every green tree :
You shall break down their altars and stone pillars,
Burn their idols, and destroy their name.

Thus he learned that the Jews were commanded to destroy the places where idols were worshipped in the country which they conquered. And this is what he learned the Jews were to do for the one place where God was to be worshipped :—

But unto the place where God shall choose to put His name
You shall seek His house, and thither shall you come ;
Bringing offerings, and sacrifices, and gifts,
The first of your sheep and cattle :
And you and your families
Shall eat before the Lord, and rejoice.

And so the boy earnestly believed that God was their God only, and that they were His people, and that not only should all idols be destroyed, but that they who worshipped them, or who did not worship God, deserved to be destroyed also. But when he grew up to be a man, and heard of the beautiful things which Jesus said, he thought, as we think now, that a greater than Moses entered the world when Jesus came. For He said that God was the God not of the Jews only, but of all mankind, and that He loved justice and mercy, and not bloodshed.

Hatred of Strangers.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

WHEN little Paul went to the synagogue with his mother on Thursdays and Sundays, he was dressed in his best tunic of striped blue, and yellow, and green; and while his thick black hair was uncovered, he wore upon his shoulders a small, curiously-made shawl, with blue tassels at the corners. It seems strange to us that a praying shawl was so important to a Jew; but he would rather not go to the synagogue at all than go without. It was made of thin cloth of one colour, or in broad stripes; and it had to be made by a Jew, for they alone knew how to make it rightly. The most important part was the fringe, which had a tassel at each corner, made of eight threads of wool dyed a hyacinth blue, for they said that God's throne was of that colour. These tassels were thought to be very sacred, and you may remember that it was one of these fringes that the woman touched who came behind Jesus wishing to be healed. And little Paul had to learn how to use this praying shawl, and how to put it rightly over his head when praying in the synagogue. He had to learn also the verses from the Bible in which Moses commanded the people so long ago about having tassels.

"Speak to the people," he said, "and bid them make tassels at the corners of their garments ever after. Bid them put upon the corner of each border a cord of blue, and it shall be a tassel, so that when you see it you may remember all the laws of Moses and do them; that you spy not about after your own heart and your own eyes, but remember all the commandments, and be holy unto your God."

And thus the boy was taught that the bright and pretty shawl was a thing to be loved and taken care of. And his mother told him to take one of these blue tassels in his hand and kiss it when the prayers were being said in the synagogue, as he saw all the other little boys doing. She told him also that he must never forget to say these words when putting on his little inner shawl in the sunny mornings, or when putting on his larger outside shawl when going to the synagogue:—

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, king of the world, who hast made us perfect with thy commandments, and hast given us the law of the fringes."

And when little Paul wore this shawl with its bright blue tassels, he thought himself much better than the children who

were not Jews, and who had no such shawl to wear—a thing which is not very good for a little boy to think.

He got many verses to learn at school which praised Jerusalem and the great golden temple, as the finest places in the whole world; and he was taught that Jews, wherever they might be, were to turn their faces towards the temple when praying, and to delight in giving presents to the priests who lived there. And his teacher told him over and over again that there was but one God, who was their God, and that they were His chosen people, and all others were wicked and to be avoided; for they did not believe in God, or keep the laws of Moses, but worshipped idols of wood and stone, and had no books of the law from which to learn righteousness. And while the little boy did not understand one-half of what he thus learned off by heart, he soon got to be very proud of his own people, and to dislike and despise all foreigners. And if he did play in the sunshine of the gardens and streets and market-places with other little boys and girls whose mothers were Greeks or Syrians, Cilicians or Cyprians, he always had a feeling that they were different from him, and were wicked, as his teacher said. And yet he found those children merry and kind and loving as himself; and if his teacher had not told him that they were bad, he would not have known it, although they did not come to his school or to his synagogue. And the child was right, for in later years he learned of One of whom his school teacher had not heard, who said that little ones everywhere were the children of God's kingdom on the earth.

But he was taught day after day that the Jews were God's own people, and to think of foreigners as all wicked, just as the Turks now in out-of-the-way places look upon all Christians as wicked and hateful, calling them "Christian dogs." But we live in happier times, and nations now respect each other, although they have different ways of worshipping God. If they bow down to idols, we do not seek to kill them, but try to turn their faces towards the one true God and Father of all men, as Paul afterwards did.

The Five Books of Moses.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

PAUL'S school had a pretty name—the "Vineyard;" for it was thought that little boys were like young vines that had to be taught to climb, and have leaves and bear fruit. And although

he sat on the floor with other boys, and repeated verses after his teacher until he could say whole chapters without a mistake, he had also to learn to read and write and do sums. His mother and father spoke Hebrew at home, and the people in the streets spoke Greek, and so he had to learn to read and write both of these languages.

He did not learn his A, B, C from wooden blocks or picture books, as little boys do now, but by tracing the letters upon smooth sand, and rubbing them out with his hand and trying again, just as children draw pictures upon the sea-shore. When he knew his letters, his teacher gave him a small, flat piece of wood, about the size of a school slate, and a piece of chalk, and he sat cross-legged amongst the other boys, writing down on his wooden slate all the letters and words which the teacher wrote upon a blackboard and held up for them to copy. It was like the blackboard of an English school, with this difference, that the things written were always lines and passages from the Bible and from nothing else. And thus he learned to read and write, learning by heart, as he wrote, all the things that his teacher gave him. Although he was a very clever scholar, you may be certain it was years before he could write Greek and Hebrew. Indeed, he never was a very good writer of Greek. But as time passed he was able to read the sentences which his schoolmaster wrote upon the blackboard, being the verses of the law of Moses which they had to learn off that day. There was no singing, for the Jews did not care for it; and no drawing or painting, for they disliked pictures, and said that to make a figure of a man or an animal in clay, or to cut it out of wood, was to make an image, and very wicked. And while the Jews loved and adored their fine and beautiful temple, they would not allow any statues or pictures to be in it.

Paul was now about eight years of age, and could read; and his lessons were harder, for then his father let him tenderly unroll the large brown paper rolls of the books of Moses, which he kept carefully preserved in a box in the best room of his house, and learn his lessons from them. And we may be sure he felt very proud when his father asked him to read aloud to him, in the dear Hebrew language, from these rolls; and you may be certain that his mother felt prouder still, for she believed in her heart that her little boy would one day be a great teacher—not a mere schoolmaster, but a rabbi among the great ones of Jerusalem.

By the time that he was ten years of age he would know the five books of Moses, and be able to repeat the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the ancient shepherds and fathers

of the Jewish people, and how the Jews came back from Egypt, led by Moses their lawgiver; and how in the rocky desert the people made a small golden calf, and set it up on a pole, and danced round it and worshipped it, and were punished for doing so. And he would be able to tell of the great tent, called the Tabernacle, in which they worshipped God, which Moses caused to be made out of strong cloth of purple and skins of wild animals dyed scarlet, and of the beautiful curtains that dropped down to divide it, and that a cloud hung over it.

And thus the little boy learned the history and religion of his people all in one; and while he could not say off the whole of these five books of Moses, he was expected to be able to answer questions from any part of them, and repeat the most important parts. For the great rabbis had said that at his age a clever boy might go on to learn out of other books of the Bible, which told how the Jews conquered Canaan. And Paul was glad when he passed on and was allowed to read in these books, of kings, battles, and adventures, and stories of God and love and gentleness, which do little boys more good than tales of a thousand battles. For in being gentle and loving we are doing the will of God, but in cruelty and in killing we are not.

White-eyed Ships in the Harbour.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

YOU must not think that the little boy Paul did nothing from morning till night but sit on the floor and learn verses from the Bible, and copy them with white chalk on a little flat board. School began with him very early in the morning, and it was over by the time that English boys are going into their classes. He was then free to play and frolic with his little companions until the time when he had to learn his tasks at home. Like many other little boys and girls, he did not always come straight home from school, for there were lots of things for his sharp eyes to see.

The Greek boys of Tarsus were famous players of games, for there was a splendid place called the Gymnasium down near the river, where they were taught to swim and leap, and wrestle and run, and play games of all kinds with balls. And while Paul was not allowed to go to it, he would go with his little Jew companions to a shallow bay of the river, and, pulling off their small tunics,

run in and splash about in the hot sunshine, and in time learn to swim. And when the birds were building in the green bushes by the river banks, he would go off to search for their nests, and count the eggs, and mark the spot with a large stone, as little boys know how to do. When the time for ripe fruits came, he would go into the fields and orchards, and see the ruddy apples and crimson cherries, the golden oranges and pale citrons, lemons, and dates shaken from the trees. And at the honey harvest he would stand at a safe distance, ready to run as he saw the men beating the air with leafy twigs to keep off the bees, while others took the dripping honeycomb from the hive and handed him a piece to eat, dropping with sweetness.

But the greatest rejoicing of all was the vintage time, when he went with his father to a hot vineyard in late autumn, and saw the purple bunches of grapes cut off and tossed in heaps into baskets. And then he would get as many as his little hands could hold ; for they grew wild, and every one could get them to eat with their brown bread.

Instead of coming straight home from school, he would run down to the harbour, on both sides of the river, and there he saw ships, the delight of all boys, that had come on voyages over the sea from foreign countries. And he would look with wonder at the small wooden figure fixed upon the front of the boat as a figure-head, which the sailors believed kept harm away. On other ships he saw a great white eye painted on the side of the bow, and wondered what it was for. And there he saw men with faces red as copper, who had sailed all the way from Egypt, and black men who had come from Africa, and merry, singing fellows, with caps of red and blue, who had crossed from the island of Crete, of Cyprus, and of Rhodes, and the more distant ports of Italy, Greece, Syria, and Palestine. And thus he learned that while Tarsus was a big city, there were other cities and countries far away over the glittering sea.

And he would see rafts of trees, with men standing upon them, guiding them with poles and ropes, that had come floating down the river from miles above the city, and bales of goods being hauled up out of the ship's hold, and blocks of rough marble slowly dragged to the wharf by a crowd of men, who pulled all together, keeping time to one man who shouted and clapped his hands. There, too, were strings of asses, mules, and small horses, laden with grain sacks, bundles of hides, coarse cloth, skins, wool, leather ; while others had oil and wine, some carried in black leather bottles and some in red earthenware jars—and all waiting to have their burdens taken off and put into the ships.

And when at last a ship was laden, he listened to the shouts of the pilot and captain, and the cheery answers of the sailors, as the ropes were cast off and the ship pushed away until it was well out into the river. Then oar after oar would be thrust out to guide them down the mid stream, while the steersman stood high up on the house at the stern, now pushing, now pulling at the two big steering oars, and shouting excited orders to the rowers below. Then came the creaking of ropes, and the great red-peaked sail rising up the mast, as the sailors sang and shouted, until the wind caught it, making it bulge and tug as if it were a living thing.

What little boy or girl does not like to visit a harbour and see the foreign ships, and feel the thrill and the mystery of the strange cries, strange faces, strange dresses of the droll-looking men, and be awed and fascinated with the idea of the lands beyond the sea, whence these ships came, and whither, with white wings, they will return? And while the boy Paul felt the glamour of the stir and freedom of sea life, with his quick ears and sharp eyes he was learning much about ships and the ways of sailors that he did not forget, and which would, doubtless, be of use to him in his own voyages.

Cleopatra's Gold Boat.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

PAUL would be certain to hear about the most wonderful ship that had ever sailed up the river Cydnus, for many of the old sailors about the harbour had seen it, when Cleopatra, the beautiful Queen of Egypt, came to meet the great Roman general Mark Antony, who had commanded her to come to Tarsus. On that day both sides of the river were crowded with people, all anxious to get a sight of her, for she was famous for her beauty and wealth. She came on a day of sunny blue skies and sparkling water, and the first sight they had was of a tall mast from which ribbons of all colours—crimson, blue, white, and yellow—fluttered in the breeze, and of a great purple sail of silk looped up with white ropes to the tapering yard. On the gilded bow, which rose high out of the water, stood a crowd of girls in robes of pale green, glistening yellow, rose, and deep blue, to look like lovely maidens of the sea, while more girls burned clouds of incense that wafted sweet odours to the shore.

And as the ship came close to the city, the people saw that the broad oars on each side, with which it was being slowly paddled, were covered with silver, that flashed and shone as they rose and fell in the water, keeping time to the music of harps and flutes. The high stern of the ship was in the shape of a house with windows, all covered with shining gold, and over it was spread a rose-hued canopy, embroidered and fringed with gold. On a couch of softest cushions lay the beautiful Egyptian queen, covered with sparkling jewels, and easily seen from each side; while little boys, dressed to look like Cupids, with shining robes and snow-white wings, fanned her with rainbow fans of peacock feathers.

This dusky princess wished to conquer the Roman soldier with her charms, and had come to visit him as Venus, the queen of love, surrounded by everything that was lovely. We do not now think much of this queen, whose lips were painted red, eyebrows pencilled black, and finger-tips stained a bright crocus yellow; but the boy Paul was told that her gilded barge, with its rainbows of ribbons, was the most wonderful ship that ever sailed into Tarsus.

Besides the busy harbour, there was another place in the city of great interest to boys with sharp eyes, and that was the wide, open market-place, where the most of the buying and selling was done for the country round about. Fairs were held there, when the shepherds of the hills came down to sell their long-haired sheep and black and white goats, horses, asses, camels, horned cattle, and pigs. Round this open square were most of the shops of the city—not stone buildings with windows stocked with wares, but open sheds and movable stalls and tables, with thick tent-like shades over them of black and brown, red and yellow, to keep off the hot sun.

There sat the sandal and slipper makers at work, in a shed hung round with shoes of scarlet, yellow, and brown leather; while the man inside sat cross-legged on the floor, cutting up hides with a sharp knife, and sewing them together with needle and thread. There, too, were the saddle and harness makers, and the weaver in his shed, with his strange rattling loom, that looked like a mass of strings and sticks hanging from the roof, out of which came carpets, rugs, and shawls of the brightest colours, of red and blue-green, growing ever larger as the weaver rattled and shook his strings and sticks, throwing his shuttle from side to side and catching it with his hands. There were plenty of weavers in Tarsus, for they had to weave fine silk of orange and rose for the ladies' scarfs, thick wool for men's cloaks, white linen for little

girls' dresses, and strong haircloth of goats' hair for shepherds' tents and ships' sails.

And there, behind a stall covered with painted cups and dishes of all shapes, sat the potter, spinning bowls and jugs on a little muddy wheel, driven by a boy with a string, as potters do still. But it would take too long to tell you of the perfumers, barbers, confectioners, bakers, cabinet-makers, blacksmiths, sword and dagger makers.

There was also a sad and pitiful sight—the slave market, where Paul saw boys and girls, many black, but some almost white, standing for sale. Yet he looked upon them without pity, for he had been taught that it was right that some people should be free, and others be slaves, to be sold for money, and whipped if they disobeyed their masters. But you know that it is wrong, and when Paul grew up he changed his mind about slaves, as he did about many other things that he was very busy learning at this time; and it was Jesus who made him change.

The Cheerful Sabbath Lamp.

TARSUS : AGED 5-10.

EVERY Friday was a holiday at the little synagogue school, and Paul really loved that day, for on it his father ceased work early; and the weekly Sabbath began at the going down of the sun, and lasted until sunset on Saturday evening, during which his father did no work. Our Sabbath begins at midnight, and because Jesus rose from the grave on that day, it has ever since been called the first day of the week and the Christian Sabbath. But the change had not been made when Paul was a boy, for Jesus was then a youth at Nazareth.

When Paul's father came in on the Friday night, he found the house swept and tidied, and his wife and the children dressed in their best clothes, and the evening meal cooked and laid out upon a white tablecloth, where the cheerful Sabbath lamp shed a soft light over fresh flowers, red wine, and newly-baked bread. As he entered he touched the little bright box on the side of the door, and kissed his finger, saying, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in." And then he kissed his wife and children, and putting his hand upon Paul's head, said, "May God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh;" and upon his sister's head, saying, "May God make thee as Sarah and Rebekah."

Then he put off his working clothes, and washed and dressed himself as for a joyous feast. When the last rays of the sun disappeared behind the purple mountains, and the first silver star had come out in the deep sky, the Sabbath began; for the trumpet had sounded from the synagogue, and the silver trumpets from the roof of the golden temple at Jerusalem. The room door was closed; but before sitting down to their cheerful supper, his father asked a blessing upon the house and all in it, and washing his hands in a basin of water held up to him by one of his children, he poured out a cup of red wine and water. Standing round the table, they all tasted of it; while he spoke a few words about God and the vine, and the joyous Sabbath day, and breaking bread, he dipped a small piece for each in salt, and handed it to them. Then they sat down to the most joyful meal of the week, of fish and soup, bread, milk, fruit, and raisin wine.

When the Sabbath supper was over, Paul's father chanted a familiar thanksgiving in which they all joined, and read those parts of the Bible which said that God made the Sabbath a day of rest, and that no work was to be done, not even to light a fire or cook food, and he would tell them that these rules had been made stricter by the rabbis. He told them over again the ever-to-be-remembered story of how the Jews were brought out of Egypt; and he would ask little Paul questions, which he was very proud to answer. His father would say with a very grave face, for he fully believed it, that any man who worked on the Sabbath day deserved to be put to death; and would tell of the man who was found gathering sticks for a fire, and Moses ordered him to be stoned outside the camp of black tents.

When morning came, no smoke was seen issuing from the chimneys of the houses in the Jews' streets. But the day was not cheerless, although it was spent principally indoors, as the Sabbath laws would not allow them to walk a mile; but they visited their neighbours, and had them in. The people of Tarsus did not keep any Sabbath, and made sport of the Jews for doing so; but they were so faithful to their religion that they put ropes across the ends of their streets, to keep them quiet.

Paul was thus early taught that it was a wicked thing even to carry a walking-stick on the Sabbath; but he did not know that the rabbis who made these little Sabbath laws for the people did not keep them. Jesus has taught us how to keep the Sabbath rightly, and He was called many cruel names for breaking these little Sabbath rules which Paul's father thought so important.

The Star=Lamp of the Synagogue.

TARSUS : AGED 5-10.

THE Jewish synagogue has set us the pattern of our churches ; and when little Paul went on Sunday mornings with his mother and sisters, it was not to a splendid temple of white marble set in the midst of a grove of trees, but to a small round building in one of the city streets, with a trailing vine, a bunch of flowers, or a branched candlestick carved in stone over the door, by which everybody knew that it was a synagogue. They looked neither to the right hand nor to the left as they went along the narrow streets ; and as they passed through the small door, it seemed very dark inside after the sunshine.

Looking through the women's screen, he saw the tall brass candlestick with seven branches, and the rich curtain of purple, scarlet, blue, and gold where hung the ever-burning lamp, and behind which was the box where the large rolls of the Bible books were kept. When his father came, he took off his shoes, and tied his phylacteries on arm and brow, before walking slowly to a seat in front of the beautiful curtain where the chief men sat. In the middle of the place were a raised platform and a reader's desk, and in front of this the men sat cross-legged on the floor, some with heads covered with their blue praying shawls, and all with faces turned towards Jerusalem and the star-lamp.

When the door was closed, some one began to repeat a beautiful prayer from the Bible which they all knew ; and when they heard the voice they stood up, and this is part of what he said,—

Blessed is the Lord, king of the world,
 Who made light and darkness ;
 Who makes peace, and creates everything ;
 Who in mercy gives light to the earth ;
 Who in goodness, day by day, and every day,
 Renews the works of creation.

“Amen,” said little Paul with the rest, as they stood with bowed heads in the dim synagogue. And again they heard the voice,—

With great love Thou hast loved us, O our God ;
 With great pity Thou hast pitied us, our Father and King :
 Have mercy on us, and teach us ;
 Give light to our eyes in the law ;
 And unite our hearts to love and fear Thee.

The people sat down as the reader went forward to the desk and read out certain well-known parts of the Bible, which they all said with bowed heads, for even the youngest could say them, beginning,—

Hear, O Israel : The Lord our God is one God.

After he had read on for some time, he left the reading-desk, and standing before the beautiful curtain, repeated another prayer,—

Blessed be the God of our fathers,
Who remembers His gracious promises,
And brings a Saviour to our children.

Four times the speaker paused, and four times the people murmured "Amen."

If there was a priest in the synagogue, he came forward ; and holding up his hands with the tips of his fingers touching, he blessed the people in words which we all know,—

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee :
The Lord make His face shine upon thee,
And give thee peace.

But that was not the end. After this the reader went behind the beautiful curtain, and came out carrying a large paper roll on a stick ; and going up to the reading-desk, in a loud voice, as if singing, he read a few verses in Hebrew, and stopped, while the interpreter repeated it in Greek, so that all might understand. And in that manner he read the Law of Moses.

Then Paul saw him take up another large roll, and read a part from the "Prophets:" for they divided the Law and the Prophets into portions, so that by reading a part every Sabbath they got through the whole in a year.

When he sat down there was silence ; and the people waited to see who would speak, for there was no minister. Any one was at liberty to do so. And the boy would see the speaker go up to the reader's platform, and sitting down cross-legged there, begin quietly to talk about the passages of the Bible which they had just heard. If he was a learned teacher, he would give them an address, full of the rules which the rabbis of past times had spun out of the verses. And Paul would hear cries and remarks from the crowd of listening men, for that was usual ; and often at the end the speaker had to answer questions, which was a very good thing, but it would not find much favour amongst our ministers. There was no singing, except on festival days ; and when questions were over, a short blessing sent the people quietly away home.

And so the Sabbath day went by ; for his father lived under very strict rules not to go out walking, but to spend the day at home with his wife and children, not sadly but joyfully, as a day of rest and gladness, and of drawing near to God.

And when the sun sloped towards the western hills, and shadows lengthened over field and vineyard, his father called his family round him ; and as the sun disappeared and the first star shone out, he spoke a blessing upon the departing day—the sign for the household work and bustle of another week to begin, for the Sabbath was ended.

Learning the Religious Laws.

TARSUS : AGED 5—10.

WHAT with learning to read and write and do accounts, and studying verses and chapters of the Bible, Paul had hard lessons for one so young. But his teacher was not unkind. The Jews were very fond of their children. We have three names—baby, child, youth ; but they had nine : suckling, weaned one, bread-asker, firm one, ripe one, are some of them. Every school teacher must have children of his own, and be kind, so that he might know how to treat them, and he was well watched by the old men of the synagogue. They did not allow him to keep them in school very long at a time, for little children are apt to be tired and cross in hot weather. He might scold, but might not punish them with anything harder than a piece of leather.

Little Paul was expected to learn the five books of the Law of Moses between the time that he went to school and ten years of age. That seems a long time ; but when you remember that Genesis has fifty chapters, some with sixty verses, you can see that four years is not so long after all. If you care to turn them all up, you will find that these five books contain one hundred and eighty-seven chapters and six thousand five hundred and seventy verses ! But besides religion, he learned history, travels, and a hundred other things from these books. From the books of the Prophets he learned how their country had been conquered, and Jews taken captive to other cities, and that many thousands remained dispersed in other countries, and he was told that one day they would all be gathered into their own land again. But that has not happened yet.

He also learned from the Bible that the priests at the golden

temple had all their duties planned out by Moses, even to the shape and colour of their clothes; and he read about the laws by which people were to be guided in their daily life, and about the punishments for breaking them. And he read with awe that death by sword, or spear, or stoning was the punishment for any one who worshipped an idol, or spoke against God, or broke the Sabbath law. We do not carry out these now; but the little fellow was told, and believed, that it would be most wicked of him to say that such laws were not just and right.

It was not to be expected that little boys of nine or ten would understand what they read in these books, any more than we should expect them now, and they were told to ask questions of the schoolmaster—a very good way to interest them and make them think about what he was saying. If this were the custom in our schools and churches, what a lot of curious questions our children would ask! for I am sure there are many things said which they do not understand and would like very much to know. You can imagine the pleasure amongst the boys sitting on the floor of that school if little Paul put a question which the grey-haired teacher could not answer; and this would sometimes happen, for he was a very clever boy, and there are strange things in the Law of Moses. But there was also this unpleasant rule, that whatever his master said he must believe, however strange or impossible it might seem.

The laws and rules which he learned at school he saw his father carrying out with the greatest care at home, even to the particular way in which he washed his hands before and after food; for his father was a very strict Pharisee, and besides the two Sabbath services at the synagogue, there were services on Mondays and Thursdays which his father would not miss, and to which little Paul would have to go.

Roman Soldiers and Processions.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

ALTHOUGH they spoke Greek in Tarsus, it was really a Roman city, conquered long before Paul was born. The people were principally Cilicians, but there were Syrians, Italians, Greeks, and Jews among them. The Jews were a very small part of the whole, and were not liked by the rest of the people, who did not understand their way of worshipping an unseen God in

their houses and synagogues, and despised them for not going to the city temples or to the great festivals held in honour of their Greek idols.

The Jews were not soldiers, but little Paul often saw the Roman troops marching through the streets from the castle to the country—footmen in rough tunics of all colours, coming down to their knees like kilts, with stout leather shoes fastened on their bare feet, making a dull sound on the street as they marched past in a band, each wearing a heavy leather jacket shining with brass plates on back and front. Their legs and often their arms had shining brass coverings strapped upon them, and on their heads were leather caps that flashed with brass plates, often with a ridge of white or black horse-hair, like a brush, that added much to the fierceness of their appearance. At their side hung the terrible short sword of bronze, their left hand clasped a long bronze-headed spear, and on their back was slung a heavy shield of bull-hide studded with brass, having the soldier's name and number written inside. These were the terrible men who lived by fighting for their masters in the far-away city of Rome. Fighting was their trade, and they cared little who they fought for or why they fought.

Others were light and active, and rode beautiful horses, with only a cloth pad for a saddle, and no stirrups; and every one could spring on to his horse's back, spear in hand, at one bound. And little wonder. From boyhood they were trained for horse soldiers, and horse soldiers they would be to the end of their lives. They had no music to cheer them; but in front, when they were going into battle, went a row of men, with long, straight trumpets of bronze in their hands, which gave forth all at once a frightful blare, as the terrible signal for the slaughter. Instead of banners, some companies carried a small flag of green or red, embroidered with a serpent, that fluttered from a crossbar on the top of a gilt pole, while some had only the number of their band. Others had no flag at all, but a gilt ball, a small figure of the emperor, or a little eagle with outstretched wings, upon their pole. The other end was shod with brass to use for fighting, or when they stopped marching, to stick into the ground and mark the place for their band.

And Paul was taught to hate the sight of these men, and he heard his father praying every day that the Saviour would soon come who would deliver his country from them. But in later years he got to like the Roman soldiers, for they saved his life, and some were kind to him.

It is not likely that the boy Paul would be allowed to watch the processions from the groves and temples of the idols when the

city of Tarsus kept a holiday, and hundreds of white-robed priests, men and women, were decked with flowers and ribbons, to walk, dance, and sing through the streets, and drink, feast, and revel in the temples. The priests said it was in honour of the idols, but their way of doing them honour was even more vile than the images they served. Sometimes it was in the name of Apollo, the idol of the sun; sometimes of Hermes, the idol of games; sometimes of Sardanapalus, the drunken king of Assyria, who was said to have built Tarsus eight hundred years before. The procession in his honour went out of the city to walk round his ancient statue by the side of the sea.

They revelled also over the name of Semiramis, who, they said, was the first queen of that country, some two thousand years before, and whom they mixed up with Venus, the idol hated by the Jews under the name of Ashtoreth. The processions in her honour, in which women took a large share, were the vilest of all. They also kept the birthday festival of the Roman emperor Augustus; and as these holidays were partly religious, they were hated by the Jews, who took no part in them, and kept their children out of sight, telling them that it was very wicked to pay honours to idols of wood and stone.

Synagogue Festivals.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

THE Jewish festivals were, of course, kept with far greater splendour in the golden temple than in Tarsus; but each synagogue was a small temple, and the rabbis at Jerusalem said that the Jews in foreign cities must keep the festivals as well as they could. At the Purim festival the children went to the candle-lit synagogue in high spirits. It was held in spring, in memory of Queen Esther, when flowers were bright among the grass; and the reader read the whole Book of Esther, and every time he came to the name of the hated Haman, the children shouted and screamed, while the people stamped their feet, to show how much they hated the vile chief minister who plotted to murder the Jews in Persia so long ago. But at the name of Esther there were low murmurs everywhere of blessings on her name, and at the end some kind person gave cakes and sweetmeats to the children as they went out. And that old festival is kept by little Jewish children in the same happy way to this day.

In the wintry month of December, when the snow-clouds came down from the mountains to lie white about their doors, there was a festival in memory of Judas Maccabeus, and of the time when he reopened the temple at Jerusalem, after it had been closed for three years. Then the children carried branches of bright green palms to the small synagogue, lighted with lamps and candles until it was said to be a blaze of light inside. Lanterns, too, were hung inside and outside their houses, and candles lighted, beginning with one, and lighting a fresh one every night, till at the end of the festival there were eight candles for each person in the house. And that was their way of showing how joy increased as the days went by.

Paul rejoiced also when the festival of First-fruits came in the sunny month of June, when he went again with the children to the synagogue, this time with their necks decked with flowers, red and blue, and carrying green garlands in their hands, to see the small white willow baskets, filled with fruits of all kinds, brought in and laid before the rich curtain and the ever-burning lamp, as an offering to God of the first and best of their fruits and grain.

And there was the joyful festival of the New Moon, which came every month. He knew that men were set to watch for the slender slit of the white moon in the blue sky, and that they ran to the synagogue to tell of its first appearing. The neighbours in his street, too, stood at their doors looking out for the same white bow, and he pleased his father by being the first to see it, and heard him say in a solemn voice, as he looked at the new light, "Blessed art thou, O God, who didst create the sky and the stars. Joyfully and gladly do they fulfil the will of their Creator. Blessed art thou, O God, who renewest the moons."

There was no school on that day, and friends were invited in to share their cheerful supper; and it would be none the less a night of joy in Tarsus that the Greeks also were rejoicing over the little hoop of light in the evening sky. And besides these monthly moons, the first new moon of the year was greeted with trumpets and cow-horns blown up to it, and with such extra joy and feasting that it was called the festival of Trumpets.

But we are more pleased when the moon is at the full, for then the earth is brightened, and a path of dancing silver is laid upon the sea.

The Gymnasium and Racecourse.

TARSUS: AGED 5-10.

THERE was a great open-air theatre at Tarsus, and if Paul was allowed to go and see it, that would not be when it was crowded with thousands of excited people, but when it was empty. It covered a large hollow at the foot of a slope, where rows above rows of stone seats were built in a wide half-circle. Thither the people of the city, rich and poor, came crowding in the early mornings, to see men acting Greek plays for half a day at a time, and hear the music of flutes and harps and pipes and singing, with intervals for refreshment. For the educated people loved to see plays, and hear fresh pieces of poetry and new music. But the Jews did not like it, and Paul's father thought such things were not fit for the son of a Pharisee.

The racecourse for foot races, in the part of the city farthest from the sea, was another place about which the boy Paul would hear a good deal. The Greeks and the Romans were so fond of running that a youth who gained one of their great races had a statue put up to him, and was as much praised as if he had done a great and good thing. The racecourse was a huge open place like the theatre, but long-shaped, and the youths ran to the end and back again. On each side were rows above rows of seats, and thither the people came in thousands to see the contests among the young men, who had been training for years to win a prize. If Paul did not see the games, he saw plenty of young men training for them; and after they were over he would hear the name of the youth who had won the chief race, for everybody would be talking about it and wearing the colours of the different racers.

The place which gave the greatest fame to the city was the gymnasium—a name which we still give to places where boys and girls are taught gymnastics. Built on a sloping piece of country on the east of the city, it was such a place for size and splendour as you would never think of. We think that to teach little boys to be good and clever is the first and best thing, but the Greeks thought differently. They said that to train them to be strong and graceful came first. From sixteen to eighteen boys were taught nothing but gymnastics, so that they might be powerful men; but they were not so careful that they should be good as well as graceful. You must not, however, think that this place was all for leaping, wrestling, and running. It was

daily crowded with boys and youths, but the wisest men of the city also went there to meet and talk of learned things.

There were hot and cold baths, where all boys were taught to swim and to love bathing; and after each bath they were well rubbed with olive oil to make them supple, for they wore no clothing when at their games. In fine weather they practised in playgrounds, and when it rained they went into large, roofed places, and there the masters taught them walking, running, leaping, dancing, singing, and many games played with balls.

And Paul would see the boys, shining with oil, spinning tops of good size, rushing to and fro at football, or pulling with all their strength in a tug-of-war. They had also to throw weights and rings, and shoot at marks; and at a certain age they were taught grammar, which covered much, as you will afterwards hear. A magistrate walked about in white shoes and a purple cloak, with many officers under him; and part of their duty was to see that the boys played fairly, and did not fight, or even lose their tempers, and that was a very wise rule.

Ringling all day with the merriment of boys' voices, it was a cheerful spot, with high buildings of carved pillar and sculptured wall; and throughout the halls and baths, the terraces, gardens, and groves, were many statues in white marble and coloured stone, of famous men, and of beautiful youths who had won prizes. Thus the boys were taught not only to think highly of youthful strength and skill, but also of wise men. If it rained, there were broad porches, where the learned men walked about among the pillars and looked out upon the gardens below and the country beyond; and in fine weather they went in small groups along winding paths shaded with thick green laurels. And while the clever ones talked together, the less clever listened, too often to some argument which was only meant to show how clever the talkers were; and yet it was from this garden that tutors were sought for the sons of emperors.

And when his father took Paul to see the boys at play, he would tell his little son that these supple, laughing fellows might make strong soldiers or fast runners, but the boy who studied the law of Moses, and excelled in learning and goodness, would grow up a better man.

Learning the Traditions.

TARSUS : AGED 5—10.

THE Bible books which Paul learned were almost the same as ours, only there were more of them. He read the Law of Moses in Hebrew, which was like a sacred language; but the other books he read in Greek, the language of every day. The old Jewish rabbis divided the Bible into three parts. First came five books called the Law, then twenty-two books called the Prophets, and the remainder were called the Writings. Paul was now reading the Prophets, about kings and wars, and ever the story was woven through with love for God and obedience to Him, showing that when the Jews worshipped God they prospered, but when they worshipped idols they did not.

He read of Samson, the Jewish judge, who tied lighted brands to the tails of foxes, and let them off among the Philistine corn; of Jehu, the Jewish king, who was known to the watchers on the city wall by his furious chariot-driving; of the lepers who went out of Samaria to give themselves up to the Syrian army, and found that they had all taken fright and fled, leaving their tents; and of the black Queen of Sheba, who came to see King Solomon, and was astonished at his grandeur. And so he read, until, like many Jewish boys of ten, he knew far more of the history of his country than English boys of that age know of England.

When he came to the twelve books called the Writings, he did not find so many stories; for some are wise sayings, some songs, some long poems, and some history; but all were held in high favour by his teachers, as we hold them now. He had then to learn long portions of the Psalms, and read tales about kings both good and bad, and of the boy Daniel, who became a great man in Assyria, and would not give up worshipping God even if he had to die for it.

You may think that thirty-nine books of the Bible were quite enough for a boy to learn at school; but if his father wished him to be a teacher, there remained as much more for him to study in future years, and this was all the harder because it was not written down anywhere, and had to be learned from the teacher's words alone. These were called the Oral Traditions, consisting of endless sayings, explanations of the Bible, and of the six hundred and thirteen commandments which the rabbis said were in the first five books. These Traditions had been heaped up by the

great rabbis of past times, who had spent their lives in committing them to memory, and teaching them to their students, and adding more if they were able.

It was said by the teachers that they were so complete that no question could be put about any subject in the Bible but there was an answer to it. They gave the names of all the angels, and of the magicians of Egypt, and said that the beasts in Eden could talk man's language. Indeed, these Traditions were so numerous and minute, that a rabbi who was fond of fun said they were like a mountain hanging by a hair. Another said that if a man knew the Law of Moses and all their rules, and set himself to keep them, he would have no time for anything else by day or night, not even to eat and sleep.

If Paul had mastered his Bible by his tenth birthday, he was thus only laying the foundation for the huge structure of learning which he would have to build upon it year after year, if he wished to be a rabbi at Jerusalem, as his father intended. And this mass of difficult rules pressed hard upon the common people, for there was a council or law court connected with every synagogue, where the old men were the judges, with power from the great Sanhedrim at Jerusalem to try men and punish them for not keeping the laws and rules of their religion. And you will remember that Jesus recognized the laws of Moses, but set his face against the Traditions, saying He had come to set the people free, for they were only rules made by men which they called laws of God. But Paul was told, and believed, that if a tradition seemed to contradict the Bible, the tradition was to be accepted rather than the Bible.

And so he went on grind, grinding at the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings from day to day, week to week, and month to month; and as he was a clever scholar, he would soon reach the Traditions, and begin his vain attempt to eat up the mountain that hung by a hair of foolish stories and idle speculations.

His Father the Pharisee.

TARSUS : AGED 10-15.

BY this time, Jesus, the divine boy in the glen of Galilee, had been to the golden temple at Jerusalem, and had heard the rabbis speaking amid the coloured marble pillars of which the boy Paul dreamed with awe and admiration; and His pure soul had been filled with doubt, which caused Him to ask questions that remained unanswered. The sayings of these men were not to

Him the word of God. He too had been to school, and had now begun to learn the hard trade of a carpenter; but His growth in wisdom was not in the learning of men. Paul toiled on, storing up line upon line, precept upon precept, of what he would one day cast away; but Jesus thought, worked, and grew in the wisdom of His Father in heaven.

In Tarsus, boys grew up quickly to manhood, so that when Paul was eleven years of age he was quite a lad. His studies were hard, but his father made it harder still; for he thought it right to carry out in daily life not only the laws of Moses, but as many of the rules and traditions of the rabbis as he could, and taught his son to do the same, for he intended him to be a strict Pharisee like himself. To be a Pharisee meant that Paul would belong to one of the great sects of Sadducees and Pharisees into which the religious Jews were divided. The Sadducees were the rich upper classes—what we call the aristocracy. They were the courtiers, officers, diplomatists, chief priests, statesmen, who held the high offices in the nation. They believed in the Bible and the laws of Moses, but would have nothing to do with the Oral Traditions of the rabbis, and did not believe in heaven, or angels, or a life after death. The Pharisees, however, believed in these things, and were men of the people, and included most of the poor rabbis, scribes, lawyers, and teachers. They said the Bible was the word of God, and the Oral Traditions were equally God's words, because they flowed from the Bible, and were its natural application to everyday life. They were thus always arguing and quarrelling with the Sadducees, saying they were very wicked men, and believing that they themselves were very good. But there were others who thought that Pharisees and Sadducees were alike bad, although the teaching of the Pharisees was the better of the two. And Paul's father would tell him that when he grew up he must obey the whole Law and the Traditions, and put down the bad teaching of the rich and powerful Sadducees.

But there were very many who were neither Pharisees nor Sadducees—common people, who worked, toiled, kept the festivals, and went to synagogue and heard what was said, and who were preached at, scolded, punished, and went their own way, and were called by the proud, self-righteous Pharisees "the cursed people, who know not the law." But they had their own thoughts, which they kept to themselves, until One should arise who would speak for them. They were not much concerned about being called names, so long as they were not taxed too heavily by the priests—who took tithes of their corn and wine—and were not brought up before the synagogue court for punishment.

And Paul thought of these common people with shrinking and dislike, for his father told him that they were daily doing wrong in a way for which they rightly deserved to be punished, although we would not think so. Walking a mile, or carrying a stick, or lighting a fire on Sunday was counted a great offence by Paul and his father. To eat an egg which a hen had laid on that day was said by some rabbis to be wrong, while others said it was right. They even argued hotly about how many angels could stand on the point of a needle at one time. And the common people, who had to plough and sow, and hammer and hew, thought that the rabbis might do something more useful than spend days in arguing over trifles about which common-sense men did not trouble their minds. And you and I think so too.

His Sister's Marriage.

TARSUS: AGED 10-15.

THERE were many times of happy family rejoicing in the Jews' quarter of Tarsus, when houses were lit up with candles, rooms and doors decked with flowers and green leaves, and friends invited in to share the joy. The birth of a little child was one of these, and they rejoiced more over the birth of a boy than of a girl, which was strange among a people whose laws were so wise. Another family party was given, with more flowers, and lights, and a solemn ceremony, when the little one received a name. If it was a boy, there was greater rejoicing than ever, when, at the age of twelve, he had a phylactery containing Hebrew words from the Bible tied with strips of black parchment upon his left arm, because it was nearest to his heart. But we do not read of little girls being so treated. Whether they were thought good enough without this, or that they did not deserve it, we are not told, but we know that somehow or other the girls turned out to be quite as good as, and often better than, the boys, when they grew up.

When a girl was betrothed to be married, and the agreement written out and signed, there was again a night of rejoicing, and Paul joined in these festivities when his sister was betrothed. Greater rejoicings followed when her wedding came. Notice was given in the synagogue weeks beforehand, and days were spent in inviting the guests to her wedding, which, by the little rules of the rabbis, had to be on a Wednesday, after the red sun had gone

down. For a time she sat in her father's house, dressed as a bride in white, decked with sweet flowers, and covered from head to foot with a thick veil, through which neither her eyes nor red cheeks could be seen, waiting amid a throng of guests, all in holiday clothes, with her maidens around her, expecting the coming of the bridegroom ; for the chief part of the ceremony was taking home the bride to the bridegroom's house in the evening.

A loud noise of singing, shouting, dancing, and of clashing cymbals and clicking castanets, by the bridegroom's friends, told her that he and his companions were coming. He too was dressed in his gayest clothing, perfumed with scent, his long hair curled, crowned with flowers and fragrant with oil. With much ceremony he went into the house, to lead out the bride, and help her on to an ass, on which she was to ride through the narrow streets. The wedding guests followed ; and surrounded by youths bearing torches and lanterns, with dancing, shouting, and singing, she rode through the starlit streets towards her husband's house. On the way she was met by a company of gaily-dressed, flower-decked girls bearing lanterns on thin poles, who joined the procession, singing loudly the praises of the bride and bridegroom in words of their own making, telling of the happiness of the marriage. On reaching the bridegroom's house he lifted her down from the ass, and his companions carried her into the house, lest she should stumble on the threshold, which all were agreed would be a sad calamity. The guests followed, and they all sat down to the richest and most joyful feast which they could provide, called the marriage supper, at which the bride and bridegroom sat side by side, her eyes still hidden by her thick veil, for he must not yet see her charming face.

When the supper ended, parched corn was scattered over the guests, and over the bride and bridegroom as they retired from the room—she still wearing her white veil, for it was not until they were quite alone that he was allowed to see her face. Then he was expected to lift the veil, and shout loud exclamations of surprise and delight at her great beauty, so that his companions in the next room might hear the bridegroom's joyful voice, and rejoice also. And while that ended the wedding day, feasting and rejoicing amongst their friends were kept up for at least a week, as a sign that all their relations were delighted with the marriage, and wished the young couple much happiness in their new home. And thus Paul would see his sister married to her youthful husband.

The Joyful Passover Supper.

TARSUS: AGED 10-15.

BESIDES times of feasting and rejoicing at home, and of special services in the little synagogue, there were three great festivals kept by the Jews of Tarsus that lasted each for a week, and which they kept as holidays. It was the law of Moses that as many as could do so should then go to Jerusalem and keep these festivals in the golden temple itself; and while large numbers went from distant lands, there were many who had to stay at home with the children.

One of these was the spring festival of the Passover, in memory of their coming out of Egypt; and the chief thing was the joyful Passover supper, in which Paul was now old enough to take part. He saw his mother busy on that day cleaning and sweeping in every corner, and burning every piece of bread she could find, so that her house should be bright, clean, and pure when the sun went down, without even a crumb of leavened bread in it. He saw her baking the Passover cakes of finest wheat flour without leaven, and preparing the bitter herbs, endive and lettuce, the sauce of figs, dates, almonds, and spice pounded into a paste with vinegar, the roasted lamb, the cups of red raisin wine, and the white candles.

In the afternoon the children were dressed in their best clothes, and went with their father and mother to the synagogue, to hear again the familiar story of that night in Egypt when the angel of death passed over the land. And when they came home, Paul saw his father take a lighted candle from his mother's hand, and go through the house, searching in every part to see that no leavened bread was there, and gathering up a few crumbs, and burning them in the fire, which she had left expressly for him to find. For the law said their house would not be pure if any crumbs were left.

When the first star appeared, the outer door was shut, and they went into the lighted room where the supper was laid; and as they had not tasted food since noon, they were very hungry. They all washed their hands, and his father reclined upon a couch at the head of the table, of the best cushions which his mother had in the house, saying that the first Passover supper had been eaten in anxiety and readiness for a journey, but they were now to eat it joyfully and at their ease. Then each one tasted the raisin wine, over which his father had asked the usual blessing.

They ate of bitter herbs and vinegar sauce, to remind them once more of the bitter bondage of Egypt; and next of the unleavened cakes; and then the roast lamb was brought steaming from the fire and put in front of his father. But before touching it, he poured out a second cup of red wine; and if Paul was the youngest child, he asked what it all meant; and his father replied that it was a joyful supper to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt. And standing up, they sang a glad psalm with these words in it:—

When Israel went out of Egypt,
From a people of a strange language,
The Red Sea saw it, and fled:
The Jordan was driven back.

Then they ate the hot roast lamb with their fingers, and more cakes of bread, and drank more raisin wine, and sang more psalms, till they came to fruits and sweets and anything else they pleased; so that if they were hungry at first, they made up for it by having a really good feast.

Paul had always pleasant memories connected with this supper, for the children were told to be kind to the poor, the widows, and the fatherless, and poor Jews who could not afford a supper of their own were invited in to eat it with them. In later times they were taught to believe that angels took a great interest in it, hovering over the house with white wings, and standing behind the door, and that the spirit of the old prophet Elijah came down the street. And the father poured out another cup of wine for him, calling it Elijah's cup, and cheerily bade the children open the street door and let him in, just as other little children let in the New Year. But though they could see no one as they gazed out into the moonlight, or feel anything but a gust of night wind, and although the wine in the cup grew no less until their father drank it up, yet the little ones felt amid their lights and joy and feasting that they had done a kind thing. And if it did no good to the old prophet who was so long dead, it did some good to the little angels with red cheeks and dark eyes who opened the door for him.

Pilgrims for Jerusalem.

TARSUS: AGED 10—15.

THE week of the Passover festival was in the sunny month of April, when flowers covered the ground, and the skies were a sheet of blue. The fields in the plain of Tarsus were full

of wheat and barley swinging in the wind, the red wild rose and yellow honeysuckle scented the thickets, and the small streams were hedged with crimson oleanders, for the white snows of winter had faded from the lower hills.

There was another happy feast in which the children took a part—the festival of Tabernacles in hot October, when the purple grapes hung in ripe clusters in the sunny vineyards. Then they went into the country with their fathers and mothers to cut down branches of the broad-leaved palm, the silvery olive, grey willow, and dark-green myrtle and fir, and carry them home and build bowers on the broad house roofs, and in the open courtyards and gardens behind. When they had finished their leafy house, they covered the floor with mats of woven straw and rugs of blue and red, and hung red peaches, yellow citrons, purple grapes, apples, olives, and other fruits among the branches, and the bower was ready to live in. Their streets, too, were lined with branches of trees, and gay with ropes of flowers on the walls, and from house to house across, until they looked like green forest lanes. Whatever the old people might think of it, the children rejoiced when the day came; and at the setting of the sun Paul's father and mother and all their children left the house, and went into the bower which they had built, there to live for a week at least, and longer if they liked: for the days were hot and burning, and the nights bright with moonlight.

And Paul was told that it was to keep them in mind of the time so long ago, when, after leaving Egypt, the Jews lived for years in tents as they wandered among the dark yellow sands and bare rocks of the desert. And so they spent a week in these green tents, with the sunshine playing among the broad leaves by day, and the stars threading through them and the full moon flashing in at the open door by night; a happy time for the children.

The third great festival was the festival of First-fruits, in sunny June, when the first sheaves of the harvest of wheat, corn, millet, and barley were cut.

Paul was still too young to go with his father to Jerusalem, for it was about four hundred miles away; but a band of Jews went from Tarsus to every great festival, and his father would not think he had done right if he did not go to the golden temple at least once in each year. Tarsus was on the highroad to Jerusalem from the countries and cities beyond the Taurus mountains, and Paul was familiar with the sight of hundreds of Jew pilgrims resting there; for the Jews were always kind to Jews, and gave these pilgrims lodging in the towns by the way.

For weeks before a great festival the Tarsus pilgrims prepared for the road. When Paul's father went, his mother got ready his very best clothes and sandals, and tied them up, to be put on only when he got close to Jerusalem. His father went to the woods, and cut a thick stick as tall as himself, and mended the harness of his ass, and had fresh wool tassels of red, yellow, and green made to hang at its neck and in a small fringe over its nose. The pilgrims started in the early morning, and his mother and he would go with them to the outside of the city. As they marched across the river bridge and along the road towards Adana, he saw them waving green palm branches above their heads, and heard them singing the joyful psalms with which they cheered the many weary days of their long journey to their beloved Jerusalem.

After months of absence his father came back again, telling them such tales of the magnificence of Jerusalem, of the splendour of the golden temple, of the thousands and thousands of Jews from all countries who were there, that Paul thought it must be like a vision of heaven. If his father had been to the festival of Tabernacles, he would tell him of the morning when the white-robed priests blew upon their silver trumpets, and the people came thronging together to see a chief priest go down a hundred steps cut out of the rock, from the temple gate to the brook Kidron, to fill a golden bowl with water from the wonderful pool of Siloam, and carry it up again; while the people, on every hill and rock, sang together and waved green branches that looked like a forest moving in the wind.

If he had been to the festival of First-fruits, he would tell of the singing of the great psalm by the choir of white-robed Levites and singing boys, who crowded the marble steps, and sang when a great brass gong was beaten, while the silent worshippers listened in a thick mass below. And Paul would listen until his mind was filled with dreams and visions of glory, such as he could hardly hope to see; and his father would tell him that he would soon be old enough to go with him and see the holy city and temple, for the first sight of it was so lovely that whoever had not seen it did not know what joy was. And thus the Jews of Tarsus taught their children; and with sweet faith they believed so earnestly, that when their eyes came to see what they had so long pictured, they shouted with joy that Jerusalem and the golden temple were lovelier than in their richest dreams they had ever thought they could be.

Idols, Temples, and Strange Learning.

TARSUS: AGED 10-15.

ALTHOUGH Paul was a clever boy, he did not yet think for himself. He was encouraged to ask questions by his schoolmaster, but it was only to learn what others thought, and not that he might make up his mind and have opinions of his own. There were two rules laid down for him in all his learning: he must commit to memory all that his master gave him to learn, and he must believe all that he learned. And thus while he learned and believed much that was good and right, he also believed much that was wrong and foolish. He heard that God told Moses every word that was written in the five books of the Law, even to the description of his own death, and that Moses wrote it all down. Common-sense said this could not be true, and conscience said it could not be right; but he was taught that to believe when he had doubts was more to be praised than to believe when he had none.

His teacher said that all the books of the Bible were the words of God, and that it was his duty to love and obey; which was partly right and partly wrong, and thus good and bad teaching were mingled. He was also told that amid the smoke and flames of Mount Sinai God gave Moses many oral traditions, and that Moses told them to some one else, who told them to some one else, until they came down to the rabbis of Paul's day as the words of God. His teacher even said that if a tradition seemed to contradict the Bible, the tradition was to be believed, and that to teach anything that was contrary to these Traditions was very wrong, and deserving of severe punishment. And so when, some years later, Jesus told the Pharisees that they made the Bible of none effect by their Traditions, the people knew that what He said was true.

But the boy Paul was not encouraged to think for himself, and so he continued to learn and believe all the countless little rules that were laid down for everyday life, and all the strange and foolish stories that had been woven into the history of his people by men of old time, who wished to make it seem as wonderful as they could. His daily task was to learn and believe, believe and learn, and not judge for himself, until it came about that however wonderful, foolish, wrong, or oppressive the tradition might be, he believed it, and would tell others to do the same.

He was now old enough to go about Tarsus by himself, and

often looked in at the gates opening into the thick groves of green trees which surrounded the splendid temples built to Venus, Sardanapalus, and Semiramis; and he may have had glimpses of broad white steps leading up to rows of great fluted pillars that supported the roof of the outer porch. He saw the white-robed priests who lived there, moving along the paths through the trees and about the broad steps, and watched the townspeople, rich and poor, from all parts, who crowded into those temple groves on festival days, paying to get in. He hated and despised them with a boy's intense anger; for inside those splendid buildings there was a graven image of a man or woman, which they called the figure of a god or a goddess, but which he called a hateful idol. The Law of Moses said that whoever made such things should be punished, and all who worshipped them should be slain. He believed that, in the great city of thousands of people of many nations, the Jews in their small quarter were the only true worshippers, and that all the rest were idolaters, who should have their temples destroyed, their groves cut down, their images hewn to pieces, and be themselves put to death; but, of course, he was only a boy yet.

On other days he passed the fine buildings enclosed in gardens with shaded walks—the colleges or schools of Tarsus, where history, grammar, poetry, music, oratory, astronomy, medicine, philosophy were taught, and for which they were famous throughout the whole Roman Empire. With the easy confidence of a boy, he thought that as they had not the knowledge of God, their learning was only useless speculation and wicked knowledge. For he had been taught that the learning of foreigners, their books and their sayings, were things to be avoided, as they would lead his mind away from the study of the Bible and the Traditions. And yet we find that when he grew up he knew a good deal about Greek learning; but he would gain that in his later years, and not when a school-boy. For little boys are apt to count themselves very wise, and think that they see a great distance, when they are really only beginning to look about them as they climb the hill.

The River and White Fall.

TARSUS: AGED 10-15.

A LITTLE way up were the Falls of Cydnus. There the swift-flowing river spreads out into a clear lake, narrowing

gradually as it nears a cliff of grey rock, over which it pours in a crystal flood, split by jutting crags as it flings down whirls of white foam and sheets of rain upon the black rocks below. Trees lean out from the banks on each side of this sparkling fall, and some growing upon the rocky islets in the midst of the tossing stream trail their branches in the water when the river is full.

This waterfall may have changed since Paul stood upon the bank, to look with a boy's wonder and delight at the tumbling foam, but the scene above is unchanged. The red banks of the upper stream are still clothed with bowery trees, the ragged edges green with drooping ferns, the rocks cushioned with mosses of bronze and brown, and stained with lichens of scarlet and deep yellow. Far in the distance the same outline of purple hills meets the eye, rising ever higher towards the ragged peaks of snow that sparkle in the sunshine against the blue skies. A waterfall has a fascination for all boys, and we can picture Paul and his companions pausing in their ramble by the river to stand gazing there—thinking little, feeling little, but somehow satisfied, and deeply enjoying the constant shoot and plunge and glitter of the water.

There were plenty of fish in the river, and as they were a favourite dish in his mother's house, he would spend many an hour dropping his hook into the clear pools, or casting it out into the deeper stream, too intent to notice the crimson-backed pelicans standing knee-deep in the shallow water, fishing too for their dinner, and with more success. If he went out in the early morning, he would hear the grey lark carolling, while the golden-backed hoopoes strutted up and down upon the rocks with curious crowing cries. If he lingered until the evening, he would hear the thrush and blackbird calling from the crimson pomegranates and the pink flowering oleanders, until the dark-winged nightingale tuned her voice with low, gurgling notes in the lofty pine tree, soon to burst into a song that would arouse more of these wondrous singers, when for hours there would not be a pause of silence.

The boy knew his Bible, and we can think of him walking home under a canopy of throbbing stars such as we never see in England, repeating these words to himself, as many a serious boy has done, gazing upwards at the same glittering worlds,—

When I consider the heavens, the work of Thine hands,
The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained ;
What is man, that Thou art mindful of him ?
And the son of man, that Thou didst visit him ?

And so his boyish days glided past, spent in learning at school,

obeying at home, wandering about the city, rambling by river and field. Seasons came and went—winter, with its white robe and chilling breath; summer, with sun of burnished gold and brooding, quivering heat; spring, with a too brief carpet of gleaming grass and scarlet flowers; autumn, with yellow leaves and purple fruitage. The years were moulding the boy into a youth, and bringing him ever nearer to that age when questions stir the heart and thoughts rise in the mind—the age of thirteen, the most important year in a Jew's life. He was then supposed to step out of childhood into manhood, and was expected to put away childish things and think as a man. But English boys are more fortunate; for while we expect them to be wise and sensible at that early age, we also like them to be merry and happy, and not perplexed with the problems of life. Deep thoughts and serious responsibilities will come in due time.

A Son of the Law.

TARSUS: AGED 10—15.

WHEN a boy reached thirteen, his parents had to impress upon him, as solemnly as they could, what his duty was in regard to all that he had been learning. They told him that he now knew the Law of Moses, and must obey it, and that he could be punished in the synagogue court if he did not do so; for he was about to be solemnly named a "Son of the Law," when he would have to think and act for himself, and be held responsible for all that he did. In England we do not make men of our boys quite so soon.

It was indeed a proud day for his mother when, after solemn examination, Paul was declared fit to have the phylacteries bound upon his arm and brow in the synagogue, as a sign of manhood. These had been carefully prepared. Four texts of Scripture were written in Hebrew, in special ink, on special little slips of parchment, rolled up, and put into a small box of black calf's skin, to which were attached two long straps of skin the breadth of your finger.

The boy stood out before the people in the dimly-lit synagogue, while a grey-haired official placed the little black box upon his naked left arm near his heart, and carefully twined the two thongs seven times round his arm, coming gradually down to his hand, round which he twined them three times, until they came down to his middle finger, where they were tied in a knot. And he

was told that he must never enter the synagogue without binding this box on his arm, and that if he lived a good life he would one day be allowed to bind a phylactery upon his brow also, as he saw his father do. The address of advice, warning, and encouragement from his old friend the rabbi would move him deeply as he listened. And as his mother, with her face close to the women's screen, saw her boy, still so young, being declared a man before the Law, she sighed and wept, for she knew that he could never again sit with her behind that screen, or walk with her to the synagogue.

No doubt you wonder what mysterious words were written in old Hebrew and put into the little box. There were thirty verses, and this is a part: "It shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and between thine eyes, that the law of the Lord may be in thy mouth. Thou shalt diligently keep the commandments of God, and His laws."

If that solemn day was also Paul's birthday, there would be a joyful birthday supper, at which his father would put his hand on his head and bless him, and his dark-eyed mother would kiss him, with a sweeter prayer in her heart than any to be found in the books of the synagogue, and his brothers and sisters would all feel proud of him.

And thus he passed from boyhood into manhood before the Law, his mind stored with all the teaching that a strict Pharisee could give his son, and his young heart deeply impressed with the duty of obeying all that he had learned, of which he was constantly reminded by the little black box which had been so solemnly given to him, to be prized all through life as one of his greatest treasures.

About this time he ceased to be a schoolboy, and became a student; for he did not give up his studies, but only changed his way of studying. He no longer went to the synagogue school, to sit among children—a son of the law was too big for that—but he went on learning lessons by himself, such as would suit a lad who was to be a teacher. Boys look forward to the day when they will have done with school and lessons, for they think studies will then cease; and it is quite true that they sometimes do, but that is only with lazy ones, or boys who have to work so hard that they have no time for study, and both of these are to be pitied. He is happiest and wisest whose only difference is that he goes on with his studies out of love of knowledge, instead of at the command of the master; and these boys we praise, for they will make good men. But there are also boys whose profession will connect them with books all their lives, and they pass on from school to college—a proud step—and Paul would be one of these.

The Weaving Shed.

TARSUS : AGED 10—15.

THE Jewish rabbis said that every boy must learn a trade, and it was the general custom that he should learn his father's trade. They had a saying that the man who did not teach his son a trade wished him to be a thief, for whoever did not work for his bread ate the bread of some one else. And so the student who wished to be a rabbi must learn a trade to live by, for he was not allowed to live by teaching religion. And some people think it would be a good thing if there were the same rule still.

Weavers and tentmakers were common in Tarsus, and it is likely that this was Paul's father's trade, for he made his son a weaver and tentmaker. The strong cloth of Tarsus was known far and wide, for it was made from the hair of the long-haired goats that fed among the highlands of Cilicia, and was called *cilicium*. Owing to its hardness it was almost waterproof, and was used for making ships' sails, corn and wool sacks, and rough outer clothing for sailors and fishermen; but it was chiefly used for making strong, wide tent-covers.

If Paul's father was a tentmaker, his workshop would be an open shed, with sticks, strings, ropes, and stone weights hanging at one end as a weaving loom, from which it would surprise any one but a Tarsus weaver to see a roll of firmly-knit haircloth slowly growing. Bundles of goats' hair, black, brown, and white, tied with hair ropes, would be heaped up, just as they had been bought from the shepherds, either in the market-place, or more likely by wandering among their tents and camps in the hills.

Several times a year Paul's father would take a long journey up the winding rocky paths into the mountains to find the shepherds, and come home again with his asses laden with sacks and bundles of hair to keep his tentmaking going. The hair had then to be combed and put in order for spinning into thread, and some of it would be dyed red, brown, yellow, purple, blue, green, so as to give the broad stripes of colour which the shepherds love to see in their wide tent-covers. But the most of it would remain in its natural colours of black, brown, grey, and white.

In another part of the workshop would be heard the lively chatter of women, as they stood holding a bundle of hair, spinning the hanging thread with deft fingers, and blending the bright colours, to wind it upon spindles and put into the weaver's shuttle. And Paul would have to stand with the women and learn how

to spin the thread ; for without thread for his shuttle he could not weave, and in years to come he would have to do everything for himself.

Spinning was easy compared with weaving. He would have to spend many a weary day under the shed, while the sunshine was bright outside, learning how to put the web upon the loom for different kinds of cloth, and fill and thread the shuttle, and throw it from one side and catch it on the other before it fell to the ground, and how to push up the heavy beam of wood, and press the threads close, standing all the while. And yet weaving coarse stuff for tents and sails would not be very difficult for a boy who could say off the Books of Moses, for he would have his father beside him to show him what to do, until he could weave a web from end to end himself.

After weaving came tentmaking—how, from a roll of stiff haircloth, to shape a tent such as a man would care to buy and live in. He would see his father cutting the cloth into lengths and sewing them together. And you can picture the boy, with black hair and sharp grey eyes, sitting on the floor in the shed, a large bronze needle and thick thread in his hand, slowly sewing the edges of two pieces of haircloth together, and so securing them that rain could not get through nor wind tear them apart. Boys generally prick their fingers and get angry when they try to sew, and Paul would not be without these little troubles to teach him to be careful.

His tents were not high and white like those we are accustomed to see, but like great squares of striped carpet, with broad edges hanging down to the ground ; and they were not to be reared up with one pole like a mast in the middle, but to be thrown like a curtain over about a dozen low stakes set in a double row, so that the flaps which hung down might be fastened close to the earth. To do this, strong ropes of the same goats' hair tightly twisted were sewn all round the rim of the tent to keep the edges from tearing. Loops of leather were cut and fixed on here and there, and short ropes made for going through these loops, to tie them to the tent-pins cut from trees and shaped for driving in with mallets. For the tent had to be stretched over the sticks so tightly that the rain would run off and a gale of wind could not blow it over.

And so the trade of a tentmaker meant buying the goats' hair, dyeing, spinning, weaving, shaping, rope-twisting, hide-cutting, pole-making, and fastening hooks and loops on these poles to hang up pots and pans, clothing, and harness, and then the tent was ready. At length would come the day when it was put up in

the open air, looking strong and new, to be shown off, and perhaps bought by an Arab. Some were coloured in broad bands of bright red and blue, yellow and brown; others were all of black or grey, the commoner kinds of tents, that grew blacker with the smoke and soot of the tent fires. And you may be sure it was many a day before Paul could say that from first to last he could make a tent as good and as strong as his father could.

Tentmaking and Studying.

TARSUS: AGED 10-15.

PAUL was a clever boy at school, and he was to be something more than a tentmaker: he was to be a teacher of the law, and, if possible, a rabbi of Jerusalem. In England a rabbi would be called a professor of theology—one who learns all he can about God and the Bible, and teaches it to others. But Paul had yet much to learn. After many years he would indeed become a great teacher, but of quite a different kind from what his father had in his mind.

You may wonder why, if he was going to be a teacher, he should trouble to learn a trade; but there were many reasons, and some wise ones. Rabbis were not allowed to take money for what they taught. "Use not the law as a spade to dig with," said one to his students. "Work is great; it honours God," said another. "Do any kind of work," said another, "even to skinning a horse by the roadside; and do not say as an excuse, I am a priest." Some were coopers, bakers, tailors, carpenters, shoemakers, builders, carriers, millers, tentmakers. And Paul had to be able to work for his own food, lodging, clothing. Here we find the idea of the free gospel, which has since got sadly out of shape. You will see later on how Paul worked and slaved at his trade when on his journeys, so that he could say he had kept himself.

Boys look back with pleasure to the sunny hours of school, and to one particular master, who made it a time of happiness, and somehow of learning also. But these days were past for Paul. He would now sit alone with his master poring over the old brown Hebrew rolls, listening to long explanations of what this old rabbi and that old rabbi had said was the meaning of this and that verse, or he would slowly repeat the exact words of some wise saying, which he had to commit to memory. If there was a rabbi at the Tarsus synagogue who had been to the college

in Jerusalem, and was more advanced than the schoolmaster in learned studies, and yet worked humbly at his trade in the great city, Paul would go to him for deeper instruction in the endless Traditions.

But he was still a boy, though past thirteen. And when the hour of study came to an end, the old rabbi would roll up his brown parchments and put them carefully into their box, and tell him tales of his student days in Jerusalem—of the halls and rooms round the temple courts where students went for private teaching, to sit on the floor at the feet of the reverend rabbi whose school it was; and of the open arched porches, where the rabbis sat with their students round them, speaking to all who cared to hear their words of wisdom without money and without price.

We can see the earnest face of the boy Paul as he sits cross-legged in his striped blouse, a bright kerchief hiding his black hair, his earnest grey eyes fixed on the rabbi's wrinkled face, as he listens with deep interest to what he can tell him of that student's life of study and holiness opening before him. In youth we see visions and dream dreams. Our feet are upon the mountain clothed with earth's green and crowned with heaven's blue, and we see not the gaping passes, the black crags, the torrents. Rocks gleam with gold, streams flash silver, the mist-white pass is bridged with a bow of violet and rose, for upon it shines the sun of hope. And so Paul toiled at his studies, and worked at his sacks, tents, and sails, with a heart that rose on wings from his present hard life into realms beyond.

He would not be a right tentmaker until he could also buy the hair needed for making *cilicium*, and sell the tents when made. Sometimes he would have to saddle his father's asses, and taking empty sacks accompany him through barley fields, farms, vineyards, and orchards towards the only pass in the dark Taurus mountains by which they could get up to the shepherds' regions beyond. They rode along a Roman road, with black pavement of flat stones, worn into ruts by the wheels of country carts, and the older wheels of war chariots; and these journeys would be taken in spring-time, when the goats were casting their long winter hair. Wherever the red earth had not been tilled and planted with waving grain, the plain was covered with grass and wild flowers. Brilliant beds of poppies and red, yellow, and white tulips were there, and broad tracts of anemones of dazzling scarlet and deep purple, and of pink scented hyacinths.

In these fields flowers sowed themselves, and multiplied their colours, until the scorching sun bent them to the ground. Even

the thickets were sweet with yellow honeysuckle and white jasmine, and the wild vine, creeping from stem to stem, tied the branches together, as we have seen trees laced with ivy in our own woods.

The road went up by the river, crossing and recrossing as they rode towards the lower hills, covered with forests of short oak and belted with blue pines. This steep pass through the mountains is called the Cilician Gates, for it was the only opening by which the people from the countries beyond could come down to the Cilician plain. Long years ago it had been cut out of the rock by invading soldiers, and at parts the gorge was so narrow that a laden camel could hardly pass, while the overhanging crags shut out the blue sky.

The shepherds' region was on the table-land at the top of the pass, where myrtle and wild thyme grew for the goats to feed upon. And there Paul and his companions found the rough shepherds living in low-roofed tents such as he himself made, with their children and their fierce dogs playing there, while the women cooked the food at a fire of sticks and rubbish smouldering at each tent door. Days and weeks would be spent in going from camp to camp, living among these wild shepherds, and bargaining for the goats' hair which they knew he had come up to buy, and would pretend they did not wish to sell.

At other times Paul would go on journeys to the coast towns, to sell haircloth for sails and sailors' clothing, or along the roads and over the low hills that bounded the plain on the east, to sell his cloth to the farmers and country people, or to merchants in the towns who wished it for grain sacks, or to patch their tents or make saddle-bags.

Going from place to place, he saw men of all sorts—merchants, sailors, shepherds, farmers, town people, village people, rich and poor, Jews and foreigners—and learned that there were other cities in the world, and that the worship of idols and the keeping of festivals were not confined to Tarsus. He learned, too, that there were other temples than the temple at Jerusalem, and other priests in white robes who offered sacrifices. In these towns he found that the foreigners disliked the Jews, who traded there, and lived apart, and worshipped in their small, dark synagogues; and that the Jews hated the foreigners, who knelt and made offerings, and burned incense, and played wild music to idols of wood and stone amid green groves.

Leaving Tarsus.

TARSUS : AGED 15-30.

IN his journeys across the wide Cilician plain, and among the hills and villages, Paul would learn the ways of the country people. Sitting at night by the shepherds' ruddy fire that lit up a circle of dusky faces, he would hear their strange stories of fighting and bartering, of cattle-rearing and cheating, of drinking, feasting, robbery. He would spend nights in the rude stone shelters for travellers, and would learn how to take care of his asses, and cook his own food, and fight for his rights in places where the timid and the weak were pushed aside and the strong got what they wanted. He thus was taught to be a traveller, though he did not know how much of his life would be spent in travelling.

The Jewish rabbis said that at fifteen years of age, having learned the Law, the Scriptures, and the principal Traditions, the young student was to enter upon the study of the whole of the Traditions of every shape and kind, old and new, whether connected with the Law of Moses or the rest of the Bible. At that age he was thought to be so well settled in his knowledge of the Law that nothing, however strange or incredible, need be kept back from him. He would believe anything, and so the last door of the rabbis was thrown open, that he might see and know all that they knew.

He had learned a trade, and the time came for a final decision as to his future. If he were only to be a leading Pharisee, he need not leave Tarsus ; but if he wished to be a teacher, he would have to go and live in Jerusalem, as a student under one of the great rabbis of the temple. It would not be without many consultations between his father and the synagogue elders that the decision was at length come to that he should be a teacher. His mother, too, would have her deep and tender thoughts, although her voice would not be heard in these discussions. He was a good scholar, and his old schoolmaster would rejoice to think that Paul was to continue his studies ; and the whole synagogue would be proud that so promising a youth was going up from Tarsus to Jerusalem.

A supper would be given in honour of his going, and much good advice bestowed on him by old men whom he respected, and whose praise would be dear ; for they knew of his progress, and hoped he would do great things. The Jews always helped each other, as they do still, and he would get letters of introduction to friends in Jerusalem ; for they were careful that wherever

a youth went, he should not be without a hand to welcome him at the synagogue, and an eye to watch him. And his talkative friends would say that he would come back to Tarsus a great and learned rabbi, to teach and speak in their own synagogue. And he would think in secret that perhaps he might, and would resolve to try; for his young heart would be overflowing with generous and tender feelings towards the people and the place that had known him all his life.

It is probable that by this time his sister was in Jerusalem with her husband, and that his father and mother would go with him to attend one of the great festivals. But his mother's real purpose would be to see as much as she could of her boy before being separated from him for what she knew would be many long years, with very few breaks between.

They could either sail in a pilgrim boat to distant Cæsarea, on the coast of Palestine, or they could ride by road to Jerusalem; and I prefer to think that they went leisurely by road, travelling with one of the great bands of Jewish pilgrims who were going to the holy city and the golden temple.

Leaving Tarsus would be a great event to the young student and to his mother, who would feel that he was passing out of her control into unknown hands that might mould him into something different from the child she knew. For weeks before the departure she would be busy with her needle, making shirts, tunics, girdles, shawls, kerchiefs, the brightest and the best, for her boy, with a heavy cloak for winter and a thick mat to sleep on. For it was considered a sign of a well-to-do youth if he had several changes of clothing, besides money in his purse. And whose hand could make them better than a mother's, with bright colours, and touches of embroidery at the neck and hem, to make him think of home and her?

Paul had often seen the pilgrim bands starting with shout and song in the sunshine of early morning, but now he was to go also. Others would return within a few months, but he would not return, and might not see again for years the great city with its river and ships, their own street, and the door of his father's house.

With his mother riding on an ass, their tent and mats, pots, bottles, food, clothing, books, and all the requisites of a long journey strapped on more asses, they joined the noisy crowd of Jews in the gathering-place in the fields outside the city wall—many men and youths, and a few women, dressed in their holiday dresses of red and yellow, green and brown, and mingling with friends who had come out to see them start early on the long journey of four hundred miles. They were not sad, for they were

counted fortunate who were able to go, and those to be pitied who were left behind and would not get the rich blessing which they deeply believed came to those who gave up most and who travelled furthest to attend a festival.

The road could be seen winding eastward like a white ribbon across the plain, and songs of joy went up from the band as they went away, waving green branches to those who had come out to see them start. They were a strange company, of old and young, rich and poor; the aged beggar with staff, wallet, and ragged cloak, who thought lightly of a journey; the lightly-clad, black-haired boy, whose rich father rode a horse, taking his son to see the greatest sight in the world; the broad-shouldered merchant with turban of purple and white, who walked beside his well-laden camel with a long knife at his girdle, and who intended to do business in the great city. At a slow pace they streamed on, laughing and talking; for it was like a holiday trip to walk and ride, over hills and valleys and by the blue sea, to Jerusalem.

Crossing by the steep, narrow bridge of the Cydnus, they travelled along the paved Roman road for twenty miles, over which so many armies had passed, and the setting sun would find the pilgrims nearing the town of Adana, on the banks of the broad river Saurus. Their first day's journey would be from one swift river to another, and there they would stop and put up their tents for the night.

Journeying towards Jerusalem.

ADANA : AGED 15-30.

IN every town there was the house for strangers, or inn, as we should call it, though not the least like an inn. It was only a wide, open space surrounded by a thick wall, with arches for shelters; and sometimes there were rooms above, reached by an outside stair, where travellers might sleep who were willing to pay. In the middle of the enclosure was a deep well, with stone water-troughs for the cattle. A low archway in the thick wall, which could be securely closed at night, was the only entrance; and thus travellers were able to get shelter, where they could light a fire, and get water for their horses, and be safe from thieves. If there were few people in, the horses, camels, and asses had their burdens taken off, and were put into the stable arches; but if the place was crowded, the animals lay on the open ground, and the travellers made themselves as comfortable as they could in the

arches and the rooms above. There was no furniture. Every one had to bring his own pots, dishes, and sleeping mat, and make his own fire, for the people were always changing.

While some of the Tarsus pilgrims went thither, and took the best places they could get, others spread out their tents in a small camp close by the city walls for safety. And we can picture Paul unloading the asses, putting up the poles, shaking out the broad tent-cover, and spreading it over them with his father's help, knocking in the tent-pins, and pulling at the ropes until he had stretched the cover tight, while his mother hung up grass mats of yellow and red that were to divide her part at the back from the men's part at the front. Then he would help her to gather sticks and kindle a fire, and pulling out pots and pans, she would soon have the evening meal ready for her husband and her son. And by the time the sun had gone down over the rosy mountains behind Tarsus, and the stars were out in the violet sky, the small family had said their evening prayers together, and with the tent door fastened, and a small oil-lamp burning within, they were preparing to sleep for the night. They knew that before the red dawn had kindled upon the eastern hills they would have to be up and ready to start again.

Paul was going, as Jesus had already gone, away from his home, towards the great city about which they had heard and thought so much. But how different was their going! Jesus, the divine boy, guided by God's presence; Paul, the youth of fifteen, amid a maze of rules, commands, traditions, with darkening mind, looking towards God, and seeing Him afar off.

Jesus had been to the temple. Bordering upon manhood, He was now learning to be a carpenter in the green glen of Galilee, meditating upon those scriptures about which Paul was not expected to think for himself; watching the changing seasons that wrote their lesson among the crimson flowers and over the golden fields, and seeing in the little ones around Him the children of His Father's kingdom. He had not found in the temple what He had been told to expect, although it is likely that, in obedience to His parents' wishes, He frequently returned with them.

Paul was going in the earnest belief that God dwelt there, and that there alone could He be worshipped aright. Jesus knew that it was not so. Paul believed that only the man who knew and kept the whole Law of Moses and all the Traditions could live a good life. Jesus had been told this, and wondered.

They were moving along different ways—Jesus in the way of God, Paul in the ways of men, toiling onward in a daily, ever-increasing effort to reach perfection by obeying countless rules and

customs laid upon him by his teachers. Did they ever meet in Jerusalem and in the temple? Had they but met and spoken, how great and sudden might have been the change in Paul! But it would not come until he had felt the useless bitterness of his ever-increasing study in the barren years to come.

Through the Syrian Gates.

SYRIA : AGED 15-30.

A BREAKFAST of sour milk and thin scones, eggs, parched corn, fruit and oil, would be what Paul would get as the tent was being hurriedly taken down in the grey dark, and the things gathered together and strapped upon the asses. And soon the pilgrims were passing over the long stone bridge that crosses the broad river Saurus, with the rising sun gleaming on the high mountains in front of them. Their day's journey was again across wide plains green with grass, spotted with the flaming heads of poppies and marigolds, and ruddy brown where the fields were surrounded with prickly hedges so thick that bullocks could not break through.

As the day advanced they went through open valleys among low hills, where herds of brown deer bounded lightly up the rocks far out of reach. At midday they stopped to take food, and rest for an hour or two in the shade of trees. In the afternoon they moved on again, and their second day's journey would end at a town on a river broader and deeper than the last, and again the tent was put up and the fire kindled for the night.

And in this manner, day after day, the band of pilgrims moved slowly on a road paved with worn stones; for the armies of many nations had marched along it—Egyptians, Macedonians, Persians, Syrians, Greeks, Romans—and in years to come the all-conquering Turks would pass also. It was the great highway between the countries of the East and the West, and the camels of the merchants were coming and going along it in summer and in winter, and bands of soldiers with shining armour, and gangs of weary, footsore slaves, with their cruel drivers.

But there were others who knew this road—the robbers, who lived in caves among the hills, and who rushed down upon defenceless travellers to rob them and make off to the hills again. Nor was it safe to travel by night; for wolves and hyenas were common, and even lions and tigers were known to attack travellers when

they were too few to scare them off. And so the pilgrims went in bands, and sometimes had to pay tribesmen who loved fighting to come with them and protect them from the robbers. This band would be so large that they had little to fear from either wild beasts or robbers, and their numbers increased each day by the addition of more Jews from the towns through which they passed, and their joyful marching songs were heard ever louder in the valleys as they went.

The fourth day would find them close to the sea-shore, as they went round the large bay at the end of the blue Mediterranean, and then they turned their faces towards Palestine and Jerusalem. There were high mountains in front of them, reaching from the edge of the sea far inland, and they had to climb by a winding road that brought them into a narrow and difficult pass called the Syrian Gates, which marked the boundary between their province of Cilicia and the province of Syria. And they looked back across the bay of sea and the wide plain towards the trees and the white houses of Tarsus, at the foot of the dark mountains. Armies had poured into Syria through this deep pass, and as the pilgrims came out of it, Paul would be for the first time on the other side of the mountains which had been the boundary of the world of his childhood.

They passed the great and ancient city of Antioch upon the hill, the capital of Syria, with its massive walls to keep it safe on all sides from attack. And there Paul would see the temples, theatres, and baths of the foreigners shining in white marble, and more splendid than any in Tarsus. They would find many Jews there, for had not Herod the Great of Jerusalem paved the principal street and lined it with pillars? And they saw its seaport of Seleucia filled with ships, whose masts and flags were crowded closer than in the river harbour at Tarsus.

First Sight of Palestine.

SYRIA : AGED 15-30.

THE pilgrims from Tarsus could continue their journey by the winding caravan road along the sea-shore after leaving Antioch, or go up into the hill country and along the road by Damascus. It is probable that they would go by Damascus, and so through the heart of their own beloved country of Palestine, among scenes made familiar and dear to them by constant reading

of the Bible. Paul's knowledge was fresh and his expectation keen, and his father would point out mountains and hills, valleys, woods, and streams, whose names called up vivid pictures from the history of their people.

After leaving Damascus, they would pass through the beautifully-wooded hill country of Bashan, and from the higher ground Paul's father would point out the snowy cap of Hermon, like a white cloud in the sky, and tell him that it was the high mountain of which he had often heard, and that he was now in the land of his fathers. He would tell him that the part where they stood belonged to the tribe of Naphtali, and that as far as he could see over the hills to the south was the promised land of Moses. He would show him the Lebanon ranges spreading out from Mount Hermon, and tell him that there grew the forests of mighty cedars. And Paul would call to mind verses of the Psalms, and perhaps repeat them as they gazed.

He shall grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

The hills are covered with shadows,

And the boughs are goodly cedars,

Sending branches into the sea, and roots into the river.

The trees of God are full of sap ;

The cedars of Lebanon, which He planted :

There the birds make their nests,

The stork has her home in the branches.

The view of the country from Bashan along the valley of the Jordan is very extensive, and as his father pointed across to the hills and vales of the Galileans, he would tell him that amid its lonely caves and passes there were men whom the Romans could not conquer, and who kept up the hope that one day they would be able to drive them out of the land. If he mentioned Nazareth, it would not be to speak of Jesus the carpenter, for He was not known beyond the hills round His village.

As his eye roamed over the land of his race, his father's mind would be filled with strange thoughts. There was no longer any king. Herod the Great was the last Jewish king, but he only reigned by leave of the Roman emperor. When he died, about twenty years before, the country was divided amongst his sons Archelaus, Philip, and Antipas, who, while calling themselves kings, were only Roman governors. Archelaus was over Judea and Samaria, and in two years' time he had offended the Roman emperor, and was banished to France ; and Quirinus, a Roman soldier, was made governor in his place, who caused much trouble by ordering the people to be counted and taxed. The old quarrel

between Judeans and Samaritans had broken out again, and some spiteful Samaritans had defiled the Jerusalem temple by scattering dead men's bones in the courts, which was a terrible offence; and quite recently the Emperor Augustus had died, who was a friend of the Jews, and Tiberius was now reigning, with Annius Rufus as Roman governor in Jerusalem. And Paul's father would tell him that their country was in a very unhappy state, and that the wild spirits were hoping that deliverance from the Romans was at hand, although the truth was that they were soon to be oppressed more heavily than ever.

Green Vales and Wooded Hills.

BASHAN : AGED 15—30.

CONTINUING their joyful journey towards Jerusalem, the pilgrims from Tarsus would go down from the highlands of Bashan towards the river Jordan; and Paul's father would point to the Lake of Gennesaret deep down among bare hills, with grass and trees round its uneven shores, and crowds of fishing-boats upon its blue waters. And he would tell him of the fights that had taken place there, and of Tiberias and Cæsarea, the Roman cities beside it; and that the Jordan, which they would cross, was the river through which Joshua led the children of Israel, into a land flowing with milk and honey, as Moses said.

On their way through the country, his eyes would rest upon the round shape of Mount Tabor, green to the top with small oak trees; and he would hear that there Barak and Deborah had gathered ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun, and coming down, had defeated Sisera, the Canaanite, with his chariots of iron. Beyond it was the broad plain of Esdraelon, scored with roads, and dotted with white villages amid fields of grain; and his father would tell him of the battles that had been fought among these fields, and would point out the mountain of Gilboa, where his great namesake, King Saul, had placed his sword-handle upon the ground and pierced his heart, because he had lost the fight.

The pilgrims would not go through the beautiful country of the Samaritans, because the feud between them and the Jews was so bitter that many who tried to go to the festivals at Jerusalem were attacked; and so they would keep on the other side of the Jordan. But he would look across to the wide vale of Shechem, where Jacob and his sons stopped for four years on the way to his father Isaac at Hebron, and would hear that Jacob's well was

there, and Joseph's tomb. The rocky Mount Gerizim would be pointed out to him as the hated spot where the Samaritans built a temple to rival the golden temple at Jerusalem, but that it was now in ruins. And as the pilgrims crossed the deep and wooded vale of the Jabbok, and went through the beautiful pasture-lands of Gilead, the place would be pointed out where Jacob wrestled all night.

Up among the blue haze of the hills on the other side of the Jordan, he would be told, was the stony plain of Bethel, where Jacob dreamed he saw angels coming and going as on a ladder between earth and heaven, and had set up a stone and promised to serve God all his life.

Coming down from the hills of Gilead, they approached the fords of the Jordan, and saw upon the other side the rich plain of Jericho; and Paul would be told that this was the spot where, a thousand years before, the Jews had first crossed into the promised land. With cries of joy the pilgrims would hasten into the river, as they do still, and bathe and wash as if the water were doing them some strange and wonderful good. And Paul would bathe for the first time in the Jordan, and feel that the water, shaded from the sun in its deep gorge, was very cold indeed.

They were now in the land of his own tribe of Benjamin, where every hill and valley, stream and town, had some story dear to his father's heart. This strong walled city of Jericho, with trees growing in its streets—was not this the town whose walls fell at the blast of Joshua's trumpets? And Gilgal—did not the people come out hither to bring King David back in triumph to his palace in Jerusalem? Was it not at Ramah that the great prophet Samuel lived and taught his young men? Was not Saul crowned at Mizpah? And yonder hill of white limestone—was it not there that six hundred men of Paul's own tribe defended themselves for four months? Every field, stone, and tree was dear, for it was woven into a history of imperishable religion and stirring deeds which he had learned from his childhood, and the land on every side of him was peopled, to his eyes, with the figures of heroes.

The Vision of Jerusalem.

JERICHO: AGED 15-30.

LEAVING the beautiful town of Jericho, a valley lay before them which got more narrow and steep, until it became a gorge with high rocks on each side. They were climbing into

the hills of Judea ; and while it was hard and dangerous, and a favourite place for robbers, the pilgrims were joyful because they would come out upon the Mount of Olives, beyond which was Jerusalem !

When they approached the top of the hill, Paul's father would tell him to prepare for the most beautiful sight in the whole world ; and his feelings of love for his country and enthusiasm for his religion were such that he would not have been amazed if, instead of walls of stone, he were to see a city in the skies, with foundations of sparkling crystal and towers of shining gold. A few steps more and he was on the crest of the hill, and the city rose in splendour before him. Built upon a lower hill, its walls, towers, terraces, palaces, streets were spread out like a map, upon which he looked across a deep glen. With glowing eyes he would turn to his father, and ask if yonder roof, plated with gold and encircled with a crown of gold spikes, was not the roof of the holy temple.

The Mount of Olives was not high, and soon the pilgrims were winding down into the Kedron valley, while Paul gazed on palace, tower, and streets crowded with moving people, and on the temple buildings that rose court above court, until his eyes rested again upon the awful mystery of the small square building with roof of shining gold that stood highest of all ; for to him it was so sacred that to say one word against it was to deserve death.

And as he gazed, the prayers for the temple which he had learned in Tarsus, and the descriptions which he knew by heart, would pass through his mind, and he would think that all he had heard and all he had read fell far short of the glorious vision. He was a Jewish youth, trained by the strictest of fathers, and would have thought it wicked not to think that the sight was far beyond what words could picture or heart desire. For such is the influence of teachers, that when they are trusted wholly, in the first blaze of vision, in deep earnest, the youth sees what he is told to see, and feels what he is told to feel. Later on he will begin to see and feel for himself, but not yet.

Going down the path towards the city, Paul sang with the pilgrims the psalms with which they had greeted the first sight of the temple as they came over the hill,—

Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion,
The joy of the whole earth ;
On the north side is the city of the great King.

And as the psalm changed, amid fresh waving of green branches he sang with his young companions,—

Walk about Zion, go round about her :
 Count the towers, and mark the walls ;
 Consider the palaces, and tell it to your children.
 For the Lord is our God for ever and ever.

Not many years before, Jesus, the holy boy of Galilee, had come over the same ridge of Olivet singing the same psalms, and waving a green branch, His young mother with Him, and Joseph also, His dark eyes glowing as He looked upon the city, His heart filled with hopes of what He would find in yonder temple. But He did not find what He sought. His father's house was not the house of prayer ; and when He left the city a few weeks later, it was with a wondering mind.

But in the sights before him Paul saw all that he had been told, and in the temple itself he would find all that had been said. He would not leave the city in a few weeks with a mind unsatisfied, for it would be his home for years to come, and the temple his chief resort.

Crowds in the Streets.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15-30.

THE crowds who came to Jerusalem at the Passover festival were so great that the city could not hold them, and they had to put up tents and live in camps outside. The pilgrims from Tarsus would choose a camping-place on the slopes of Olivet, opposite to the temple, or on the level ground close to the walls. If Paul's sister and her husband were living there, he would go to them ; for at such a time it was the custom to take in as many as the house could hold. The streets of the city and the Kedron valley were thronged with people, and as he crossed over the bridge towards the city gate, he would see deep down the white stream which King David loved.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
 The holy place of the tent of the Most High.

And as he walked with his father through the low archway in the massive city walls, and up the narrow, crowded streets, and saw Jews there from Egypt and Asia, Africa and Greece, he would remember the words of the psalm,—

Our feet are standing within thy gates,
 O Jerusalem ! Thou art built close together as a city,
 Whither the tribes go up to give thanks to God.

A blessing on Jerusalem : may they prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls, prosperity within thy palaces.

And this is part of the marching song which they had sung upon their long journey :—

As the deer pants after the water brooks,
So thirsts my soul for Thee, O God.

I went with the throng, in a band with them,

With songs of joy and praise, a multitude keeping holiday.

Paul would be early awake on his first morning in Jerusalem, and would listen for the three blasts from the priests' silver trumpets, borne over the temple walls on Mount Moriah, proclaiming to the city that a new day of worship had begun. Then the temple gates, that took twenty men to move them, were being slowly opened, and the morning sacrifice would soon burn upon the great white altar of rough stones in the priests' court. With his face turned towards the temple, and perhaps with his eyes resting upon its roof of gold, Paul would say his morning prayers with a feeling of nearness that he had never felt in far-away Tarsus. Going out with his father through the narrow streets, his step would be light and his heart joyful; for was it not written,—

I was glad when they said, Let us go up to God's house.

My soul longs and faints for the temple courts :

My heart sings for joy to the living God.

The sparrow has found a house, the swallow a nest

Where she may rear her young, by Thy altars, O God !

They are blessed who live there : they ever praise Thee.

I would rather keep a door in the temple of God,

Than dwell in tents of wickedness ?

Following the crowd of worshippers, all dressed in bright clothes, Paul climbed the steep street bringing them to the great white steps that led up to the marble porch of coloured pillars under a richly-ornamented roof, where they were shaded from the sun as they walked. His eyes looked out upon the first great court, paved with coloured stones, and thronged with worshippers from all countries ; for many who were not Jews were allowed to come in if they believed in God. But noisy butchers were there with sheep and cattle for sale, bird-sellers with willow cages, money-changers with tables of coins, there to buy and sell, bargain and cheat. The sun shone upon the people as they moved to and fro ; for the court was open to the blue sky, and surrounded on three sides with more pillars, roofed over to make shaded porches from the heat or rain.

In the Temple Courts.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

FOR the first time in his life, Paul stood with naked feet upon the coloured pavement of the temple. He had never been in such a crowd, or seen such beautiful pillars, such numbers of white-robed priests, such flocks, herds, cages of birds, heaps of money. Above were more white steps and another terrace of pillars, and higher still the holy place, with its roof and spikes of gold, and its blue curtain which none but the priests might see.

Going towards these steps, they came to a low wall, about a man's height, of ornamented marble, with openings in it; and before going through, they paused to read these words, cut in Greek and in Latin upon the small pillars on each side: "No foreigner must go past this, on pain of death." He little dreamt, as he went through, that one day his life would be in danger at that very spot.

Going up the steps and through the pillars above, they entered the second court, looking, as they passed, at the famous Beautiful Gate of bright brass from Corinth. They were then in the women's court, open to the blue skies; but beyond this his mother could not go.

Crossing this court, he went up more steps, and through more beautiful pillars, and the Nicanor Gate, of silver and gold, and into the court of the men and priests. There stood the great white altar of rough stones that had never been touched with hammer or chisel, from which a stream of grey smoke rose into the air from the fire that was never allowed to go out. And as they walked about, he saw the marble tables on which the sheep were killed, the gold and silver bowls to catch their blood, the bath like a flower, resting on twelve brass lions, and so large that it was called a sea, for the priests to wash in.

But there was a higher terrace still, which filled the youth with such dread and awe that he hardly dared lift his eyes to it. This was the shining holy place, with great stones covered with gold, and white marble pillars holding up the roof of gold. Covering a door of gold was the outer curtain, woven of blue, scarlet, purple, and white, behind which were things so holy to the mind of the youthful Paul that he would have feared to look on them. His heart throbbed as he knelt by his father's side in prayer to the great unseen God, who, he believed, dwelt within that veil; and he would pay little heed to his father when he

pointed out the hall of hewn stones at the corner of the court, where the rabbis taught their students.

Walking with naked feet across the hot, coloured pavement, dressed in the pure white dress and striped kerchief of a young Pharisee, his mother would see from his grave face, when he returned, that he had been deeply moved by what he had seen, but which she would never see. Her boy had passed beyond her. Other minds would mould the young life that was so dear—the minds of those silent priests who served in their white robes of seeming purity in the court above.

Meeting friends who had come up with them from Tarsus, they would go about, while his father showed him the number of the pillars, the size of the stones, the beams made of the cedars from Lebanon, the houses where the priests lived, and the Levites who helped the priests, and the guards who were like soldiers. There, too, were the storerooms for the clothing, food, lamps, candles, oil, wine, salt, and many other things which were used every day. And he would learn that the temple had taken forty years to build, and was not finished yet. The treasury, he would be told, was considered the safest place in the whole country to keep money and jewels, and that in it were stored rich gifts from wealthy Jews in past years, presents of gold dishes from foreign princes, and heaps of money sent from Jews in all parts of the world. And he would see the boxes at the doors, with their trumpet-shaped mouths, into which the people cast handfuls of money; and he too would throw in his first gift, and hear the coins go clattering down upon the heap inside.

A Day in the Temple.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15—30.

AS the morning advanced the crowds in the temple courts did not grow any less. Fresh people were coming in as others went out, and the white-robed priests were busy receiving gifts, and doing the many services required by their religious law. When left to himself, it would not be the country people making their gifts of lambs and money, or the young mothers bringing their baby boys to be blessed, that would attract him most, but the pillared porches at the doors, and the shaded cloisters, where the people were listening to the rabbis. Standing by a pillar, he would listen for a time, and move on to hear another speak.

Sometimes the voice was full and strong, reaching out into the sunny court; and sometimes weak and trembling, the voice of an old, white-haired man: and the people placed their hands to their ears to catch what was said, for these were the great temple rabbis.

Standing on tiptoe, he could see the old men sitting on a raised stone bench, with their followers in a circle at their feet, listening in silence. They were preaching after their own way to the passers-by, in a sing-song voice which carries furthest. They were not saying anything new—that was forbidden—but repeating what the great rabbis of the past had said about the Law and the Traditions, and calling upon the people to pay heed to the words of wisdom.

We can see the Tarsus youth, with a bright kerchief shading his clear grey eyes, as he hovers about the outskirts of these groups, not going too deep, so that he may get easily away, and ever hearing much the same things as he had been taught at Tarsus. He goes on and on till he has gone round the three sides of the great court, listening, and never doubting, but somewhat bewildered with the floods of learning possessed by the rabbis.

Not many years ago, the holy boy of Galilee, in holiday tunic, with ruddy cheeks and bright brown hair, had come with His parents to the Passover festival, and had left them, to mingle with these crowds. Attracted by the speakers, He had gone from rabbi to rabbi among these pillars and arches, seeking what He could not find, listening for what He did not hear. For three days He went, perplexed and anxious; for He could not believe what He heard, and was grieved that they should tell the people what was not true. He pressed forward to the front to ask a question of the aged teacher—a simple question which he could not answer. And as He was asking more questions He saw His mother's face looking at Him with joy and anxiety, and went over to her, and left the golden temple with feelings of wonder and dislike that would grow and flower in the purity of His life.

Jesus was a young man now, working as a carpenter in Galilee; but before many years would pass His voice would be heard among these pillars, and ringing out over the thousands in that great court. It is not likely that Paul would hear of the Galilean boy who astonished the rabbis with His simple questions and wise answers. Unlike Him, Paul had no questions to ask, no burning astonishment to force him forward to the inner circle. His doubts were as yet afar off, but one day they would spring up in alarm, startled by the words of the Carpenter of Nazareth, that would

pierce like flame and burn like fire. To-day he worshipped at the feet of those who spoke not the words of God, but the sayings of men, and his parents would not wonder if he lingered long among the listening crowds.

Not until the crimson shades of evening had deepened on the roof of gold, not until the warning trumpets of the priests had proclaimed the closing one after another of the great temple gates, would Paul withdraw from those pillars and arches, that were to him the very house of God.

The Old Rabbi Gamaliel.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15—30.

THE sun set in crimson curtains over the mountains of Samaria, and Paul had spent his first long day in the temple. He had seen the grey smoke streaming upward from the morning sacrifice, and streaming again at the evening, ere the clouds were ruddy. From the opening to the closing of the golden gates the day seemed but an hour, and the longing of his heart was satisfied. Hitherto he had sung of the temple courts, but that day his feet had stood within them. Hitherto he had recited about the crowds that gathered there, but that day he had mingled with them. Hitherto he had worshipped in far-off Tarsus, with his face turned towards the temple; that day he had worshipped in it. And as he walked home his mind was in a whirl of excitement, his heart filled with exquisite joy.

Day after day he would go up to Mount Moriah in the early morning sunshine, to gaze and wonder and worship, and return in the evening as the shadows of the bronze palm trees were lengthening over the land, impressed ever more deeply with the splendour and mystery of the holy place. He had come from far-distant Tarsus to live as a student under the shadow of these white walls, to worship and to learn, so that in after years he might be able to say that he knew and loved every stone of its buildings, and was familiar with all that went on within its walls. There is no limit to youthful enthusiasm. In these years all seems possible, and we lay our golden pathways into the future, along which we shall travel with the ease of conquerors. One youth sees himself throned as a genius of music, another as a commander of men, another as a master of science, another as rich beyond dreams; and Paul saw himself a rabbi, sitting on a coloured

mat amid the pillars of a temple porch, with crowds listening to words drawn from all the ages, and wondering at his marvellous knowledge. But sometimes a life is crossed by another that changes its whole course, and so it would be with him.

There were many rabbis in Jerusalem from whom to choose his teacher, but few of their names have come down to us. His father would seek for a strict Pharisee, who would teach his son the rules and beliefs of Phariseism, and warn him against the Sadducees; and the rabbi chosen was called Gamaliel, a learned doctor of the law, of about middle age, so highly thought of by the people that he was called a rabban. He was the son of Rabbi Simeon, and the grandson of the most learned Rabbi Hillel, famous for his kind and charitable mind—a mind which Gamaliel seems to have inherited.

Some of the sayings of the Rabbi Hillel are very beautiful. This is one: "What you yourself dislike, do not to your neighbour; for this is the whole law, and everything else is only its application." Here is another: "He who knows the law has gained the life to come."

Gamaliel was a strict Pharisee, but he was not unkind. A good many years after this, when Peter was brought before the Sanhedrim for speaking about Jesus, he was for letting him speak, as he might have a message from God. It is said that this gentle teacher, so unlike those by whom he was surrounded, lived to a great age; so that he must have had the grief of sitting in the Sanhedrim that tried Paul, his own student, for breaking through the very rules and laws which he had taught him.

Slaying the White Lambs.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15—30.

RABBI GAMALIEL belonged to the broad-minded rabbis who followed what Rabbi Hillel had taught; but there were others, narrow and severe, who followed the severe teaching of Rabbi Shammai, also long since dead. He was called the Binder, because of the many rules which he made for his followers; while the kindly Hillel was called the Looser.

Old Rabbi Hillel, the founder of Gamaliel's teaching, was a porter who carried burdens; and we are told of him that when a little boy he was so poor that one wintry day he had no money to pay the very small coin that each schoolboy had to bring to

the schoolmaster. But instead of going home, he climbed up to the window, which of course had no glass, so that he could hear what was being said, and sat there listening and shivering—for snow was falling—until the teacher happened to look up, and saw the little fellow, and took him in and warmed him by the fire.

We can imagine the white-haired Gamaliel listening with a pleased smile while Paul's father told him that his bright-eyed son was a very good lad, and had been the best scholar at the synagogue school at Tarsus, and that he wished him to be one of his students and learn to be a teacher. And Paul would stand with his grey eyes fixed upon the grave face of the old rabbi in flowing robes and snow-white turban, whose words of instruction in years to come were to be as sacred to him as the Bible itself.

During the days which preceded the real commencement of the Passover festival, Paul would hear the rabbis telling the people that it was the duty of every Jew, and especially of those who lived within fifteen miles of Jerusalem, to come every year to this festival, and that women and children might come, and that they must come joyfully, dressed in their best clothes, and with presents in their hands. He would hear them say that all dead bodies should be buried, and all gravestones whitewashed a month before, so that no pilgrim might touch them, as that would make them impure, and unfit to attend; and that all the roads and bridges should be mended for the pilgrims to pass over. He would hear also that all shepherds and farmers must tithe their sheep and cattle—that is, make them pass through a gate, and touch every tenth one with a stick dipped in red paint, as a mark that it was to go to the priests.

He would also hear that it was the duty of all persons who had been near a dead body, or had had a baby, or had been cured of leprosy, to come to the temple fourteen days before, and tell the priests, and offer sacrifices, and wash and bathe, and give gifts, before they would be declared clean, and allowed to mingle with the people in the open courts; for no one who was what was called Levitically unclean must go into the temple. And he would be reminded again and again of the old story of the first Passover in Egypt; and some rabbis would say that the coming of spring, with its buds and flowers, was itself a time for rejoicing, when the rains of God and His sunshine had caused the grain to sprout through the brown earth, and the green leaves to flutter on the trees. And some of the little boys in the temple would feel more interest in these than in what had happened to the Israelites in Egypt so very long ago.

The festival was held at the full moon, and as the day approached, Paul saw such crowds of people in the city, and camped outside the walls, and on the side of Olivet, that he wondered how they could all get into the temple; while the flocks of sheep and herds of cattle were more than he could count.

On Passover eve he went to the temple with his father to have their little white lamb examined by the priest, and saw the pillars and walls gaily hung with carpets, rugs, and bright-coloured curtains; and when the evening sun was setting over the sea, he stood in the priests' court, amid a vast throng of people, with the gates shut, patiently waiting for the time between the sun-down and the dark. At length the silver trumpets sounded, and glittering knives were raised to kill the thousands of lambs which the men had brought in on their shoulders; while the priests caught the blood in bowls of silver and gold, and handed it from one to another in a long row towards the great altar, at the foot of which it was poured in a red stream. This was thought to be pleasing to God, but we think it horrible and revolting. Above the noise of the bleating lambs rose the psalm of the Levite choir singing on the white steps of the women's court, while at every pause the people answered in loud shouts, "Praised be the Lord!"

The lambs were quickly skinned and hung up on golden hooks and cut to pieces, the priests keeping a part to burn upon the altar, and giving the rest back to the men to take home for their Passover supper. Coming out of the court, he saw thousands crowding to get in, and it was at once filled by a second throng with lambs to kill; for the work of killing and singing went on until the last man had shouldered his lamb, to go down to the city and roast and eat it with his wife and children. And as there were about two hundred and fifty thousand lambs killed on that evening, the marble floor of the temple court would require a good deal of water to cleanse it of the horrid stains.

Paul did not think the slaying horrid or like the temples of idols, but rejoiced as he ate his first Passover supper in Jerusalem; and his mother would be glad that he had been in the temple on the great Passover eve, to see what no woman was allowed to see. It was a scene which only men could endure and priests maintain; for it was a source of great gain to the ten thousand priests and Levites who served there. But there were men who thought it barbarous and degrading, and believed that instead of heaping the great altar with the flesh of beasts, a better offering to God would be the humble service of a life spent in faithfully doing His will. And the day was coming when

Jesus would say this in these temple courts, and at that very festival.

There was no sleep for Paul that night, for the moonlit streets were filled with people coming from and going to the temple. As soon as the courts were cleansed of the blood, the gates were opened again, and lamps lit, for the people to come up and give gifts to the priests, in the joy and fullness of their hearts; and their gifts were called thank-offerings.

The temple was crowded all night long, and the stars looked down upon slaughter, blood, and fire in the open courts. The temple lamps were dim and the candles thick with smoke when the yellow dawn came over the mountains of Moab, but the work of slaying, burning, feasting was going on still; for it was kept up all the next day, so that all the people might have opportunity to offer sacrifices and give gifts—a work which the priests did not care to shorten.

Cutting the First Sheaf.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15—30.

YOU may wonder how the temple was kept clean when so many lambs and bullocks were being killed; but on that night there would be a thousand priests and Levites and servants at work. They had a plentiful supply of water also, brought from the distant hills of Hebron by King Solomon's water-course, to wash the pavements clean, and send the scourings down into the brook Kedron.

After the Passover came the seven days of unleavened bread; for the cakes which the Israelites ate when they fled out of Egypt had no leaven in them, because they had no time to bake them rightly. The rabbis were now so particular, that the women had to grind the flour in a covered mill, and bring the water in a covered dish, lest any leaven might blow in; and the iron pan had to be heated red-hot, to make sure that it was pure, before they might bake with it. The cakes must be served on new dishes, and they who ate them must first cut their hair and nails and take a bath. And Paul would do all this, for the rabbis had said it must be done. And so you see what trouble the rabbis sought to put the people to, all over such a simple matter as baking and eating a small, thin cake; but I very much doubt if the people did as they were told.

Paul saw the cutting of the first barley sheaf, when the elders of the Sanhedrim went across the Kedron bridge in the evening, with sickles in their hands and willow baskets on their arms, to the yellow barley-field beyond, where they stood until the red sun had sunk behind the western hills. Turning to the people, they asked,—

“Has the sun gone down?”

“Yes,” was the reply.

“Into this basket?” holding up a white willow basket.

“Yes,” the people shouted.

“On this Sabbath day?”

“Yes,” was again the loud answer.

“Shall I reap?” holding up the sickle.

“Yes,” came louder than ever.

Going over to three bundles of barley that had been tied neatly together, the old men cut them so that they fell into three white baskets. With shouts and songs of joy Paul saw them walking back into the city and up to the temple, where the grain was threshed and ground till the flour was fine enough, and then it was baked with oil in a gold dish.

This is the strange way it was presented next day. It was put into a gold dish, and frankincense scattered over it; then a man held it up to the priest at the altar, who caught his hands and waved the dish about before taking it and putting a handful upon the fire. And that was called a wave-offering. It would have been nicer to have shaken out the sheaf upon the altar, and made a blaze that would have lighted up the court for a few seconds. It was all very solemn to Paul, because the rabbis said it must be done in that strange way; but if you had asked him what good it would do, I am sure he could not have told you. He could tell you, however, that the people were not allowed to bake with new flour until that offering had been made; and then the streets of the city echoed at once with the cheerful cries of the sellers of cakes and loaves, made out of that year's barley, which they must have had ready, and only waiting for a signal from the temple.

The next three days were spent by the country people in buying and selling in the bazaars; and some of the shopkeepers thought it was the best time of the whole, for then they made money.

The Morning Sacrifice.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15-30.

THERE were twenty thousand priests, and as many more Levites, servants, and temple soldiers who lived in and near Jerusalem. The Levites were the singers, musicians, gatekeepers, guards, and officers, and they and the priests were divided into twenty-four bands, with a chief priest over each; and as they had only to serve two weeks in each year, they were not overworked, except at the great festivals, when all had to be there.

Every night, when the people had gone out of the temple, and the outer gates were locked, the priests met, and the keys were given to those who were to watch that night. After the pavements and dishes were cleansed and ready for next day, the inner doors were locked, and the keys hidden under a marble slab, on which a priest slept, kissing it before he lay down. Then the watch of priests, Levites, and townsmen was set upon the high walls and in hiding-places below, to sit in perfect quiet, for they had to say that not a sound had broken the silence of the vast place.

Each morning, just before the dawn, the captain and priests took the keys, and with torches examined every door, to see that nothing had been touched. While they were doing this, other priests were bathing, dressing, and drawing lots for who was to be the chief priest of the day, for that was the only way to prevent them quarrelling over it. Three trumpet blasts gave the signal for the singers, musicians, and priests to go to their places, while the watchers on the walls looked to the east, and the chief priest went up the sloping pavement to the great whitewashed altar with the bright-red line round it, to stir up the smouldering fire, which was never allowed to go out. Not far from him was the sea of brass, that had been filled by machinery.

A voice came down from the dusk of one of the towers,—

“The morning already shines.”

“Is the sky lit up as far as Hebron?” was the question from the court below.

“The whole sky is lit up as far as Hebron,” was the reply.

A lamb was led out and tied to a gold ring of the altar, and the order was given to open the outside gates, and three blasts from the trumpeters were heard over in the city. Then the inner gates were opened, the lamb killed, its blood sprinkled on the sides of the white altar, and its body burned on the top, and people could enter the temple.

Then Paul saw priests going up the white marble steps to the holy place above, that shone with blocks of gold, and disappear behind the beautiful curtain, to trim the lamps of the candlestick and the little altar fire, and come out again, walking backwards. Others, carrying a silver pan of incense and a gold pan of coal, went up, and he heard a great gong sounding for the priests and the people to gather. At a sign from the chief priest the people knelt down, with hands spread out, upon the coloured pavement, their heads bowed in prayer, while the priests went in behind the veil and threw incense on red coals until clouds of sweet-smelling smoke filled the holy place. Again they came out backwards on the top of the steps, lifting up their hands as the curtain fell into its place, and saying,—

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.

A hoarse murmur rose from the court below, of thousands of voices saying together,—

Blessed be the God of Israel
For ever and ever.

Priests went up to the great altar with sacrifices of flesh and bread, to be burned in the large fire of wood; and of wine, which they poured into a silver funnel to run into a tank below. What became of it Paul did not know; but if it were wise to save the wine, it would have been wise also to have saved the flesh and bread, for there were many poor persons in the city to whom it would have been a welcome gift.

Then came the temple music and singing, with processions and responses. The priests stood beside the great altar, with silver trumpets in their hands, and blowing them all together, they marched towards others who beat cymbals. The choir of Levites and sweet-voiced boys, standing on the white steps with their backs to the people, began the psalm for the day, accompanied by flutes, pipes, throbbing harps, psalteries, tambourines, bells, hand-drums, and other strange instruments, making a loud noise which we would not think very sweet or harmonious. Three blasts on the silver trumpets marked the end of each part, and then all the people bowed down and worshipped, with their faces towards the holy place; and this is part of what they sang:—

Sing aloud to God our strength, and make a joyful noise.
Sing the psalm; strike the cymbal, harp, and psaltery.
Blow up the trumpet to the new moon.
It is a law for Israel, and a command of God.

A long blast upon the trumpets told that the morning service was over, which had lasted from an hour before the dawn till two hours after.

What boy would not be carried away by such a service, and such multitudes joining in it? Trained to worship the very stones of the place, Paul would stand thrilled with what was going on around him; and when the time came for silent prayer, among all the thousands kneeling there not one would utter one of deeper earnestness than the unknown youth from Tarsus.

Taking down the Striped Tents.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

WHEN Paul went to the evening sacrifice in the temple, the service ended just as the red sun went down over the bare Judean hills. The priests took off their soiled white robes, putting sandals on their bare feet, and sitting down to a supper, while bands of fresh priests came in to take their places.

They feasted and talked together in their well-lit chambers, and Paul went down into the dark streets of the crowded city, so full of toil, poverty, and misery, thinking how small and wicked was the life of a common man compared with that of a priest up in yonder golden temple, who seemed to stand so much nearer to God. For he had yet to learn that the poorest beggar who lifts his eyes to our Father in heaven draws as near Him as the priest who goes behind the great blue curtain, and who would order any man to be slain who tried to follow.

While Paul slept, the silent temple was watched by armed and sleepless men, standing at twenty-four fixed places; and four times in the night the captain went round, and every watcher had to rise and answer. And woe betide the man who was found asleep! for he would be wakened by his thin linen robe being set on fire with a torch, or else with blows from a cudgel.

The seventh day of the Passover festival was kept as a strict Sabbath, and the people were commanded to do no work; but it was not kept so in the temple. They made one rule for the people and another for themselves; but the day was coming when the people would see through this, and refuse to obey.

On that evening two priests with great solemnity went in behind the beautiful blue curtain, bearing new cakes of shewbread, to place upon the golden table in front of the inner curtain,

and to bring the old cakes away, to be divided amongst certain of the priests, who were highly favoured in being allowed to eat it.

Next day Paul's first great festival in Jerusalem came to an end; and because it was the last day, the people were told not to come to the temple empty-handed, which meant that they were to bring more money, and fling it into the brass trumpets, for the good of the services and the priests. And as he left the temple courts, he felt as if the golden glory of the setting sun upon the hills was as nothing to the glory of that temple, for which he would gladly lay down his life. Before him lay, not an instant of splendid heroism, but years of drudgery, slowly heaping up a mountain of sand to crumble under his feet. The crowds in the city streets grew less as band after band of the pilgrims camped outside took down their tents of black, and brown, and striped yellow, and green. Packing up their pots and pans, their bags of food and clothing, and tying their bundles of tent poles and covers on the asses' backs, he saw them slowly winding up the side of Olivet, singing as they went, and waving branches as they disappeared on their long march back to the villages of Palestine and the cities of far-distant Asia. His father and mother would leave with the Tarsus pilgrims, and he would go out a part of the way with them; and after fond kisses from his weeping mother, and a solemn blessing from his father, he would turn, with a lump in his throat and tears in his eyes, to walk back again to the city of his dreams, which was to be his home for years, and would prove a stern city for him.

Paul and the other students would have to be present every day at the morning and evening sacrifices, and each dawn would find him waiting for the opening of the temple doors. After the service he would hasten with his young companions through the pillars to the winding stair in the corner of the priests' court leading up to the hall of stones, with its row of windows looking out into the court below. There he would sit among the followers of Gamaliel—some younger than himself, others old and with grey hair, who had come to listen and learn. His studies were not like those of our colleges, for they largely consisted in listening to the Rabbi Gamaliel whenever he spoke in the hall, or to the people in the temple porches; and if Paul wished information, he could ask him questions at the end. He must not, however, dispute anything, but accept his words as if they were the Bible.

Sometimes, too, he would read the Bible in the class, and answer questions as to what meaning the old rabbis put upon the passage; and if he did not answer aright, Gamaliel would correct him. He had still to learn portions of the Bible, so as to perfect

his knowledge of every part, and also the Traditions ; for the rabbis said that the Law was like a green field, and their Traditions like a prickly hedge around it. He would also receive instruction how to behave as a strict Pharisee, and how to carry out, and teach others to carry out, in daily life, the thousands of rules, large and small, although the rabbis themselves said it was impossible to remember and keep them all. Already they had been called blind leaders of a blind people ; but Paul did not think them so, although there was One living in Galilee who would proclaim it to the world.

About Washing Hands.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

WE cannot follow the youthful student through all his confused maze of studies ; but if we were to take all the commands contained in the five books of Moses, and multiply them fifty times over, we should not even then have a clear idea of what lay before him. If Gamaliel went over the Law in any kind of order, he would tell them what one rabbi said and another rabbi said, taking care to support the views of his gentle grandfather Rabbi Hillel, and to deprecate the harsh sayings of Rabbi Shammai and his followers. And Paul would hear again that his only hope of happiness in this world was in knowing and keeping the whole religious Law and the Traditions.

When Gamaliel spoke of the books of the Prophets, he would tell them of the good work which these ancient writers had done for their nation, and of thousands of meanings which the rabbis attached to their writings. When he spoke of the books of the Writings, he would tell them many strange stories that had come down through the centuries ; for the rabbis had fixed the birth, death, age, appearance, and trade of every one named in these books.

And when he spoke of the life of a Pharisee, he would say that the scribes were the lawyers and judges, and had to learn and know not only all the civil crimes, like murder and theft, and their punishments, but also all the religious offences against the Law and the Traditions, and what punishment was attached to them, and how pardon could be obtained from the priests. A scribe had also to know about the festivals, and how they were to be kept in the temple and in the synagogues, and the different kinds of sacrifices and offerings ; and even then he had not touched the wide field

of purifications. And Paul would be deeply interested in hearing Gamaliel's instruction about how a strict Pharisee must behave in walking in the streets, in sleeping, eating, washing, dressing; how he must wear his phylacteries, and pray at different times of the day and night; and what he must do to get right again if he found that he had broken some of these countless rules of behaviour.

And thus we can picture the youthful student striving day after day to carry out what he was taught, and ever winding round himself more and more of the bonds of tradition as explained by Gamaliel; for he was determined to be a blameless Pharisee. He was troubled with anxiety about such trifles as hand-washings and dish-washings—things which give us no concern—for he believed they could make him good or bad. Here is an example:—

“When you rise from your bed, it is not lawful to move more than four steps till you have washed your hands and your face, to cleanse you from the defilement of sleep. It is also unlawful to touch any part of your body till this has been done. And thus you must wash: Lift the jug with your right hand, and pass it to your left; then pour the water, which must be clear and cold, twice over the open fingers of your right hand, which must be pointed to the ground, then over your left hand—washing your face three times. Then place the palms of your hands together, with fingers outspread, and say, ‘Blessed art Thou, O God, King of the universe, who hast purified us through Thy commandments, and hast required us to wash our hands.’” We can picture him practising this every morning, until he was able to wash as a strict Pharisee should.

He had to wash his hands in a different manner before and after food, on going into his house, and before certain prayers; for however Hillel and Shammai might differ about other things, they were agreed that washing of hands, pots, dishes, knives, and tables was one of the most important things for a Pharisee. They had also many rules about the kind of water that could be used, whether from a pool, a well, a cistern, or a stream; and while some said that melted ice, hoar-frost, snow, or hail would do, others said no: and thus a Pharisee might wash his hands and find afterwards that he had used forbidden water, and was impure, and would have to take a lot of trouble to make himself right again.

This may seem very trifling to you, but it was no trifle to Paul, for a great rabbi had said that the man who did not wash his hands after food was as bad as a murderer.

How to be a Pharisee.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15-30.

OUR English Sabbath, with its rest from work, its church-going and Bible-reading, had its beginning in the Jewish Sabbath, and owes its liberty and beauty to the teaching of Jesus ; but when Gamaliel spoke of it to Paul and his fellow-students, it was to tell them of hundreds of rules with which it was surrounded, until it was no longer a day of joy and rest, but one of bondage.

Paul learned that he must not walk more than half a mile on that day, or carry anything, even in his pockets, or wear shoes, slippers, or boots, but only sandals ; that he must not tie a sandal except with one knot, or light or put out a fire, or help any one who had been hurt, but he might pull an ass out of a well. He must not pluck an ear of grain, or rub it between his hands, for that would be to reap and thresh. These Sabbath rules he believed were right and holy ; but Jesus would tell the people that they were foolish, and had nothing to do with being good or bad.

When it came to the matter of what food he might eat, and what it would be wrong for him even to touch, he was told of many strange and irksome rules that he had to keep—rules which gave him a great deal of trouble in after years, when he began to see how foolish they all were, and which his Jewish friends thought it very wicked of him to break. He was told of animals which he must not eat at all, and of others which he must not eat unless they had been killed in a special way. There were birds and fish, too, which he must not eat ; but he could take fruit and vegetables of all kinds, and that was a good thing in that hot country. He durst not eat beef or mutton killed as ours is, or pork, for if he did he would be called impure ; and he was told that any one who ate beef with the blood in it was to be put to death.

He was also told by his old teacher how to make long prayers like the rabbis, who recited pieces of the Bible, and repeated prayers which had been made by rabbis of long ago. He learned, too, how to stand, hold his hands, and bend his body when praying, and the different prayers to be said on festival and fasting days, at the new moons and the new year, at marriages, and on Sabbaths and week days ; and that he must learn all the prayers for the day and night, and be able to use them rightly, and teach others to do so.

And so, under Gamaliel's guidance, Paul went daily deeper into the endless maze of the rules and the traditions with which the rabbis bound all who came under their influence; ever learning and repeating, with no time left for reflection as to what he himself thought he should say and do, which, after all, is far more important than learning the thoughts of others. And one day he would know his error, but not until Jesus showed him it.

He was not a Jew of Jerusalem, but of Asia, and his dress would be that of a traveller and workman who had to face wind and sunshine, rain, heat, and cold. On week-days, a long tunic, in broad stripes of different colours, clothed him from neck to feet, bound in at the waist by a broad shawl or sash going twice round his body, and forming a girdle in which he could carry things, for he had no pockets. Over his shoulders, in cold weather or in rain, he wore a thick, dark-coloured cloak hanging open in front. Over it was his praying shawl, with the blue tassels at the corners; but it was partly hidden by a striped kerchief on his head, folded so as to shade his face and ears and hang down behind, and kept in its place by a cord bound round his brow. His black hair was quite hidden, and when the sunshine was bright he drew this kerchief forward, until it hung round his dusky face and shaded his bright grey eyes, that looked out with quick and piercing glances, so different from the dark, dreamy eyes of so many of the Jerusalem Pharisees, whose desire was that they should be considered so full of good thoughts that they saw nothing of what was going on in the world around them.

These town Pharisees were so fond of making pretences that the boys of Jerusalem had nicknames for them. Some they called "Tumbling Pharisees," because they went with their heads bent down, so that they could not see where they were going, and so tumbled over things. Others they called "Bleeding Pharisees," because they went with their eyes shut, lest they should see a woman, which, they said, would make them impure, and so they bled their noses against walls and posts. Others were "Cap Pharisees," because they pulled a cap over their eyes, that they might not see bad things. And others were called "What-can-I-do-more Pharisees," who said they kept the whole Law—but nobody believed them.

Paul was not one of these, but he was foolish enough in many things he did. When passing persons in the street, he kept wide of them, or pulled his cloak to one side, lest his dress might touch theirs, which, he said, would make him impure if they happened not to be keepers of the Law, as he was. And, more foolish still, he considered women should not be taught the Law, as

they were not fit for such high things ; and he would not look at a woman, or speak to one on the street. And we find that even in later life he had ideas and said things about women which we now think foolish and unjust. For we have learned from Jesus that not only are women as good as, but usually better than men ; although the youthful Paul did not think so at this time.

Zion Hill and the City Gates.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

PAUL had read of the beauty of Mount Zion in many a passage of the Bible, and he had sung of it in many a song and psalm, and now he saw it daily from the open courts of the temple on Mount Moriah ; for Zion was a higher hill, across the deep and narrow Tyropean valley, spanned by a high bridge, which joined both sides of the city, and formed a road for the priests over to the temple. The houses and palaces of the rich were there, and it was called also the city of King David ; but in recent years the great King Herod had built towers and palaces, partly for beauty, partly for his own safety, that made it look grander still. As Paul looked up at it, he saw three great towers, built of massive squares of white marble : one called Hippius, after Herod's friend ; another Phasaël, after his brother ; and another Mariamne, after his wife, whom he had killed—a miserable monument of years of cruelty to her. A little further off were Herod's own palace and wide gardens, surrounded with high walls. The pillars at the palace door were of fine marble and other costly stones, the floors of coloured pavement, the ceilings covered with gold—the finest palace that a Jewish king had ever built ; and now the Roman governor lived there. But Paul would look with scornful eyes at this splendid castle, for Herod had placed beautiful statues in the gardens to please his Roman friends—a thing which Paul believed to be wicked and idolatrous.

But he turned with different feelings to the ancient and mean-looking palace of the Asmoneans, for they had been the last of the true Jewish kings. He saw, too, the high priest's palace on Zion, and the new street where goldsmiths and silversmiths had their shops, who found their customers among the rich priests and nobles living near. It was through these streets, and from palace to palace upon that hill of kings, that Jesus would be led not many years hence, as a breaker of the Law and the Traditions, which Paul now thought so holy.

As he looked round him from the temple height upon the city of hills, he saw the huge fort of Antonio, called after the Roman general Mark Antony, where the Roman governor of the city kept a strong guard of soldiers, with a private passage through which they could rush in a few seconds into the temple court itself to stop any rioting. And he would feel indignant that these foreigners should have this private way into the temple; but he did not know that he would yet owe his life to that very passage and these soldiers, who would rescue him from the fury of his own countrymen.

Beyond the hill of Acra was the valley where men plied their trades in the bazaars and open markets, and where the city councillors met. He would know that valley well, for he would go there to make and sell his tents and tent-cloth, and keep himself in food, clothes, and lodgings, as many a poor student has done. A fourth hill was called the New City, and as Paul's eyes roamed from hill to hill and part to part, he saw that there were many streets, winding and narrow, to keep out the sun. And when he went about the city, he found these streets paved with small stones, with a raised footpath on each side, and that he had to step down whenever he met a great man; and he would hear their names—Water Street, Fish Street, Bazaar Street, and many more.

Looking at the thick, high walls, that, with a hundred towers upon them, went all round the city, dividing houses within from valleys outside, he believed that it could never be captured, for the few small gates were more like tunnels through the wall. It was, indeed, the strongest city for defence in the world, and yet it had been captured by the terrible Romans. He would not always stay within these massive walls, for he would go out into the country, perhaps to sell his cloth, perhaps to visit friends. If he went out on the north side, it was through the Damascus Gate; and he soon came to wonderful tombs in the side of the hill, where the Jewish kings had been buried since the days of King David—tombs that can be seen to this day. If he went out on the east side, it was through the Jaffa Gate, and along the road that led to the great Mediterranean Sea, thirty miles distant—the road by which the hated Romans came up from their ships. If he went out on the south, it was through the Lion Gate, at the gloomy vale of Hinnom, where he saw Tophet, the hated place, smouldering with fire and smoke, where the bones and rubbish of the temple were burned up. So hateful was the spot, where the worms that fed upon the rubbish were unending and the fire was never quenched, that it was like Gehenna, or Hell.

But when he turned his face in another direction, he saw the sweetest spot around all Jerusalem—the Pool of Siloam, that bubbled up at the foot of the city wall, and flowed softly through the king's beautiful gardens, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, of silver willows, almonds, golden gourds, and lilies, that were kept fresh in hottest summer in this dark valley by the winding stream from the spring.

Kedron Bridge and Olivet.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15—30.

WALKING into the country from the south gate, Paul saw before him the hills of Hebron, dear to all Jews because of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who had pastured their flocks and herds there. In the vale of Etam were the three large pools, made by King Solomon, which supplied Jerusalem with water; and a little way from the roadside, as he approached Bethlehem, was the small white building that marked Rachel's tomb, where faithful Jews turned aside to pray, as he would do. If he went on to Bethlehem on the hill, it was to see the town of King David. Walking through its narrow streets, he would not hear of the Holy Child over whose birth the angels sang of peace and good will, but only of the shepherd boy David, who became king, and loved music and song, and battle and conquest, and was not as good a man as Paul wished to be.

But he would go more often out by the east gate than by any of the others, for that opened upon the vale of Jehoshaphat, through which dashed the rapid white Kedron, with the Mount of Olives beyond. This was the most beautiful side of the city, and the best beloved; for the temple was built upon the top of the cliff on that side, and the beautiful porch, with its double row of white marble pillars, roofed over with cedar wood, was there, whence the people could look down into the wide vale, with its pleasure gardens, its beautiful burial-places, its winding stream, and over to the tree-clad hill of Olivet beyond. To this day that spot is the dearest place in all the world to Jews, and thither they go every year in thousands to pray and weep at the foot of the only bit of the old temple wall that is left standing.

The slopes of Olivet were green almost all the year round with fragrant myrtle and olive, fir and dark-leaved cypress, fig trees, almond trees, clustering vines; and the top of the hill was crowned with two old and beautiful cedar trees, of which the whole

city was proud. In the valley were the gardens and orchards of the rich citizens, where they loved to walk over the fresh grass and under the trees; for the shadow of the holy temple itself fell upon them when the sun sank low, and the sound of the silver trumpets of the priests pealed over them from the temple courts above, proclaiming the hour of prayer.

Thither Paul would go, to walk and to meditate upon the splendour of the temple and city, perhaps in a garden planted with dark-stemmed olive trees, whose twinkling branches turned their silver to the passing breeze—trees through which would move at midnight the white-robed figure, made whiter by the sheets and shafts of moonlight, of One whose clear vision would lead Him not to rejoice over that city, but to mourn because of the wrongs of which it was the centre.

When he went by the road over the shoulder of Olivet, prickly hedges and rude stone walls protected the fruit gardens on each side; but the open hill was free, stained and dyed in early spring with such brilliant hues of scarlet and blue, of gold, green, and white, by the quivering anemones, the large daisies, the yellow buttercups and tulips, lilies, larkspur, and a hundred other cups and bells of dazzling flowers, that it was compared to an Eastern carpet of sweet scent.

As he stood upon the top of Olivet, to look again over the city below and beyond it, through glowing gorges and brown hills, he could see the green trees by the Jordan bank, the bare rocks about the Dead Sea, while the mountains of Moab shimmered in the distance like a wall of copper. For on this crest of Olivet the signal-fires were kindled that flashed the news of the new moon from hill to hill across the country, although the hated Samaritans lighted false fires to cheat the people. But to a student of religion the roof of beaten gold over the Holy of Holies was the object in the scene which moved his deepest feelings, and strengthened his resolutions of what he would yet do for that city and yonder temple.

White Willow Baskets.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15—30.

THE golden temple was not like a great cathedral. It was a place for sacrifices, priests, trumpets, singing, and processions, as well as worship, and the priests said it was the one house where God dwelt. The synagogues were the churches in Jerusalem

where the people went to worship. We are told that there were four hundred of these; and there certainly were a great many, for the Jews who came from foreign countries liked to have a synagogue of their own where they could meet friends, and ten men were enough to start one. There they heard the language which they spoke and understood best, spoken by a rabbi and a reader whom they knew and liked.

They were generally called by the name of the country from which the worshippers came—such as the Alexandrians, who were the Jews from Alexandria in Egypt; the Libertines, who were the Jews set free from Rome; the Cyrenian Jews, from Africa; the Greek Jews; and many others. And Paul would go to the Cilician synagogue, attended by Jews from the province of Cilicia, of which Tarsus was the chief city. With his daily attendance at the golden temple and Gamaliel's class, his attendance twice a week at the synagogue, his lessons to learn at night, and his work in the tentmakers' shop where he earned at his trade the small sum of money which served to keep him, he was kept as busy as any one could wish to be.

As flowery April passed into hot May, and May into the blazing month of June, Paul saw the city emptied of pilgrims, and moving on its rather sleepy way with bargaining merchants, shopkeepers, traders, priests, Levites, rich noblemen, and Roman officers and soldiers going up and down its streets.

In time he would see the Sanhedrim council of the city, composed of staid and old men, partly priests and partly leading citizens, sitting at their council meetings in the hall of hewn stones; and once a month they sat continuously waiting for the message from the watchers round the city, looking out for the first white gleam of the new moon, for that fixed the commencement of a new month. Then they ordered the signal-fires to be lighted. He saw the torches waved, and the fires leap flashing upward on Mount Olivet, while the priests blew loudly on their trumpets in the temple. For in the Bible it was written:—

Blow up the trumpet to the new moon,
And at the full moon, on our solemn feast day.
Blessed be God, who renews the months.

And going up to the temple, he saw hundreds of priests at work in the dark, starlit court, slaying bullocks, rams, and lambs, and burning them on the great white altar; and he may have thought it a little strange that there should be so much rejoicing and thanksgiving, all because the silver strip of the moon had appeared once more in the dark sky. We do not know why

they thought so much of a new moon, and we cannot but think that it would do the people little good to see animals burned and trumpets blown because of it.

You have already heard of the three great festivals in the temple to which Jews were expected to come from all parts; but the priests did not allow many weeks to go by without a festival of some kind, for these great gatherings brought money to the temple and the city. Within six weeks from the Passover festival there were bands of pilgrims again coming over Olivet, and streaming through the gates, until the city was again crowded with strangers, for the festival of First-fruits was drawing near. Men, women, and children were there in their bright-striped dresses, and on the first day he saw them divide into smaller bands in the open valley, and march into the city decked with green garlands and wreaths of flowers, and bearing their white willow baskets of figs, pomegranates, and golden dates, their wheat-sheaves decked with lilies, their doves with necks like the rainbow, and leading their sheep and oxen garlanded with roses, as they went singing up the steep street towards the temple, led by a pipe-player and a banner-bearer; while the city people crowded the houses, hung with green branches and flowers, to welcome the pilgrims. Within the temple he saw the Levites receiving the gifts. Some of the rich people brought theirs in little baskets of silver and gold; but the gifts of the poor looked prettier, with the ruddy apples and golden dates nestling among green leaves in baskets of willows, peeled to make them look pure and clean.

This joyous festival lasted for six days, during which the great white altar was again drenched up to the red line with blood, and the fires were heaped with burning flesh. But when the vast crowd stood silent under the blue sky, waiting for the white Levite choir to chant the great psalm, they heard no crashing cymbal or pealing trumpet, but only the softly warbling notes of a flute that played a strange wild air for the singers to follow with words like this:—

Praise, ye servants of the Lord; blessed be His name.

Let His name be praised from the rising to the setting sun.

When the psalm ended, the silence was great as the crowd of thousands listened to the warbling flute that finished the music alone.

He saw coming up to the temple the procession of the men who had been across the brook Kedron to cut the last sheaves of wheat that had been specially tied together and left standing.

And so the end of the wheat harvest was marked by thanksgiving, not only in the golden temple, but in all the synagogues; for the rabbis said, and Paul believed, that until that was done, it was wrong for any man or woman to bake with new wheat-flour. But just as at the Passover time, no sooner had the cakes been held up at the great white altar than the streets of the city below were ringing with the shouts and cries of the sellers of wheat cakes baked and ready.

But soon the country pilgrims went home again, and Paul was left to pursue his daily round of temple services, work, and studies, which were growing ever more difficult.

New Moons and Horn-Blowing.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

THERE was not another great festival in the temple for four months, although there were new moons, with red fires and blowing horns; but Paul had to keep many fasting days, which were sad and sober times to a strict Pharisee. These days came very often, and as he, like the Mohammedans of to-day, was not allowed to eat or drink anything from the time the sun went down until the stars appeared next night, and had often to wear next his skin the coarse cloth of which sacks were made, and had to put ashes on his head, and mourn and weep, and say long prayers, they were distressing days when the sun was hot. These fasting days were to keep the people in mind of sad events in the nation's history—such as the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the destruction of the first temple, the death of Gedaliah, and other calamities. But besides these, strict Pharisees were told to fast every Monday and Thursday, in memory of Moses and Mount Sinai; and Paul believed that if he fasted regularly he would be favoured with special messages from God in his dreams. And although fasting seems to us a strange thing, we must not forget that it was once practised in England with great severity, and is common in many parts of the world.

The Pharisees of Jerusalem were of three degrees of strictness, and as the strictest Pharisees bound themselves to keep all the rules about purity, and giving one-tenth of all they got to the temple, you can see how severe Paul's duties were. From Gamaliel he would learn that the rules of tithes, or giving one-tenth to the temple, applied to every Jew, rich or poor; that tithes were begun

by Moses, and that the rabbis had added to them, until every fifth sheep, cow, horse, goat, hen, or sheaf of grain had to go to the priests: and to make this gift the more sure, they said that these were holy, and to keep them back and use them was very wicked. And Paul knew that, besides these tithes, every man had to send a half-shekel to the temple, and that it must be one particular old coin worth about one shilling and fourpence. And this tax brought in about seventy thousand pounds every year.

He had much to learn about the sacrifices that were being continually offered on the altar, for there were none of these in the synagogue at Tarsus. There were so many different kinds of them, and they had to be offered in so many different ways and at so many different times, that none but the priests ever rightly understood them. There were burnt offerings, the smoke of which went up into the blue sky every morning and evening; peace offerings, given by people for some good thing that had happened to them; meat offerings of cakes of bread; drink offerings of wine and oil; trespass offerings, by those who had broken the law and wished to make up for it. And as Gamaliel could name four hundred faults for which a trespass offering should be made, there were many offerings of that kind.

The burning months of July and August went heavily by, with not a drop of rain, and hardly even a cloud in the quivering sky, till the grass was all burned brown, and the earth had cracks wide enough for a man's foot to go down; and only the large streams had any water left, for the smaller ones were dry beds of white stones, where the green and golden lizards basked in the sun.

New-Year's Day was not in mid-winter, as it is with us, when snows are thick and winds cold. It was held in September, after the fields had been cleared, the purple grapes plucked, and the dark-green olives shaken from the branches. The old year, with its seed-time, its springing, its growing, its harvest, was then complete, and a new year begun, when all had to be done over again. And children will admit that rejoicing on a New-Year's Day of hot sunshine is better than amid snow and ice.

And they did rejoice! For as soon as the silver slit of the new moon was seen in the sky, Paul heard the priests blowing their silver trumpets, and long, straight deer-horns tipped with gold, and crooked rams' horns that made a deep, booming sound. The people took up the signal, and the noise of horn-blowing was heard all night long in the streets of the city, and all the next day, until the first star appeared in the sky. And as Paul ate his cheerful New-Year's supper, he heard the melancholy hooting and boing of the horns from all parts of the city; but you

would have to be told that these were merry signs, for the long-blown notes had anything but a cheering sound.

Scarlet Flowers and Gold Bells.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

THE horn-blowing and rejoicing over the new year lasted only for a few days ; and when October came, with its russet leaves, it brought the Atonement, the most sad and solemn festival of all the year—so solemn that Paul had to spend the week before it in fasting and preparation, and stand with others in the synagogue, clad in a white sheet, as a sign of sorrow.

The coming Sabbath was the greatest day of all the year, for on it the high priest went inside the inner curtain in the temple, and into the Holy of Holies ; and as he did this only once a year, and was believed to stand in the presence of God, it was a very solemn thing for him and for all the people. For six days before it he was kept by the priests in a room in the temple, lest he might become impure ; and all night long he was kept up, lest he might sleep, and that would be so like death. They dressed him a little before the dawn in a dress of pure white linen, and over that a dark-blue cloak, with a rich border made of an embroidered scarlet flower, and a little gold bell, then a purple flower and another gold bell, then a blue flower and another gold bell, all the way round ; for the bells were to ring with a sweet sound, and tell the people he was coming. They next put on him a stiff blouse of the richest cloth, woven with threads of blue, white, purple, scarlet, and gold, like the temple curtain, and they clasped it at his shoulders with precious stones, on which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of the Jews. But the strangest thing of all was his breast-plate, for it had in it a red ruby, clear topaz, crimson carbuncle, green emerald, deep blue sapphire, sparkling diamond, yellow jacinth, red agate, purple amethyst, pale blue chalcedony, black onyx, and rosy jasper, all set in shining gold. This they fastened on him with gold chains and blue cords. Last of all they put on his head a white bell-shaped hat tied with blue ribbon, and having a gold plate on the front, on which was written, "Holiness to the Lord." We hear of the richness and strangeness of kings' and women's dresses, but surely no woman was ever dressed so strangely and richly as this man, who could scarcely walk under his load

of robes, girdles, jewels, and gold. And this gorgeous dress had such an effect upon all who saw it, that for years the Romans kept it locked up, only lending it out at special times, lest it might be used to rouse the people against them.

Of all the sounds which Paul heard in that great temple, the tinkling of the gold bells on the skirt of the high priest's dress, on the great day of Atonement, was considered the rarest and sweetest. And when he took off his splendid dress to bathe before all the people, after the morning sacrifice, Paul saw that he did not put it on again, but was then dressed in shining white linen.

He heard him pray, with his hands placed upon a bullock's head, that his own sins and the sins of the priests might be forgiven; and every time he named God's name, all the people in the temple—for they could see him from every part—bowed their faces to the coloured pavement.

He saw the white figure of the high priest come down the steps from the holy place above, down to the court crowded with people, and stand between the two white goats, and draw lots from a golden urn. He saw him tie a tongue of red cloth to the horn of one and round the neck of the other; and then the first was turned about so as to face the people, for that was the scapegoat. He heard him pray that the sins of all the people might also be forgiven.

Having killed a bullock and caught its blood in a golden bowl, he next took red coal in a golden dish from the altar. And then came the most solemn act of the year. Before all the people the white high priest went slowly up the broad steps alone to the holy place, and Paul and the thousands crowded in all parts of the temple saw him disappear from view through the great curtain, which was partly folded back. In silence the multitude stood waiting below, while he went on and on until he had passed the inner curtain and stood within the Holy of Holies. There in the darkness of that secret innermost chamber, whose walls, floor, and ceiling of gold glittered with the dim light of the red coals which he carried, he lifted up his eyes; but there was nothing in that room of gold but a rude stone standing in the midst of the gold floor. Going forward, he placed his pan of hot coals upon it, and with his hand sprinkled incense upon the coals, until the place was filled with sweet-smelling smoke. Thus he offered the incense which was thought to be pleasing to God. Then he walked slowly backwards until the rich, heavy curtain dropped into its place, and there, standing outside, he prayed for the people—a few set words which he must not prolong, lest the crowds below, who were now on their knees with their faces to the pavement, might begin to

fear that something had happened to him in that awful place. When at length he was seen coming towards the steps again, deep joy filled every heart in the temple; for the people believed that once more God had accepted the high priest's service, and had forgiven all their sins. There is much in all this that we cannot like, but the central thoughts of faith, obedience, and reverence towards God which it encouraged in the people are still the central thoughts round which our public worship moves.

The Red Flannel Tongue.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15-30.

STANDING in the crowded temple, Paul saw the high priest kill the white goat with the red flannel tongue round its neck, and go up with its blood in a golden bowl to sprinkle again the Holy of Holies. Forty-three times that day the high priest sprinkled blood with his fingers, and on no account must he allow one red drop to fall on his white dress, for the blood was believed to be laden with sin.

And still the scapegoat stood in front of the white altar, with the red flannel tongue on its horn. What was to happen to it? Paul saw the high priest put his hands upon its head, and heard him pray to God that their sins might be forgiven, while the people bowed their heads low; then suddenly turning round, he cried in a loud voice to the people below, "Ye shall be cleansed." But he did not kill the goat. Paul saw a priest leading it away from the white altar, down the white steps, and through the people in the courts below, who made a wide lane for it to pass, lest it might touch them, for it was supposed to be laden with sin; through the Nicanor Gate of silver and gold, through the women's court, through the Shushan Gate of polished brass, through the crowded court of the foreigners, through the marble pillars of Solomon's porch, out of the temple, and across the Kedron by a special narrow bridge, and over to the Mount of Olivet, where a man took the cord of the little goat that was supposed to be carrying away all their sins, to lead it on for five miles into the wilderness of Judea. There he tore off half of the red flannel tongue and stuck it upon a rock, and loosing the cord, gave the goat a push and a blow that set it galloping away into freedom, waving a flag as he did so. The signal was passed quickly back from man to man, until a watcher on Olivet waved it to a watcher on the temple, who

waved it to the people in the court below, who whispered to each other, as they looked at him with upturned faces, "The goat has borne away all our transgressions into an uninhabited land." And Paul did not doubt that it was true.

While the white goat, with the red tongue on its horn, was on its way to freedom, the high priest was still busy ; but when he had lighted the lamps of the great golden candlestick, his work there was done. And wearing again his golden vestments and jewelled breastplate, Paul saw him taken by rejoicing crowds away from the temple, through the city streets, and home to his own palace on Mount Zion.

It was now evening, the time for feasting and joy ; for Paul had tasted no food since the night before. And if he went out after supper to the moonlit vineyards, he saw the maidens of the city who wished to be married dressed in white dresses that had been given to them, so that the rich and the poor might be alike, dancing to the music of timbrels and chanting wild songs, of which this is a part :—

" Round and round in circles white the maidens dance,
And while their wives the happy young men choose,
Remember beauty soon will lose its charm,
And seek a maid who loves and fears the Lord."

And he would see the young men dressed in their best clothes standing among the yellow leaves of the vines, with their dark eyes solemnly following the shifting figures of the beautiful damsels as they floated past in the moonlight.

Yellow Citrons and Green Myrtle.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

HAVING spent so many days in preparation for the great festival of the Atonement, it might have been thought that the priests would not have had any more festivals for some time ; but that was not so. Within five days there came the festival of Bowers, with which Paul was familiar at Tarsus, but he had never seen it kept in the golden temple. It was also the Harvest Home festival, and the most joyful of the year, just as the Atonement was the most sad.

Again he saw bands of pilgrims, many of whom had marched hundreds of miles, come singing over the shoulder of Olivet ; but not to camp in little tents of black and brown, or live in houses,

but in booths of green. As band after band went to their camping-place outside the walls, he saw the valleys and hillsides being covered with their bright green bowers of leafy branches, while inside the city bowers were built in the gardens, on the broad housetops, and in the wide courts, and the streets were garlanded in the same way as he had seen the Jews' streets done in Tarsus.

The festival lasted for seven days, and Paul stood with his willow branch in his hand, among the thousands who crowded the vale of the Kedron, to wave and sing each morning, as the priest carried the golden bowl of water from the sweet Pool of Siloam up the rock-hewn steps to the temple above. And in the temple he saw the priest pour the water into one gold trumpet of the great white altar, and wine into another.

On one of the days all the people in the temple carried a yellow citron in one hand, and a bunch of palm, willow, and myrtle twigs in the other. And Paul saw a procession of white-robed priests walking round and round the great white altar, while the Levite choir sang; and every time they came to the words, "Oh give thanks to the Lord," the people shook their branches over their heads, until the temple court looked like a forest of waving trees.

The temple money-chests were opened also, and Paul would see the shining coins carried away to be stored past in the strong treasury. And at night, when the huge oil-lamps, made from the old garments of the priests, were lighted high up on the temple walls, to throw their wild glare over the court and down into the streets, Paul saw the strange sight of the rabbis and leading men of the city, old and young, dancing on the polished marble floor of the women's court to the loud, quick playing of the Levite band of harps, cymbals, and drums, until they could dance no longer, while the white figures of women looked down on them from the dark galleries above. They might dance for a husband in a moonlit vineyard, but they might not mingle in the dancing there.

On another day of the festival, carrying his yellow citron, green branch, and a gift, he went up to the temple, amid thousands of others, to walk round the great white altar, looking at the huge bower of willows from the brook Kedron that the priests had built over it, and shout, "Hosannah! hosannah!" And this was a treat in which crowds of little children were allowed to join, and shout as loud as they liked. On the last day of all he would help to pull down and scatter that green bower, and beat the willow twigs on the marble pavement till not a leaf remained on them; which was the signal for the people to pull their bowers to pieces in their gardens and houses, and to return to their homes.

But before many years Jesus would come to look upon these strange scenes with different feelings, and to stand amid the crowds in that vast temple, and tell them of another Light of the world and another water of life ; but His time had not yet come.

Oaths and Marriages.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

ONCE more the bright dresses of the country people faded from the streets of Jerusalem, and the strange tongues of Jews from foreign countries were no longer heard bargaining for the city-made goods in the shops, bazaars, and markets. The festival crowds were gone, and Paul was again at work at his daily task of weaving and tentmaking, and his studies under Gamaliel. He had to learn the rules of the rabbis and carry them out in his daily life, and know them so accurately that he could teach them word for word to others.

When his teacher spoke of the rules of marriage, he heard that Jews must only marry Jews, and of the present which the father must give his daughter on her marriage, of the day of the week on which she might marry, of the contract of betrothal, and of the marriage ceremony itself ; that no one could be married without first getting leave from the synagogue ; and of a hundred other rules and customs about the behaviour between married people. He would even hear what flowers a girl must not wear at her own wedding, and how she must dress her hair. And he would learn that the rabbis had made many rules about divorce, some of them so childish, and with results so cruel to women, that we wonder honest men could believe them. And yet Paul believed that a man might have several wives ; that he could send his wife away on such silly excuses as that she went about with her hair loose, or cooked his food badly. There were no women among the rabbis, and they could make what rules they pleased for them.

Paul did not doubt that all this was right and proper, because Rabbi Gamaliel said so. And he would also hear it said that it would be best for a man not to marry at all, as a wife would lead his thoughts away from the study of the Law and the Traditions, and that laughing little children would do the same. And so he was taught to look upon the gentle faces of women and the sweet voices of children as things that a good man would be better to avoid. And to the end of his life he never quite got

rid of that idea. But in this the rabbis had gone far beyond the laws of Moses ; and when Jesus came to speak to the people, He rebuked these teachers for their hard hearts and their cruelty to their wives.

When Rabbi Gamaliel spoke about oaths, and true and false swearing, Paul learned that what Moses had said about these had been greatly altered by the rabbis, who had made up lists of different kinds of oaths which men might swear. They said they might swear by the temple of Jerusalem, or the great altar, or the fire on it, or by the sun, or even by the sacred name of God Himself. These oaths were usually a promise that they would present something to the temple, and so the priests made very strict rules about keeping them—so strict that even if a man's parents or children were starving, the present must go to the temple all the same. And Paul believed that such oaths were right, and that if a man did not keep them he ought to be punished.

He was told, too, how a man came to be a priest : for there were only certain families from which priests could be taken. And he saw the young priests daily in the temple learning what they were to do, for they said it would be a terrible thing if a priest made a mistake. He learned, also, what a man had to do who wished to be a scribe, and that scribes were the judges in the synagogue courts wherever there were Jews ; that they made all the copies of the books of the Bible, and were really poor scholars, for they did not share, like the priests and the Levites, in the riches of the temple.

The Coming of the Wild Flowers.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

THE month of russet leaves was now over in the vale of Kedron, and winter in Jerusalem was approaching, but not such a winter as we are accustomed to, with trees of hoar frost, hills of snow, and ice-bound rivers. In November the rains came that turned the stony beds of the streams into foaming torrents ; and standing on the Kedron bridge, Paul would see that rapid river steeping the black rocks on each side in its deep waves, and sweeping past the foot of the temple walls in a flood of turbid brown, while every valley and gully around the city had a white stream dashing down it. And yet, although the nights were piercingly cold, at midday the sun was often as hot as in summer. By December the dawn sometimes showed hills sprinkled with snow,

and the golden roof of the temple powdered by the clouds of heaven with a covering more pure and dazzling than the laboured roof of beaten gold ; but the sun quickly melted the snow, and soon it was being whirled down hundreds of gullies in the steep hills towards the broad Jordan.

This dead, cold month was cheered by a festival, which was confined almost entirely to the people of Jerusalem, of a kind fitted to drive away the gloom of a winter's night. It was called Dedication ; and it did not go back to the days of Moses, but only to about two hundred years before, when one of the Maccabees had pulled the defiled altar to pieces and thrown it out of the temple, and built the present splendid one of huge unhewn stones in its place, and had again started the sacrifices, which had been stopped for some time. Going to the temple for eight successive nights, Paul saw it lighted up in every part with lamps and candles, getting brighter and brighter each night. And looking down on the city, he saw that the streets also were all lighted up, and the houses lighted with candles such as he had often seen in Tarsus.

During the daytime the people walked about with branches in their hands of evergreen shrubs, keeping holiday, and going up to the temple, to remind each other of what had happened there. And Paul would see in his sister's house a fresh candle lighted for each person every night, for that was the way Gamaliel said it should be done. And he thought that it was a most important thing to increase by only one candle at a time ; although you and I would not now be so particular, and might light them all at once.

There was no great festival held in January, but it was not the cold, dead month to which we are accustomed. By that time the grass on Mount Olivet was springing green under the twisted branches of the olive trees, and the herbs were thrusting up fresh leaves in the king's gardens ; and although sometimes a cold day came, with steel-grey skies, and a sudden volley of large hailstones that made the people run for shelter, the winter was over and past. Next day might be one of rich blue skies and such bright sunshine that Paul could sit and read on his quiet housetop, for the barley was springing in the low rich fields around Jericho.

February came, with days in which a calm blue sky would quickly change to one of leaden black, bringing a tempest of wind and surging rain upon the city, while streaming lightning played through the gloom, and thunder crashed and volleyed among the hills. But spring had taken possession of Mount Olivet and the gardens there, for already the first array of the year's wild flowers were nodding their heads of white and gold, and spreading their

mantles of blue and scarlet on the carpet of dazzling green, until once more the grass under the trees was beautiful as a fresh-woven rug of the brightest hues. The grey doves, with their rainbow necks, that flew in and out among the porches and pillars of the temple, were building their nests and laying their white eggs; for by a kindly custom they were allowed to build in peace, as we have seen them building in the carvings of our own cathedrals.

The name of the young and beautiful Queen Esther was always associated in Paul's mind with the cheerful month of March, when the fields were green with waving crops, the trees thick with fresh leaves; for then the joyful festival of Purim was held, in which little children took the chief part. He had seen it often at Tarsus, but there were so many synagogues in Jerusalem that the whole city was carried away with joy.

He fasted on the day before the festival, because good Queen Esther had fasted with all her maids when she feared what was coming. But as soon as the three stars appeared in the evening sky, which told him that the fast was at an end, the streets were filled with men, women, and children hastening to the synagogues. There were no shut doors, no dread of interruption, as at Tarsus; for in that great city they were all Jews, and all haters of Haman and lovers of the good queen.

Paul had now learned much about the Law of Moses and the Rules and Traditions of the rabbis which he did not know before. He heard how people were punished who broke these rules, and that every synagogue, even in foreign cities, had a court or council of the chief men, and always one or two scribes among them who knew about rules and punishments. He learned how people were brought up before them for trial, and that they were very much afraid of being informed upon by spies. These courts ordered the people to pay fines, or do some act of penance; and if they did not do as they were ordered, there were other punishments. The worst of all was excommunication, and it was very like boycotting in Ireland. They put the man out of the synagogue, and henceforth no Jew might speak to him or give him food, and he might die of cold and hunger for all the council cared. And Paul thought it right that people should be so punished for not doing as they were ordered and believing as they were told. But we live in happier times, when a man cannot be punished in England for his religion; and that freedom we owe to Jesus, who would denounce these scribes and their courts and councils, which Paul now thought so good.

After a Year.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15—30.

THERE was another thing about which Gamaliel spoke—a thing so full of hope, liberty, and beauty that it shines out like a brilliant rainbow upon a cloud of gloom. Paul heard that although the Jews had been conquered time after time, there was a day coming when One would arise who would gather the people together from all parts of the world, and drive out the Romans, and reign as king in Jerusalem for ever. This great Redeemer, who was to bring salvation to their nation, was called the Messiah; and while that is now one of the names of Jesus, it had a very different meaning for Paul at this time from what it came to have many years afterwards. The description that Gamaliel gave him of the coming Messiah, according to the rabbis, was so different from Jesus that it helps us to understand how slow Paul was to see the Messiah in Him.

The rabbis thought and spoke much about the coming of the Messiah—more, perhaps, than about any other thing, for they were daily expecting Him. Paul knew that His coming had been spoken of by the old prophets, in the books of the Bible, a thousand years before; and Gamaliel would read passage after passage to his students, and explain that they were all about Him, and would tell them the meanings which the rabbis put upon the words he read. He would tell what kind of Messiah He would be, and what the people were to do when He came.

Paul knew from a child that the Messiah would belong to the royal tribe of Judah, and that He would be born at Bethlehem or Jerusalem. He would be told by his teacher that the Messiah would be hidden from the people for a time, and be unknown until the ancient prophet Elijah appeared again, who would anoint Him as King; and then He would show Himself, and gather the people and lead them towards Jerusalem, driving His enemies before Him, and sit upon the throne of the ancient Jewish kings, that had been empty for so long. From Jerusalem His kingdom would spread over all the earth, till all nations obeyed Him. He was to be a man and yet have the power of God, and would live for ever.

And Paul would learn that the rabbis were not agreed about the Messiah—some calling Him “the Word of God,” and “the Son of God;” while others said He would only be a mighty prince like one of their kings of old, but greater. They were all agreed,

however, that He would be a fighting prince, who would deliver the nation by warfare, and that the mountains would be dyed red with the blood of His enemies. He would work wonders also, but these would be mainly to destroy His enemies. They even said that flames would come out of His mouth and consume them.

And Paul believed that when the Messiah had put down all His enemies, He would make Jerusalem the richest and most glorious city that could be thought of—its houses ornamented with gems, its streets paved with gold—and would so bless the whole country that it would yield marvellous crops of the finest grain, and of the largest fruits, and sickness would be unknown. Indeed, the rabbis had busied themselves for ages in weaving round the coming Messiah a web of stories, some so silly that a child would smile at them, and some so cruel and unjust that no man could believe them. The main thing, however, was that He would be a great prince and warrior, who would drive out their enemies. And Paul believed this as firmly as that there was a sun in the sky, for he thought that the hopes of their oppressed nation depended on the coming Saviour being one who would lead armies and fight the Romans. We wonder now that he ever could believe it, but we must remember that he believed whatever he was taught.

He had now been a full year in Jerusalem, and Zion hill, and the temple and its services, which had been the dreams of his boyhood, were familiar things of every day. What did he think of these brightly-paved courts, these pillared terraces, these white walls and towers, that awful holy place with its gold roof? What of the hundred glittering knives of the white priests, the smoking sacrifices, the bowls of red blood, the cries of the lambs drowned in a burst of crashing cymbals, rasping strings, twanging harps, piercing pipes, beating drums, and the voices of the white-robed singers? What of the great temple gong that gave the time, and the piercing silver trumpets blown as signals to the crowding thousands? He thought, as his teachers thought, that the sacrifices, incense, blood, prayers, singing, bowing, silence, and shouting within that vast temple were the grandest worship of God that could be conceived by man; and that any one who spoke a word against the temple or its services deserved to be put to death, for that was equal to speaking against God—at least so Gamaliel said.

Jesus.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15-30.

JESUS was still in Nazareth, working and waiting, and He too knew the temple and its services. A few years ago—how many we do not know—He had stood, a beautiful dark-eyed boy, with His father and mother, in the midst of the Passover crowds, watching the white-robed priests at their work in the open court above them. At the mysterious hour when the violet dusk follows the red sundown, He had waited by His father's side, hearing the bleating of the lambs that lay bound and helpless; and had seen them slain, and their blood handed about in gold bowls. Standing alone in the sunshine, He had listened to what the white-haired rabbis were saying in the arches round the open courts, and among the coloured pillars of the porches; but not to believe as Paul did.

Years passed, and He went again and again to these temple festivals, and heard the rabbis, but only to be grieved that men should say such things to the people and command them to believe. When He looked at the priests in their glittering robes in the court above Him, He was filled with wonder at the number of the sacrifices burned upon the white altar, and the quantities of blood they sprinkled upon it and poured in streams about it. And the more He looked and listened, the plainer it became that their sacrifices were useless, their teaching false, and their gorgeous services not the true worship of His Father in heaven. These elaborate ceremonies did not draw the people near to God, but kept a white-robed priest ever standing between them. True worship is within a man, true service is in his outward life.

Living in a quiet glen of wild and free Galilee, far beyond the shadow of the temple, Jesus thought, and felt, and saw that the rabbis did not teach the truths of God to the people, but were false teachers—some blind and ignorant, others clever and learned, but all leading them astray, so that they could not tell the true from the false.

They seemed to say that the way to please God and get Him to forgive their trespasses was not by repentance and forgiving the trespasses of their fellow-men, but by giving sin offerings and trespass offerings to the priests, who would secure a pardon. But this was only outward behaviour, and Jesus knew that a man might perform all the required prayers and sacrifices and his heart remain unchanged; and it gave the rich a power of getting

pardons from the priests which the poor could not get. He cared not for the sight of slaughtered bullocks and bleating lambs, and bowls of blood which the priests loved to handle and sprinkle and pour, as if it were the most sacred thing in the world, while it could never be anything else than the blood of a beast of the field. With false teachers, and deceitful priests, and cheating traders, the temple was more like a den of thieves than a place where God should be worshipped. What availed these blazing fires, these bowls of blood, these clouds of incense, and the high priest with bells tinkling as he entered the dark and secret chamber of gold, if the people were kept strangers to the knowledge of God?

How often does a boy's heart burn within him as he thinks of the horror and cruelty of war, when one bombshell may scatter the bodies of fifty men upon the plain! how often has it burned as he read of slaves beaten to death with lead-tipped scourges! How often has a girl's heart melted to tears as she thought of the bitterness of poverty, and the misery of sickness, until despair of better things seemed closing on her! But never did the heart of boy or girl burn for others as did the heart of Jesus when He thought of the bondage of His people. But He felt no despair, for God was in Him.

Jesus and Paul.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

WHILE Paul was studying the endless rules and traditions of the rabbis at Jerusalem, Jesus was cleaving wood and driving nails in Nazareth. It is thought that Joseph was now dead, and as the eldest son, Jesus would take his place as the village carpenter and the head of the small household. He had to watch over His sweet, fond mother Mary, and work for food and clothing for the little flock.

It would be His place to teach His brothers and sisters from the Bible, as Joseph had taught Him. Perhaps standing at His carpenter's bench, amid wood and shavings, or perhaps on the flat house roof under a trellis of vines, with children round Him and the gleaming stars above, His first teaching would begin. Was ever sweeter teaching, as He talked with them of what He had seen in the temple, and what He found in the Bible, and told them of a Father in heaven, who heard them when they whispered their prayers, and whom they must serve by being good? And His sweet mother would listen to what He said,

turning over things in her mind which she had treasured up from the day He was born, and would think how different was His teaching from that of Joseph—how much easier, how much nearer God. For Joseph always repeated what other men said, but Jesus spoke what He thought.

And so in that vine-covered cottage, or in the shaving-strewn shed, the teaching began that was to overrun the world—began with children under their mother's eyes, who heard it with fear and anxiety, knowing that if He should openly speak so to the people, it would bring persecution and punishment upon Him from the rabbis at Jerusalem, and from all who believed in their laws. But Jesus believed not their words, and spoke as He was taught of God. And as He walked in the vale of Nazareth, and saw the sun setting in crimson behind the purple hills of Carmel, and the stars throbbing out over the violet sky, His thoughts were of His Father in heaven, who talked with Him, none the less plainly that no sound fell upon His ear save the song of the nightingale in the fir tree, or the bleating of the lambs in the fold.

And in the day, as He swung His axe in the forest cutting down trees, and drove in the wedge, or forced His rude saw through the plank in the hot workshop, His thoughts were of the people and their false teachers and deceitful priests, of the countless rules and burdens which they put upon them, and of His heavenly Father's will to men. But the way was not clear; His time had not yet come. His present duty was to work from morning to night as a carpenter, and take care of His mother and her children, and stay in Nazareth. And His visits to the festivals would become fewer as years went past; for the flowers of the field, the clouds of heaven, the vine-dresser and the shepherd, had more attractions for Him than the tumult of a city and the throngs of the temple. And thus, while Paul was living in a great city, toiling at tentmaking and his endless studies, Jesus was working in a country village, and walking with God. Paul was born in a city, and loved streets, crowds, and the ways of men. Books and ancient sayings were dear to him, and he liked the life of a spare student who fasted and said long prayers in Jerusalem, and believed good and bad alike, as he was told. But in a day to come Jesus would teach him to think for himself, but not until he had gone further astray.

Again the Passover crowds filled the streets of Jerusalem, and again Paul stood rapt in admiration under the sparkling stars in the temple, seeing the blood poured out at the foot of the white altar, to flow like a river of horror down the temple drains, and make more hateful the pit of Tophet.

If Jesus also stood among that crowd, Paul did not know it. It is more likely that Paul's father was there again, bringing with him those tender gifts from home, laden with the gold of a mother's love, and pearly with her tears, of such little value, and yet so priceless. He would tell his father of his hard studies and austere life in his efforts to carry out all that his teacher, Gamaliel, said a Pharisee ought to be. And when he left the city to return home again, it would be with feelings of joy that Paul was becoming a master of the intricacies of the law; for he did not know that he was arming his son with wonderfully sharp weapons, which he would turn against his teachers in years to come.

Years of Study in Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

THE years spent by Paul as a student in Jerusalem would be years of great monotony and drudgery, which not even his enthusiasm for work could make pleasant; for it was a long process of developing his powers of memory and blind faith in others, and that is depressing and stagnating. In our schools we encourage children to think and be original, so as to prepare them for the life that lies before them; but Paul was told not to think for himself, and that he must not be original, for that would be wicked. And there is some of that spirit left still in our theological seminaries—a sad survival of the days of Paul and Gamaliel.

Creeds and catechisms are not the best things with which to make good boys and girls, but they are trifles compared with the endless round of rules and traditions which Paul had to drink in without question, like a sponge absorbing all that is held to it. Day by day his life grew narrower, as he went and returned through the same narrow streets of the city, lined with high houses to keep out the sunshine, on his way to and from the Gamaliel school at the temple. Rabbis and students, priests young and old, scribes young and old, Pharisees of all kinds, were his companions; sacrifices and temple services, washings, prayers by day and night, were his monotonous round, with every act of his life hemmed in and regulated for him, and all to make him good, and at the same time to be told that it was impossible to be good by keeping the Law. That was hard indeed!

Not only was his life narrowing, but each day found him one step deeper in that labyrinth of men's rules and learning which

was already growing dusk around him, like the crossing branches and overhead growth of a wood which ere long will end in complete darkness, hiding the sun at noon. And he was told that when the time came for him to teach, he must teach only what he had learned, and teach it all, keeping nothing back and altering nothing.

It was not necessary that he should remain constantly in the city, and never leave it, during all his student years, and he would sometimes go home to Tarsus for a holiday. A mother's love is a strong magnet, and if her dear son is within travelling distance, nothing short of prohibition will prevent her drawing him to her side once and again, if only that she may look into his eyes, and read there the signs of the change from youth to manhood which she knows so well, and also see the deep light which tells her that she still keeps his heart.

Paul understood about ships and sails, and would not think much of going down to the seaport of Cæsarea at the season of the year when there was no lack of ships going north to Tarsus, and taking his passage in one of them. With a favourable wind even a slow ship could sail the distance of three hundred miles in about ten days, and after a festival there were always plenty of companions going on the same voyage. As with many another student, a stay at home would lift him out of the fever of his constant studies, and a month or two of rest would send him back stronger in body and clearer in mind, and more than ever determined to take a high place among the rabbis.

But he lived in troublous times: changes were taking place, and things happening in the country and in Jerusalem, of which he would hear, and in which, with his fiery spirit, he would perhaps take a part. If help was required to assert the rights of the rabbis, the priests, and the temple against the Romans, Paul would not remain in the background, but would follow the fortunes of his people in their struggle against the foreign rulers, with an interest not the less keen that he was only a student, and not a leader in the city.

The Roman Standards.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

PAUL would not hear of the death at Tomi of Ovid, the great Latin poet, whose verses are in our school books; for if his "Metamorphoses" had been put before him, he would have turned

away from it, as a book he was forbidden to read. But he would hear other news from Rome of a different kind which fired him with anger against the conquerors. The Emperor Tiberius had taken a dislike to the Jews of Rome, because some of them, he said, had cheated Fulvia, a Roman lady who had joined their religion; and he sent off four thousand of them to fight brigands in Sardinia, and ordered all the rest either to give up their religion or leave Rome within a certain time. And Paul would see many Jews in Jerusalem who had returned thither rather than obey the emperor's command to cease worshipping God; but the emperor did not carry out his order very strictly, and there were soon plenty of Jews in Rome again.

It is unlikely that Paul had yet joined the Zealots, although there is little doubt he joined them later on. They were already numerous in the country, and were a trouble to the Romans and a terror to their own countrymen; and the banishment of the Jews from Rome had increased their hatred of the conquerors—a hatred which Paul shared.

The Roman governor at Jerusalem had also put on a land tax that was to come before all other taxes, and had given the tax-gatherers power to collect it; and Paul thought with the priests that this was putting the emperor before God. He knew that "Zealous for the Law" was the cry of the Zealots, which meant that they would obey no law but the law of Moses, even if it were a Roman command. Some of them were opposed to stabbing and murder, but there were other Zealots who carried daggers under their cloaks, and thought they were serving God and their country by stabbing people in the back. Others of them roused their countrymen to fight in an open fashion, and were swiftly punished; but others were Zealots in secret, who hoped for a good day coming.

Cæsarea by the sea had been made a great Roman city by the Romans, who built strong forts and barracks, and filled them with thousands of soldiers, and called it the capital of the country. There the governor lived, and there an open-air circus and a racecourse were built by King Herod to please his Roman friends, where they could enjoy games and races in the true Roman fashion.

At every festival Paul saw the Roman soldiers entering Jerusalem, and marching through the streets to the Tower of Antonia, with their shining brass armour and short bronze swords; for they had come up from Cæsarea with the governor, to keep order amongst the thousands of pilgrims who came to these great gatherings in the temple. He knew that the Roman

governor could say who should be the high priest, and that he sometimes put away one who was liked by the people, and put up another whom they hated. He heard, too, that the Sanhedrim had sent a deputation of leading men to Rome, to tell the Emperor Tiberius that the Roman taxes which the governor had put on were too heavy, and that the emperor had paid no heed to them, for the taxes remained as heavy as ever.

He heard also that the governor had made a law saying that while the Sanhedrim could try people for offences against the laws of Moses, he could set aside these sentences, and that he would not let them try a Roman citizen at all. And thus, from the high priest to the poorest beggar, the people were told that they must obey the Roman laws, whether they agreed with the laws of Moses or no. He knew that under the grinding oppression of a Roman governor the people hated their conquerors more than they had ever done when they had a Jewish prince as governor.

Paul would see Pontius Pilate when he rode into Jerusalem at the head of his soldiers as the new governor, and would be told that he looked upon Jews as Roman slaves. It was the custom for the soldiers to take off the little silver figures of the emperor from their standards before entering Jerusalem, because the Jews would not allow any images within its walls. But Pilate thought this was an impertinence. And one morning Paul heard news which set the city in an uproar. Pilate's soldiers had marched in during the night, and were in barracks close by the temple, with the images still on their standards. Messengers were sent out of the city into the country round about, rousing the people to come in and save the temple from being profaned; and Paul saw them streaming in their thousands, until the temple was crowded.

The Sanhedrim met, and the Zealots wished to attack the Roman band at once and fling their standards over the city walls; but others said no, or they would all be killed. And they sent some of their chief men in haste to Pilate, who was at Cæsarea, to beg him to order the standards to be taken away. And Paul may have been in the crowd which walked that day from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, where for six days and nights they surrounded his palace, shouting, "Take them away; take them away!" At last Pilate sent word that he would meet them in the great circus, and he had the seats all round filled with armed soldiers; but the Jews were not afraid, and renewed their cries, louder than ever. At a sign from his hand the soldiers drew their flashing swords, and prepared to go in amongst the Jews.

But when they heard the order and saw the glittering blades, they went down on their knees, and baring their throats, called that they would rather die than have the law of Moses broken.

Then Pilate wavered. He feared to order his soldiers to strike, for the news of such a slaughter would be carried swiftly to the ears of his master, the emperor, at Rome, and he might be angry. With a frown upon his face he said the standards would be withdrawn from Jerusalem, and the Jews screamed with joy, for they had triumphed.

And Paul would see the crowds coming back from Cæsarea, and the Roman standards being carried out of the city, while the people rejoiced for days over their great victory.

The Golden Shields.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

ANOTHER riot took place in Jerusalem, led on by the Zealots, and Pilate was again the cause. It was a common thing for rich Romans to have ornamental shields of gold made, with the emperor's name and their own name engraved upon them, and to hang them up in temples where the people could see them, and think how good they were to so honour the emperor. It was a childish thing to do, but people sometimes do very foolish things when they wish to please kings and princes and win their favour. And Pilate, who was anxious to please and flatter the Emperor Tiberius, got some of these gold shields made and engraved, and taken secretly into Jerusalem; and one morning the news flew through the city that they were hung upon the outer walls of Herod's grand palace, where Pilate lived, on Mount Zion.

The rabbis and the priests at once roused the people, telling them that the gold shields were worse than images, for they were equal to altars to the Roman emperor inside the city; and that as it was against the law of Moses to have altars to any but God, they must be taken away. Again they went in a crowd to Pilate, begging him to take the shields down; but he refused. The agitation spread out into the country, for the priests said it was an insult to their God, and the people believed them. But Pilate remained firm—he would not take the gold shields down; and Paul may have seen them hanging for days in the sunshine, guarded by Roman soldiers.

But Antipas, Herod's son, was a favourite of Tiberius, and

when he told the emperor, he sent orders to Pilate to take them away, and hang them up in Cæsarea if he liked. And so, amid the rejoicings of the whole city, Paul saw the gold shields taken down, never to appear in Jerusalem again, and he would rejoice with the priests and rabbis that Pilate had been defeated a second time.

Once more he would see the city stirred with excitement and anger against Pilate, all the more bitter that he had dared to touch the money of the temple, which the priests said was sacred. But Pilate was right this time. The water canal that supplied the city was old and broken, and he said he would take some of the huge wealth stored up in the dark chambers of the temple and spend it on improving the supply from the distant hills. The priests and the Levites, and all who lived off the temple, and many more, replied that it was holy money, and must not be touched; but he paid no attention to their scolding. The stone watercourse was falling to pieces, the people must have water, and the temple would get its share.

The priests continued to stir up the people; but Pilate paid no heed, and ordered the masons and the labourers to go on with their work. The priests got a crowd to follow them across the valley bridge and into the palace grounds, and had hardly begun their cries when strange men, who were everywhere in their midst, at a sign from an unknown leader, threw off their long Jewish cloaks, which concealed Roman soldiers, and with heavy clubs they clubbed and beat the people, driving them in a terrified crowd out of the palace grounds, down the streets, over the bridge, and into the temple itself. They did not even stop there, but struck down some men who were offering sacrifices, so that their blood mingled with the blood of the animals they had slain. And this was looked upon as a terrible thing, although you will think it was much more horrible that some of the poor people were clubbed to death by the cruel soldiers.

Roman Oppression.

JERUSALEM: AGED 15-30.

BUILDING steadily, and taking the temple money, Pilate finished repairing the great watercourse which brought the water for miles through hills and valleys; and in after years people rejoiced over the fine supply of pure water, and forgot all about how it had been got. But before the works were

quite finished an accident happened of which Paul would hear a great deal. A stone tower near the Pool of Siloam fell, and killed some of the workmen; and the rabbis seeing their opportunity, told the people, who believed it, that it fell because Pilate had taken the temple money, but they did not explain why the rest of the stonework did not also fall.

These are a few of the stirring things which happened about the time that Paul was a student, and he would not fail to see that the iron hand of Rome was everywhere laid on a people who were not strong enough to throw it off. What with taxes which they found it very hard to pay, and rules so numerous that it was impossible to keep them, deception and hypocrisy became common. The scribes and Pharisees invented many cunning little ways to avoid keeping the strict rules which they laid on the common people; but still there were men, among whom Paul and his teacher Gamaliel may be counted, who sincerely believed all that they had learned, and earnestly tried to carry it out, however small and hard it might be.

The Roman oppression and the conduct of Pilate had the effect of heightening the people's love for Jerusalem and the temple. The more they thought that the great temple was in danger, the more deep and fierce was their hatred of any one, whether Jew or foreigner, who dared to speak a word against it, or who sought to alter their manner of worshipping God or of thinking of Him.

But the time was fast approaching when a new light would arise—a light which would make the rabbis mad with rage, and Paul not less so; for his heart was filled with burning zeal for the Law of Moses, the traditions of the rabbis, the temple, and all that was in it, and the Zealots threatened death to any one who should attempt to speak against these things.

This they called "blasphemy," which originally meant "speaking against God," and by the Law of Moses the punishment was death by stoning. But the rabbis widened out the word. They said that any one who spoke against the temple, the Law of Moses, the Traditions, and many other things, was a blasphemer, for it was the same as speaking against God Himself. And because they said this, Paul believed it, and was ready to help to stone any one whom the rabbis had tried and found guilty. But their ideas of blasphemy are so different from ours, that it is difficult to understand how honest men could think that calling a stone building hard names could in any way be speaking against God, and we shall see before long to what impious thoughts and terrible crimes the people were led by this false and wicked teaching.

During his years of study Paul passed from a youth into a

mature man ; for teachers were expected to study for ten years before they were considered to know enough to begin work, and even then no one could say he was a complete master of the whole Law and the Traditions.

It is supposed that he left Jerusalem and Palestine before he was thirty, and it is natural to think that he went home to Tarsus. He had learned and seen much, and of this he was certain, that the only hope for his nation was the coming of the Messiah, who would deliver them from the grinding oppression of the Romans. But while leader after leader had risen in past years saying he was the Messiah, and had deceived the people for a time, they were always put down, and usually killed, by the Roman governors. Yet the people had not lost hope, and the almost unbearable tyranny of their rulers, both Roman and Jewish, had roused deep longings and a yearning belief, which was encouraged by the rabbis and the Zealots, that the true Messiah would come soon. Indeed, it was whispered about that He was already in hiding somewhere, as the prophets had foretold, until the right time should come for leading the nation to victory.

Longing for the Messiah.

TARSUS : AGED 15—30.

PAUL was not yet a rabbi ; he was too young for that. He was only one of Gamaliel's leading students. He had not mastered anything like the whole of the Law and the Traditions—for no man could do that, even if he kept learning them until his hair was white—but as a learned young Pharisee, he mingled with scribes and lawyers as his equals, and he was an enthusiast. He loved the Law and the Traditions with his whole heart, and hated, even to death itself, any who dared to speak against them. There are no enthusiasts like religious ones, and no judges of others more severe than young men.

When he came back to Tarsus, it was as a learned young Jew whose knowledge had been gained at the very heart of Jewish learning—Jerusalem, the centre of the world—and he would take his place in the small, dark synagogue, among the leading men, who sat upon the chief seat, facing the congregation. And we may be certain that at the synagogue services, when the time came for an address on the passage of Scripture for the day which had been read, the people would hearken to Paul when he

spoke as to one whose words were well worth listening to, for he had learned them at the feet of the great doctor, Gamaliel.

He would find many changes at Tarsus since he first left it. Girls were now grown women, boys were bearded men, while amongst his aged friends there were blanks that told of death. But he was at home again in the city by the sparkling river, and would resume his trade of weaving, shaping, sewing, and finishing tents, and setting them up in all their bright colours, and selling them in the surrounding country. And as he travelled to and fro, up into the dark hills and over the wide plains, to buy wool or to sell his cloth, into whatever town he went he would attend the synagogue, and teach the Law and the Traditions as they had been taught to him; for he could speak with the knowledge, if not with the authority, of a rabbi.

By long labour and hard study he had prepared himself to be a strenuous upholder of the national religion, and of the Law and the Traditions, hoary with age and authority; but there were things about to happen in Jerusalem and Judea that would meet him in the face before many years. Liberty was about to be proclaimed to the people, not from the Romans, but from the rabbis who had enslaved them—a liberty which would break the fetters of tyranny and bondage into which Paul had so completely passed.

Everywhere the Jews were in anxious expectation of the Messiah; but Paul knew more than the common people about His coming, for he had heard Gamaliel speaking of Him with an earnestness that had stirred up longings of the deepest kind. He had been told that His coming was the one golden hope upon which the nation had been hanging for centuries. Some of the rabbis had even told the people openly that the Messianic year was at hand, and that any day or any night they might hear that He had appeared. Paul knew that this hope was so strong in the people that when any fanatic wished to rouse them to follow him, he had only to call himself the Messiah, and to declare that he could work miracles, and many would follow. And he would think with sorrow of how this longing for a deliverer had been used by false men, who had deceived the people for a time. One of them led the crowds down to the Jordan to see him dry up the river, that they might walk through; but it did not happen. Another took them to the top of a hill, to see the walls of Jerusalem fall down at his command; but they did not fall. Another led them out into the lonely country, to wait for a sign; but no sign came. Others had got them to rise against the Romans; but always with the same result—the Roman swords cut them to pieces.

These were terrible disappointments: but still the rabbis taught, and Paul believed, that if the Jews would only truly repent of their wickedness, the Messiah would at once appear; or if one Pharisee could but succeed in keeping the whole law for one single day, He would come. And he thought how glorious it would be if he could, on some day of his life, attain to this perfection, and be the means of bringing about that great deliverance of his nation. And thus, while entangling his feet more and more in the network of the Law and the Traditions, the stories and the commands of the rabbis, over his head was unrolled the nation's dream, that an end would soon come to all their troubles by the appearing of their great conquering Messiah and future King.

John the Baptist.

JORDAN: AGED 15-30.

JOHAN THE BAPTIST, the son of a chief priest and cousin of Jesus, clothing himself with a garment of coarse camel's hair, and girding himself with a leather belt, had appeared in lonely places and at fords of the river Jordan, where pilgrims passed on their way to and from Jerusalem, to deliver, with all the fire and earnestness of an old prophet, a message for the people. He wore no white robe or phylactery, no sandals on his feet or covering on his head, and his black hair hung thick upon his shoulders, for it had never been cut. His face was brown with the sun, and with fire glowing in his dark eyes he stood out upon a rising ground, calling to the people, as they passed by, a message from God that they were to prepare for the coming Messiah, who would soon appear; and he bade them be baptized in the river below, and confess their sins. And when they asked what he meant, he answered,—

“I baptize you with water, but there cometh One that is mightier than I, the buckle of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

His earnestness impressed the people, and many believed that he had a true message, and that the expected Messiah was at hand; and he caused a great stir among them, both at the Jordan and when they went up to the temple, where he was known. For his father was a priest of Hebron, some miles beyond Jerusalem, and he may have been a student at the temple when Paul was there. Many people went down to the Jordan to hear him

speak and to be baptized, and some thought that perhaps he himself was the Messiah. He said nothing against the Romans, and told the people to go quietly away and be good, and prepare for the coming Messiah—that was all; and so the Romans paid no heed to him. But the impression spread over Judea and into Galilee that John was a prophet, and that what he said would come true; and even the rabbis hoped it might be true, and liked him for it.

Jesus, in His carpenter's shed at Nazareth, heard the news of what His strange cousin was saying at the fords of Jordan, and His spirit was stirred. He must leave His quiet village among the hills and go down amongst the people, to tell them the truth of God as He knew it. John was lifting his eyes to the hills, looking and calling for the Messiah, the Saviour. Not under the gilded roof of a king's palace, not hiding in a dark cave of the mountains, would He be found, but in a carpenter's shed, working from red dawn to grey dusk, amid shavings and sawdust, among familiar friends in a highland village. John's hand was beckoning, John's voice was calling. God was moving Him. His hour had come, and Jesus was ready.

With sandalled feet and staff in hand, dressed in a peasant's white tunic and heavy blue cloak, His face shaded by the hanging fold of the kerchief that covered His brown hair, He bade farewell to His mother, sisters, brothers, and passed out of the village. To the villagers the Carpenter of Nazareth departed; to mankind the Saviour of the world appeared. Coming down from the thymy hills to the rocky river, He stood among the crowds that were listening to John at the fords of the Jordan.

Had Paul been asked what the Messiah would be like on His appearing, he would have said, like a prince girt for war, with fire encircling his head, and flame issuing from his mouth, with which to vanquish all his enemies. But no halo was round this Carpenter's head, save the halo of a beautiful countenance; no arms were in His hands, only a countryman's staff. But His eyes glowed with unquenchable fire, and His lips were touched with language quicker than flame, sharper than a sword. John did not look for an armed prince, and when he saw Jesus, he exclaimed to the wondering people,—

“There standeth One among you whom you do not know. He it is that shall come after me, and the buckle of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose.”

When he baptized Him, Jesus heard a voice saying,—

“Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.”

Although Jesus went away alone, John told the people from

that hour that the Messiah had come, and he had seen Him, and He was the Son of God, who would take away the sins of the world. But the people did not believe him. They expected a great prince, and they had seen none. But John continued to say that the Messiah had come; and the people talked among themselves, for they liked John. Even the priests and scribes said he was a good man, for he belonged to the strict sect of Nazarites, who lived lives of great self-denial. And they came from Jerusalem to hear him, and smiled, and would not believe. But still he kept saying that the Messiah had come, the promised Saviour of the people.

Jesus and the Rabbis.

JERUSALEM : AGED 15-30.

JESUS went away alone, into the desert country beyond the Dead Sea, to think of what He had heard at the fords of Jordan; and when He returned He gathered friends round Him, some being John's disciples, whom he bade leave him and follow the Messiah. Within three months Jesus had spoken words to the people in the temple which gave such offence to the priests that they never forgot them or forgave Him, and used them against Him when He was taken a prisoner. Paul was not there, but he heard of it.

Jesus had left His quiet village to tell the people a simpler way to worship God, a better way to be good, than the priests and rabbis taught, and what He said made the rabbis so angry that they gave orders He was not to be allowed to speak in their synagogues. He continued to speak in friends' houses and in the open air. He told the people that the rabbis were false teachers, and He did not use their sayings, but spoke His own words; and He broke their petty rules, saying that they laid commands on the people which they themselves did not obey.

He proclaimed religious liberty, saying that neither to Samaria nor to Jerusalem would men go to worship God, for the time had come when men would worship God everywhere in spirit and in truth; adding these words of living fire, which would overthrow the temple worship and put an end to the cruel and barbarous rites, the gorgeous shows, the slaughter and the fires of their dreadful sacrifices:—

“God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.”

God did not dwell behind a gorgeous curtain, in a dark chamber lined with gold, as the priests said, nor did He love the smell of incense, or delight in the slaughter of bulls and the sight of poured-out blood. God is a Spirit, who makes known His will to all who approach Him in spirit and in truth, not with gifts in their hands, but with contrite hearts.

Before a year was over, He had spoken that great address in Galilee, since called the Sermon on the Mount, which Paul did not hear, although he heard about it, and which in centuries to come would rise above the laws and statutes of Moses and the useless heap of traditions. He opposed the rabbis, telling the people that they were not to do as they told them, but as He told them; and in this He committed what to Paul was an unpardonable offence by teaching His own gospel. But Jesus was taught of God, and needed not the teaching of men. The rabbis were enraged. They had made a law that no one was to teach unless he had passed through their colleges at Jerusalem, as Paul had done, and they denounced Jesus as one who had no authority to say anything, and ordered the people not to listen to Him. But they listened still. And when Jesus told the people to pay no heed to what the rabbis taught, but to do as He told them, He did a thing which no teacher had ever done before. And the rabbis told the people that He was an ignorant peasant; and when they saw them crowding still to listen to Him, they said that He was mad. But still the people listened.

Not only did Jesus continue to tell the people not to obey the rules of the rabbis, but He calmly broke them Himself, as an example. The priests had said that no man must work on the Sabbath day; He replied that they themselves worked. The rabbis had strict rules about hand-washings; He said these rules were foolishness. They said the people should fast; He did not fast. They said the people should swear and take oaths; He said, Swear not. He set aside their rules about dish-washings, about eating this and not eating that, about marriage and divorce, about clean and unclean, and many more. In one speech He swept aside all the foolish traditions which Paul had been learning for years, saying that they were the rules of men and not of God.

He spoke against their heaps of useless learning, saying that the kingdom of heaven was opened not to the learned but to the simple, and that the rules of the rabbis were like a wall that kept men out. Again and again He said that unless a man came to God with the trust of a little child, he would not enter His kingdom. He was the first teacher to praise children in this way, and hold them up as an example to grown men. And He

has been called the Friend of little children, for they never had a dearer friend.

The rabbis hated Him, and would not believe that He was the Saviour. The very thought was an offence to them. Jesus did not go about saying He was. He left the people to say it. But the priests could wait no longer, and one day they asked Him in the temple if He was the Messiah; and when He said He was, they told the people to stone Him. But many believed, saying that the Messiah could not be greater than He. At one time the people wished to make Him a king, for they believed that the Messiah would be their king and lead them against the Romans. But He refused. He would never be a king of armies and soldiers, of provinces and cities; for His kingdom was in the hearts of men, women, and little children who followed Him in gentleness, goodness, and peace. And so He changed the thoughts of many as to what the Messiah should be; for instead of ruling an outside world with battle and conquest, He would rule in their hearts alone, and their victories were to be not over others, but over themselves.

Come, Follow Me.

GALILEE: AGED 15-30.

FOR three years Jesus went about Palestine, speaking in the golden temple, on the white beach by the lake side, amid the green hills of Samaria, and down by the rocky Jordan, spreading everywhere the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, proclaiming freedom to the bound, denouncing the rabbis and their rules, and telling the people that God did not delight in gifts and sacrifices, but in the daily service of a good life and the worship of a pure heart. Their false teachers had bound grievous burdens upon the people with their rules and customs, their laws and their traditions, their tithes and taxes, their gifts and sacrifices, pointing ever to their rules and repeating the words of some one else. Jesus said that they were to leave all these, and come, follow Him; for His yoke was easy and His burden light: and they would find rest for their souls. They were to learn the way of life from Him by believing in Him.

The hatred of the rabbis grew more intense. They saw from the way the people followed Jesus that He was a danger to their church and power, and so they put into force against Him their

temple organization, which spread out from Jerusalem, with members in every village and a council in every synagogue; and they stirred up the people against Him. At one time He was nearly thrown over a precipice at His old village of Nazareth; several times in the temple the rabbis' followers took up stones to stone Him. He had to fly from Jerusalem, for Caiaphas, the chief priest, said that He must be taken and put to death. The Sanhedrim said He had defied the law that only rabbis must teach, and that only the Law and the Traditions should be taught. He was not a rabbi, and told the people that what He said was from God, and what the rabbis taught was untrue. He called them false teachers, blind guides, serpents, vipers, in the temple itself, which the priests looked upon as their own, and where the rabbis loved to sit talking.

But His work was soon done. He had denounced the false teachers and their rules; He had set aside the priests and their bloody sacrifices; He had proclaimed the true way and the kingdom of God His Father. He had led the people out of the bondage of priests, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees into the freedom of personal worship and direct communion with God. He showed them that God was a God not of war but of peace, whose Son He was, and whose children they were if they served Him. His words shook the Sanhedrim and the temple, for He told the people that He was greater than Moses, whose memory and whose laws they revered; and He called upon them to hear His words and love and follow Him, and that whoever did so would have the kingdom of heaven.

It was again the Passover festival. The temple courts were crowded when He stood, in his white tunic, for the last time, calling upon the people to leave their teachers and follow Him, knowing well that the end would be death. He told them that if He was killed He would draw all men to Him. And, as you know, they did kill Him, by nailing Him upon the bitter cross, for speaking against their temple, and for teaching things contrary to their religious laws and traditions, and for saying that He was the Son of God, which they called blasphemy.

But He had proclaimed His heavenly message—He had sown the seed of God in countless golden sayings, in temple and synagogue, along the hillsides, through the vales, around the shores of the lake, and in every town and village of Palestine, and it had sunk into the hearts of the people so deep that no priest's hand could ever pluck it out; and His death only made more beautiful His life, more heavenly His message.

He had told the people of another and an easier way to be good

than by trying to keep the thousands of rules which their teachers had laid upon them, and that way was to believe in Him and try to be like Him, and so they would draw near to God. For only by being like Him could they come into God's kingdom. And thus Jesus the Messiah was the Saviour of the people, not from the Romans, but from themselves. "I am the way," He said; and His followers were known as the believers in "the Way," when Paul first came among them.

Paul Hears about Jesus.

TARSUS : AGED 30-40.

WHEREVER Paul was during the occurrence of these great events in Palestine, he would be among Jews, and would hear rumours and reports from time to time, from those who had been at the festivals in the golden temple, of what was taking place in Jerusalem. He would hear of John the Baptist, perhaps, from one who had seen him in his dress of camel's hair at the fords of the Jordan, and he would be indignant when his head was cut off by King Antipas, for John was a priest's son.

He would hear, too, of Jesus, the young prophet of Galilee, the village carpenter, who had taught the people without authority, and had said He was the Messiah. He would have His appearance described by those who had seen Him at the temple festivals, and would be told that they had never heard such wonderful speaking. He would hear that He had spoken against the rabbis, and had broken their rules, and told the people not to obey them; and Paul would feel the deepest indignation, and would hope that the rabbis would put Jesus down with a strong hand and scatter His followers. And when he heard that He had been seized by the Sanhedrim, and tried, and put to death, he would believe that Jesus was a blasphemer, who deserved to be stoned, according to the law, and that He had been rightly crucified by Pilate.

And Paul would continue his study of the Law and the Traditions with greater satisfaction, in the belief that one more false Messiah had been put down who had attempted to teach something different from the old established religion; for he was proud to belong to the sect of the Pharisees, which Jesus had called serpents, vipers, hypocrites. Paul was no hypocrite. He believed what he had been taught by the rabbis, and his

constant aim was to obey better and better their countless rules, believing that by that way alone could he ever reach to the purity of life for which he longed.

And thus, in pursuit of that ideal life which has eluded so many, he went deeper and ever deeper into slavery and bondage, with a heart tender towards little rules and forms, but hard and merciless towards all who said that there was another way of serving God. However good, however pure Jesus the Galilean may have been, He had set Himself against the old order of religion, and with cold, cruel determination Paul thought that He deserved to die.

And he continued at his trade of tentmaker, shaping and stitching, spinning and weaving, buying and selling, not thinking that the future had anything very great in store for him, and believing that the followers of Jesus, who had loved Him while He was alive, would return to their homes and their fishing-boats, and forget all that the Nazarene had said. And he would be surprised when he heard that the Nazarenes, the men of "the Way," had not dispersed, but that the chief followers of Jesus had remained in Jerusalem, and were openly telling the people that He was Christ, the Messiah, and repeating His sayings, and declaring that He had risen from the grave, and was now in heaven with God.

As time passed, he would hear that some Pharisees of Jerusalem had joined them, and that the Nazarenes had a meeting-place of their own, just as the other sects had their synagogues, and that they had been allowed to teach openly in the city and temple, until some thousands of people had joined them. They had established a sect called Nazarenes of "the Way," who believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and that His teaching was the truth, for He showed the people the new way. And when he heard that a number of young priests from the temple had joined them, he would feel deep indignation that this new and false teaching should be allowed to spread until even priests and city rulers were giving way to it.

He would hear, too, that these fishermen-disciples of Jesus had been brought before the Sanhedrim for speaking openly in the temple, and that on one occasion his old master, Gamaliel, had advised that they should be let alone, saying that if their teaching was false it would come to nothing, but if it was from God they could not overthrow it, and might be found to be fighting against God. Paul did not agree with his old master. He had no doubt about the falseness of the teaching, and that they should be silenced. Uneducated fishermen had no right to

be teachers of religion to the people. But Gamaliel saw deeper than his young disciple, as Paul would yet discover.

Disputing with the Nazarenes.

JERUSALEM: AGED 30-40.

IT is not known when Paul returned to Jerusalem, but we find from his own writings that, true to his training, he ranged himself there against the Nazarenes and the followers of "the Way," as they were called, and gave all the help he could to the party amongst the rabbis who did not agree with Gamaliel that the new teaching should be let alone, to live or die of itself. On the contrary, he thought, with the majority of them, that it should be put down and stamped out.

Learned in all the learning of the scribes, quick, eloquent, and merciless, he would do his utmost to help in putting down, by argument, punishment, and persecution, the followers of One whose power was not of force and violence, but of reason and conviction through the truth of God. Paul did not yet believe in reason and conviction, but in authority backed by force. The whip, the rod, the sword, the stone, he believed, could drive out faith and love. He had yet to learn that there is a state in human affairs when the sword and the stone are as powerless to change the mind of man as they are to alter the aspect of the heavens.

He had no doubt that the people could be turned away from Jesus by force, and that the spread of convictions could be stopped by chains and imprisonment. Gamaliel did not think so. And in a spirit of cruelty quite unknown to his old master, he broke away from him, and offered his services to the high priest and those who said that the Nazarenes must be exterminated. He had hitherto been a humble tentmaker and a retired student, but soon he would be a public man in the great city. A self-righteous Pharisee, cruel as a priest, narrow as a scribe, he would enter upon that path of oppression and outrage which would end in his being unhorsed and thrown at the feet of Jesus, whose name and memory he was striving to stamp out of the world.

The eleven disciples chose Matthias to fill the place of Judas, and went daily to the temple to speak openly to the people about Jesus. Paul saw and heard them there, and most likely disputed with them with the scornful ability of a learned and eloquent

young rabbi. But still the accursed people, who knew not the law, listened to them, and joined the new sect of Nazarenes.

Jesus had left very few rules for their guidance in forming a sect. This was the main thing :—

“Hereby shall it be known that ye are My disciples, if you have fervent love one toward another.”

The Nazarenes tried at first to live together like a large family. They worshipped together daily, and had meals together, at which they solemnly broke bread, in loving memory, as Jesus used to do. When they spoke, it was of Jesus the Messiah, called in Greek the Christ, and of His having risen from the dead. All who joined them were baptized with water, as a sign of membership. The Jews had long been accustomed to the use of water as a sign of purifying. The priests used it, sometimes bathing, sometimes sprinkling, not once, but often, in their services and ceremonies. There were two kinds of Jews amongst the Nazarenes—Jews born in Palestine, who were called “Hebrews,” and had been taught to be strict about the Law and the Traditions, just as Paul had been; the others were Jews born in other countries, who were called “Greeks,” and spoke Greek, and were not nearly so strict as the Hebrews. They did not always get on quietly together, for they were broad and narrow, and differed in their beliefs, as many Christians do still.

The Nazarenes continued to increase, and some trouble arose about their poor; and they appointed seven good and upright men to see that they were rightly attended to, and amongst them was Stephen, a Greek Jew, who was so clever and learned that he soon became a leader. They spoke now, not only in the temple, but in the synagogues of Jerusalem, saying that Jesus was indeed the Christ, and that He had risen again; and they argued with all who would argue with them, and proved from passages in the Bible that Jesus was the very Christ. And some Jews believed them, but many thought they were talking foolishness.

Paul would take part in these synagogue discussions, trying to prove to them, also from the Bible, that Jesus was not the Christ. The apostles did not at first speak against the temple, the rabbis, and their rules, as Jesus did. They believed in the religious law as taught by the rabbis, and kept the feasts and fasts. The one great thing they wished was to get the people to see that Jesus was the promised Christ, and that He had risen from the dead.

Stephen the Speaker.

JERUSALEM: AGED 30—40.

BUT Stephen was not born in a country overshadowed by the great temple of Jerusalem, where the word of priest or rabbi was a command not to be disobeyed. He came from another land, and had seen and heard Jesus; and the light of His face and the sound of His voice had set his heart on fire. He was inspired with the truth from His lips; and if he spoke, it would be nothing more and nothing less than he had heard from his Master. He, too, went to the synagogues and argued with the chief Jews, telling them what Jesus said about the temple and Moses, about the false rabbis and their false teaching, their clean and unclean meats, their fastings and washings, and he roused their most bitter hatred. He was well known in the synagogue of the Libertines, freed Jews from Rome, and in other synagogues of the Jews from Africa, Egypt, Asia, including the province of Cilicia, of which Tarsus was the capital; and Paul would without doubt encounter him in the Cilician synagogue.

But the Nazarenes did more than preach and dispute in temple and synagogue. They went through the streets of the city, talking with the people at their doors, and persuading men and women to join them, so that it became apparent to the priests that they were determined to form a strong sect. Some of the Pharisees favoured them a little, because they taught their favourite doctrine of the resurrection; but the Sadducees hated them for that very reason. The strife grew in bitterness. In the synagogues they were called blasphemers, who spoke against Moses and God—men who wished to overthrow the temple and the religious law, and change all the old customs that had come down from the ancient rabbis. And there was just enough truth in this charge to make them seem very bad to ignorant people.

Pilate, who had condemned Jesus, was no longer the Roman governor. He had got into trouble with the Samaritans, and Vitellius, the ruler of Syria, was now governor of Jerusalem. Caiaphas, the cruel high priest, had been dismissed, and Jonathan put in his place.

In these synagogue discussions Paul grew angry, because he found that with all his learning he was not able to silence the Nazarenes in debate, and he hated the very sight of them. He thought it intolerable that they should be allowed to go from street to street and house to house spreading their religion, or

be permitted to speak in the temple and synagogues. He was a Zealot for the religious law, and he believed they were trying to set it aside; and when he spoke, it was to tell the people that these Nazarenes should be put down and punished for teaching things contrary to the law, and that when they said Jesus was the Christ they were saying what was false and blasphemous, for he had studied the Bible.

When he went to his own synagogue he found them there, speaking and trying to persuade the Cilician Jews to join them, and he opposed them with all his might. Of the Nazarenes he found Stephen the most learned and powerful—so powerful that, with all his knowledge and ability, he was unable to show that what Stephen said was false. He then realized that this new sect could quote the Bible and point to Jewish history as well as he; and then he reviled them, calling them blasphemers. And in these discussions he had to listen to much of the life and sayings of Jesus which he did not forget.

He was now a young rabbi—for his learning, purity of life, eloquence, and zeal for the law entitled him to that name—and in time he became a member of the Sanhedrim. There he found himself in opposition to his old master Gamaliel, for he did not hesitate to urge that the only way to put down the Nazarenes was to use their full powers against them, and punish them without mercy as law-breakers. And whenever Nazarenes were brought up on a charge of breaking the law and being followers of Jesus, he spoke against them; and when it came to the vote, he voted against them. He was sure he was doing God service in this; and he had no mercy on them, for he believed they deserved none until they confessed their faults, gave gifts to the temple, and were restored to favour by the priests.

Whoever spoke against the Law of Moses and the traditions of the rabbis, or said that Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, was the Christ and Son of God, deserved death as a blasphemer; and Paul was not afraid to say it, for he was no hypocrite. Jesus, he thought, was a deceiver, and one of the worst agitators that had ever led the people astray; and if His followers did not see that for themselves, the only way was to punish them until they cursed Jesus, and to banish or put to death all who called upon His name and would not give Him up. It is sad to relate this of Paul, but it shows us the danger of blind bigotry—a danger which has been seen with terrible results in the lives of many other religious leaders. But when the change came in Paul it would be the greater, because of his present blindness and fury.

Stephen a Prisoner.

JERUSALEM : AGED 30—40.

PRIESTS with their naked feet, Sadducees with embroidered robes of purple and gold, rulers of the city in tunics of striped colours, Pharisees in shining white linen, scribes and lawyers, some old and white, some young with black hair curling on their shoulders, are coming in one by one into the council chamber of the Sanhedrim, and taking their seats, with legs crossed, upon the crimson cushions arranged in a half-circle. Perhaps it is the hall of hewn stones, with its row of windows looking down upon the bright pavement of the women's court of the temple, flooded with strong sunshine. They are gathering to try another Nazarene; and Paul is among them, in the pure white dress of a strict Pharisee, with grave face and piercing grey eyes, his black hair almost hidden by the kerchief that covers his head.

Many of them were there when Jesus, the Holy One, was condemned, and since then they had had His disciples Peter and John, and many others, before them; and although they commanded them to keep silence, their orders had not been obeyed, and the sect of the Nazarenes had gone on increasing. These bold speakers, Peter and John, were joined by others equally bold, who openly accused the Sanhedrists of killing the Messiah, the Saviour of the people; and Stephen, one of the boldest of them all, had been taken a prisoner, and they were going to try him for blasphemy. They considered him a dangerous opponent; for not only was he a very good man, but he was learned and eloquent, and had no fear. They had threatened, they had argued, but they could not silence him with words. They would silence him with blows.

The Sanhedrim had seventy members, and Jonathan, the high priest, was in the middle of them as chairman. There sat the white-faced Caiaphas, and his father-in-law, the wolf-eyed Annas, who condemned Jesus. There sat Alexander, Theophilus, and Matthew, sons of Caiaphas; and there sat the benevolent Gamaliel, and Paul, his impatient scholar. Paul, who had often said that such a man as Stephen did not deserve to live, was to sit as one of his judges. It was in this state of mind that he took his seat in a court to try a man whom he regarded as an enemy to his religion, his nation, and his God.

Stephen was to be tried by a religious court, made up of what

we should call professors, clergymen, and elders of the National Church, and for what we should call heresy, but which they called blasphemy; with this great difference, that they had power not only to put Stephen out of the church—he was out already—but to whip, imprison, or sentence him to death by stoning. There was once a court like that in our own land, only of fewer men, and all priests; but instead of stoning men to death, they burned them. We trust those days will never return.

He had been kept in prison until the day of trial. He was waiting now, and the witnesses were ready to swear to what they had heard him say, and more. The place was crowded with people who had come to see him tried—enemies, who hated him and wished him dead; friends, who loved him, and hoped he would get off with a light punishment. All looked at him as he came in and answered the high priest fearlessly that he was no blasphemer. Then the witnesses were called, who said they had heard him speaking against the temple and the traditions of the rabbis, saying that Jesus would destroy the temple and change the customs made by Moses. There was enough truth in this and enough lies to bring heavy punishment on him. The charge was partly the same as was made against Jesus, his Master, of speaking against the temple and the laws of Moses.

“Are these things so?” demanded the high priest; which was like saying, “Guilty, or not guilty?” Stephen was ready. The time had come for making the speech for which he was prepared. Whether it would be death or life was in God’s hand. He would speak the truth that was in him. Standing forward, he paused before speaking, and looked round at the hushed crowd; and as he did so, his friends said his face was beautiful as an angel’s. God was with him. Looking fearlessly at the men, old and young, his judges, “Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken to me,” he said slowly, speaking in Greek. He believed he would find some friends among them, as John and Peter had done. Beginning with Abraham, he spoke of Jewish history, to show that men might worship elsewhere than in the temple, and repeated these words from the Bible:—

“God dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Heaven is His throne, earth His footstool. What house will you build Him? or what is the place of His rest? Hath He not made all things?”

He sought to convince them he was right in what he had said about the temple and Moses, but he could not tell, from the gloomy, thoughtful, angry faces before him, whether he had succeeded. No doubt there were some who thought there was much worth thinking over in the words of this young man who knew

Scripture so well. But there was something else that he must refer to. What about Jesus the Nazarene? Would He defend what he had said to the people about Him?

Stoning Stephen.

JERUSALEM: AGED 30-40.

THE Nazarenes had never been afraid to tell the people of Jerusalem that they had killed the Just One, and many expressed sorrow for what had been done. When Peter was before the Sanhedrim he accused them, and had not been punished. Stephen was about to do the same, and in even bolder language call upon the men who had condemned Jesus to repent and express sorrow for their horrid cruelty. It was becoming plain to the priests that the death of Jesus would not end His teaching. As they sat listening to Stephen, some of them wondered when he would mention Jesus' name. He would do it now. Looking fearlessly upon his judges, he said,—

“You are obstinate and unjust. You are resisting the power of God, as your fathers did before you. Which of the good men of old did your fathers not persecute? They killed the men who told of the coming of Jesus the Just One, whom you have betrayed and killed. You received the law of Moses as if it had been from angels on Mount Sinai, but you do not obey it.”

There was a noise of angry voices in the hall, for his judges were pricked to the heart with what he was saying. They did not feel rebuked or sorry, but rather that Stephen was insulting them all, and they could scarce keep still.

But a strange thing happened. He stopped speaking, and stood with head raised, and eyes gazing upwards, as if seeing a vision in the skies.

“I see the heavens opened,” they heard him say, in the stillness, “and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”

He was not allowed to say more. “Blasphemy, blasphemy, blasphemy!” rose in shrieks from his enemies. Some put their fingers in their ears, to keep out the unholy words; others sprang to their feet, as if to strike him. The chief priest held up his hand for silence, as he ordered Stephen to be taken out. Instead of one man doing so, several rushed at him, and he was pushed, dragged, hustled from the council hall.

They soon settled what was to be done. When Jesus stood

before them, He said, "You shall see Me sitting on the right hand of God." And Caiaphas had exclaimed, "Blasphemy, blasphemy! We need no more witnesses." It was so with Stephen now. In the opinion of these stern judges, to say that Jesus was standing at God's right hand was also blasphemy. The law of Moses was well known,—

"He that blasphemeth the name of God shall surely be put to death, and all the people shall stone him. Thou shalt not hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare him. Thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. Thou shalt stone him with stones till he die, because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God."

Terrible and cruel as these laws of Moses were, every one of the seventy judges knew them off by heart, and thought them righteous. Paul thought so too. The chief priest was bound to put the question, "Guilty, or not guilty?" and take the vote. It was quickly done, Paul voting with the rest. The sentence was: "Let him be stoned until he die, according to the law."

The trial was over. Judges, old and young, rose from their places to go out; for no one asked himself the only question that was of any importance—whether Stephen's words were blasphemy or simple truth. They had the rules of the rabbis for that, and with these they were content.

Paul was so well pleased with the trial that he was ready to assist in carrying out the terrible sentence. No doubt there were others equally willing, but his hatred of the Nazarenes was so great that he took a leading part.

With hands bound, and in charge of temple guards, Stephen was led along the narrow streets, out through the city gate, out to a field where there were stones enough, while the words, "Blasphemer! Nazarene!" rose from the crowds of idlers, who were encouraged to come and help at the stoning. It was the law of Moses that the witnesses who had spoken against him must fling the first stones; and they prepared to do so by taking off their heavy outer cloaks, pulling up their loose tunics, and tightening their girdles, that they might be the more free to hurl stones. And they laid their cloaks in a heap at Paul's feet, who was to watch them and see that no low person stole them while they were busy killing Stephen. That was to be his work.

The people stood back, lest a stray stone should hit them; while Stephen knelt on the ground, and covering his face with his hands to shut out the monsters around him, he prayed to God. And there, amid the yells and jeers of the crowd, in the name of God

and Moses they stoned him to death calling upon God to receive his spirit. Before he died he cried in a voice of agony, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Paul heard, and could scarcely believe it. Was it possible that Stephen was praying for him? And some in the crowd remembered that when Jesus was nailed upon the cross they heard Him cry, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He was indeed a faithful follower of that Holy One.

If Stephen's prayer aroused any feelings of pity in Paul's breast, he crushed them down, believing that he deserved to die. He thought that the stoning of this leading Nazarene would have a great effect upon the rest, and would be a terrible example of what would be done to them if they did not give up their new religion. And yet what he heard and what he saw that day in field and hall was so burned upon his memory that it remained seared and black to the end of his life.

Many have wondered, and the question has often been asked, "How could Paul do it? How was it possible that Paul could help to stone Stephen?" The story of his life from childhood up to now is my answer. He had been taught to believe without thinking. But that could no longer be. The awful events of that day roused his conscience with the blows of stones. From that hour he began to think for himself. Had he begun earlier, he might have been kneeling in Stephen's place, stoned for Jesus' sake.

Persecuting the Nazarenes.

JERUSALEM: AGED 30-40.

STEPHEN was dead, and his friends buried him with tears and sorrowing. Paul and the Sanhedrim soon found that his death had no effect in stopping the Nazarenes, but rather increased their boldness, for they told the people that he had been cruelly murdered. They then determined that in every synagogue where there were Nazarenes the council should persecute them and put them down. Paul, with the intolerance of a zealot for the law, thought that stamping out these Nazarenes by persecution and death was the plain duty of the Sanhedrim. And as the best proof of his belief, he offered to lead the persecutions, and his offer was willingly accepted.

Obedience to the Law and the Traditions was the only way for a man to lead a good life, and this belief he was determined to force upon the Nazarenes by whip, club, chains, imprisonment,

dagger, stone, and sword. Believe or die were his watchwords. He was indignant that uneducated men should presume to speak, and yet he had heard deep things.

Stephen and he were agreed on one thing—that the higher life was all that was worth striving after. He had heard Stephen in the Cilician synagogue arguing for his ideal of a higher life against Paul's ideal, and his vexation was great that he could not beat him in that argument. He had met for the first time a man who asserted and proved that the higher life, the holy life, could be reached by another way than by obedience to the Law and the Traditions. He learned from Stephen that the way of Jesus began from within and worked outwards, while the way of the rabbis began with outward laws. A man might keep all the rules and customs of the religious law and yet be wicked. Alas, he knew many such! There was something wanting in his system which should make hypocrisy impossible. Jesus was holy, Stephen was a good man, except that they did not obey the Law as he did. The Nazarenes, whatever else they were, did not lead bad lives. Jesus had said that the first thing was to make the tree good, and the fruit would be good also. The way to make a man good was to have the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and the signs of goodness would be seen in his life. Here there was no blank, nothing wanting.

In his disputes with Stephen and the other Nazarenes, he had heard them repeat many of the sayings of Jesus. He knew them, for he had tried to refute them again and again. He could not deny that His was beautiful teaching, and that the holy life of Jesus was a living example of what He taught.

Paul was thinking now. He was forced to think about these sayings of Jesus and about His death. They would not leave him. The dawn was breaking upon him: he saw that there were other things than the Law and the Traditions for which a man might be willing to lay down his life, and other ways of making men good than by blind obedience to ancient rules.

He had listened carefully to every word of Stephen's defence before the Sanhedrim, and it sank deep into his heart. He could not deny the truth of it. He remembered the aged Gamaliel's warning about fighting against God. What did Stephen see in his vision in the Sanhedrim? He could not get out of his mind Stephen's face as he knelt on the field of stones praying for his murderers, *praying for him*. For the first time in his life, he had seen the awful spectacle of a good man being brutally killed, not for deeds of wickedness, but for abstract opinions which even the strokes of death could not change.

Paul was thinking; but the end of his thoughts, sometimes impatient, sometimes sad, was ever the same. He was right and Stephen was wrong! But still the thoughts came whispering back again and again. In wrath he exclaimed that there was no way out of it but putting down the Nazarenes with a strong hand; words were wasted upon such men. A man is never more bitter and violent against another than when he differs from him about how to save his soul. Thousands have been put to death for their soul's good; and violence grows in bitterness and intensity as a man finds himself weak in argument but mighty in power. We are told that the darkest hour is just before the dawn. Paul's hatred of the Nazarenes grew fiercer, because their teaching had taken hold on him. He could not shake it off. Violence, persecution, noise, work, activity, were the things to silence these inward voices that were calling him to account.

The high priest and his chief friends were Sadducees, who hated Jesus and the Nazarenes with a special hatred for proclaiming the Pharisee belief in a life beyond the grave; yet Paul found them quite ready to give him power to persecute. With the written authority of the Sanhedrim in his hand, and their servants to obey his orders, he began his cruel work. Entering the meeting-place of the Nazarenes in Jerusalem and the synagogues where they spoke, he ordered them to give up their faith in Jesus and His teaching, or if they did not they would be whipped and beaten with rods. He forbade them to meet together and worship in His name. But this did not put an end to their gatherings, and he caused men to go to their homes and seize men and women and take them away bound, to be brought before the council, where they were ordered to be put in prison until they would give up their new faith and speak against Jesus.

From week to week, from month to month, Paul carried on his fierce persecutions, dealing out imprisonment, the scourge, whipping, death to the Nazarenes—threatening everywhere that he would not rest until he had hunted them all out of Jerusalem. When he was present at their trials, he spoke against the poor, trembling prisoner, and voted for his punishment.

The effect upon the Nazarenes was terrible. They called his work devastation, and many fled in terror from the city, glad to get away from this fierce young Pharisee. Others remained, and giving up their faith in Jesus, returned to the old religion rather than face the council.

But the apostles did not fly. We cannot tell why they were not killed. Perhaps being Palestine Jews, who obeyed the Law and the Traditions, they were not so likely to be punished for

saying Jesus was the Christ as foreign Jews like Stephen, who had not the same regard for the rules of the Jerusalem rabbis. Paul did not persecute the leaders so much as he did the common people. So the disciples remained worshipping daily in the temple, while the humbler Nazarenes were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria by this terrible young rabbi. He thought that in hunting them out of Jerusalem he was doing good. And so he was, but in a different way from what he intended, for they carried their precious faith with them.

Flight of the Nazarenes.

JERUSALEM : AGED 30-40.

THE Nazarenes who fled in terror out of Jerusalem into the open country spread the new religion wherever they went ; so that instead of putting out the fire, the persecution of the Sanhedrim served only to scatter it further. Many fled to Samaria, where Paul had no power to pursue them ; and among them was Philip, who, like Stephen, was one of the seven deacons, and a foreign Jew. When he told the people of Samaria that he had been driven out of Jerusalem for believing in Jesus, they received him kindly, for they remembered the young Prophet of Galilee who had lived among them ; and when Philip spoke to them about Jesus and the kingdom of God, a good many became Nazarenes, and were baptized.

When the apostles heard of this, they sent Peter and John ; and Philip baptized a black officer of the Queen of Ethiopia, who became a Nazarene. In baptizing him he did what the apostles would not have done ; for they thought that no man could be a Nazarene unless he became a Jew first and received the mark of a Jew. And this was the first-fruit of the broad teaching of Jesus, who said that Jews and foreigners could alike become followers of Him.

And still the scattered Nazarenes of Jerusalem carried the glad tidings of the new gospel through the land, and people who had heard and seen Jesus joined together in little companies when they learned how those of Jerusalem had joined together, calling themselves the followers of "the Way." They had lost heart when Jesus was killed, but now the story of His resurrection, and that He was the Christ, raised hope and faith anew in their hearts.

Paul was met with a fresh difficulty. He had driven the Nazarenes out of Jerusalem, but as months went by he received reports that they were spreading their teaching among the synagogues wherever they could get people to listen. There was no turning back now. He must pursue these people and hunt them down everywhere. The Sanhedrim had power to issue orders to all the synagogue councils, and through them he threatened punishments and death to the Nazarenes wherever they might be, in or out of Jerusalem. Then the Nazarenes began to leave Palestine also, and go into foreign countries, carrying the new gospel of Jesus still further afield, like seed scattered by a strong wind.

He heard that there were Nazarenes in the synagogues of Damascus, and he resolved to go thither himself and bring prisoners back to Jerusalem to be punished. So he went to Theophilus, the high priest, and asked him for a written letter to the synagogue council there, giving him full power to do as he wished, and the letter was given. Damascus was a very old city of Syria, and under the same Roman governor as Jerusalem; and the synagogue was, of course, under the Jerusalem Sanhedrim. He got a guard to protect him, and was soon ready to start.

How changed was Paul now from the tentmaker's boy whom his mother embraced with tears when she left him in Jerusalem! It is difficult to think how the fair-haired dancing child of Tarsus could become a slaying persecutor. To understand this we have closely traced his life. We have seen the child become the school-boy, the student, the young teacher, the strict Pharisee, and the violent speaker. At one bound he flung away reason and persuasion, and seized the scourge and the sword, with which to put down his opponents. Not words but blows were to be his arguments. And now we find him whipping and murdering his brother Jews for not believing as he believed, even going at the head of a band of careless, irreligious soldiers to seize men and women who had never done him any harm. And yet he tells us in his writings that even now, while he was a persecutor, one of his own near relations had already become a Nazarene.

But he was rapidly reaching the limit of what he could do. He could not advance beyond imprisonment and death. If people would rather die than give up Jesus, what then? Killing them would not change their religion. He was powerless if they defied him still. He could advance no further by that way. Was there not another way? What about Stephen's way, which was Jesus' way—the way of gentleness and persuasion?

Amid the clattering of horses' feet, the ringing of armour,

and the shouts of rough soldiers, he rode out of Jerusalem, not like a quiet scholar whose whole desire was to spend his life in learning the Law and the Traditions, but like a stern, threatening officer. In desperation the ecclesiastic had turned soldier. He had filled the prisons with the first martyrs for Christ, and he was riding out for more. When priests become soldiers they excel in cruelty, and Paul was among that class. Soldiers often fight without anger, but priests fight at white heat.

He was now in the open country, away from the whirl and excitement of Jerusalem and the daily contact with zealots as fierce as himself, who had excited him to greater activity and violence by saying that death was the only thing for men who spoke against the Law of Moses. There was plenty of time for reflection, for he had no companion with whom he could talk as an equal. He was a learned rabbi; they were careless soldiers. He had thus a week of monotonous riding before him—a week the most of which would be spent in travelling through the land of Jesus.

Fighting against God.

PALESTINE: AGED 30-40.

IN that week of thought, the actions of the new and stirring period of his life would pass like a panorama through his mind, with long backward glances at his tranquil life before. His universe, which used to be one of books and wise sayings, had rapidly changed into a world of scourges, clubs, chains, daggers—the weapons of a public persecutor. The change was not pleasant. Was it right, without a doubt? One thing was becoming plainer every day—that it was beyond his power to put down the Nazarenes by force. Was Jesus greater than the Sanhedrim?

He had wished to live a life of righteousness under the Law, but the more he strove after it, the more impossible it had become. Rules were added to rules, and even the rabbis had to admit that it was impossible to keep them all, and therefore impossible for any man to be perfect. And when he thought of the zealots in Jerusalem—some of them murderers, liars, robbers—he had to confess that the fruit of all their zeal for the Law was poor indeed. From childhood he had been learning, learning, learning, but he was no nearer the end; such learning gave him little pleasure, small hope, and no peace. Where for

him was that peace of God amid a world of strife of which Jesus spoke? He knew none of it.

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” That was another of His sayings, and Stephen had possessed it. But he knew no peace, only constant fighting with others and with himself.

In his disputes with the Nazarenes he had heard over and over again what were the grounds of their faith in Jesus, and he had been forced to know, learn, and meditate over many of His sayings, in order to meet and refute them if he could. He had to admit that there were truth and beauty in them, and he did not wonder that His followers loved the gentle Galilean. Their confidence, too, in pointing to the Bible as proof that Jesus was the Christ was very difficult to meet. He had to take up sticks and stones instead of words. And what was the result? In his death Stephen triumphed over his enemies. With clear and holy mind, he had prayed for forgiveness as he was dying—*not for himself, but for them*—rising at once far above all their hatred and human rules. Jesus too had risen beyond the power of torture and death. *He too had prayed for His enemies.* Could it be that Jesus and Stephen were greater than he? for they must have been purer and holier.

At one time he thought he had only to persecute them without mercy in Jerusalem and the Nazarenes would disappear; but they fled out to the country, gaining sympathy and friends wherever they went. Like a dam broken up, their new religion was forming streams and pools everywhere. Here he had failed.

But he could not now stop or go back. He hated it, but it was necessary. He was going to Damascus to bring back Nazarenes for punishment. But that was only one town to which they had fled. What a prospect lay before him of journeys and persecutions! He would have to go to every town in which a Nazarene was to be found, and stop him by force from speaking of what was in his mind. In Galilee alone there were thousands who knew Jesus, and would take up arms if they were touched; for the Galileans were hot and impetuous. And these sayings of Jesus—would they ever die? The people who heard them would never forget them. How could he put down the sayings of Jesus? Thus far Gamaliel had been right, for persecution had only spread the new teaching.

Was it possible for Jesus to be the Christ? That single question was enough to make him repeat all the books of the Bible as he rode along, lingering over every passage in which the hope of the Jews was spoken about, and there were many. He would

ponder long over those passages which Stephen used in his speeches, until the thought flashed across his mind like a meteor and disappeared. *It is not impossible for Jesus to be the Christ.*

This raised many fresh questions for his scrupulous conscience to answer. Was he right in what he was doing, or might he be wrong? Would it not have been wiser to let these Nazarenes alone, to rise or fall, and to go on with his studies as before, instead of leading this persecution? He could not stifle these uneasy voices. He had been warned by his master, Gamaliel, that he might be found to be fighting against God. Was he not doing so? Was Stephen's way of righteousness, which gave him such marvellous strength and power, not, after all, the true way? Could his own way of obedience to the Law ever give him such strength? Was not the gentle Galilean the very ideal Christ written of in the Bible, and His new and beautiful teaching what might be expected of the Son of God?

From the time that questions like these entered Paul's life there was no more rest for him. Just as he had to exterminate the Nazarenes, so would he have to conquer all these doubts, or they would conquer him. He could not lay them on one side. They would not let him alone. They had to be answered, yes or no. He had so long striven after righteousness that his conscience was constantly pricking him, but never before did he have such a vital question to answer.

Was he doing right or doing wrong in persecuting the followers of Jesus? It cut into the quick. If wrong, then how dreadful was the wrong! His brain became a whirl of agony when it appeared possible to him that he was persecuting the Christ, and putting Him afresh to death in these unresisting Nazarenes, and heaping sin upon himself by fighting against God. Disappointed in his efforts after righteousness under the Law, defeated in disputation, foiled in his attempt to crush the Nazarenes in Jerusalem, he was riding forth upon a hopeless persecution, with fear in his heart, his conscience on fire against him, protesting against his madness. A crisis was at hand. Was he or was he not right in pursuing gentleness with a naked sword? Conscience whispered no; his mind answered loudly yes. And still he rode on with bowed head.

Through Jesus' Land.

GALILEE : AGED 30-40.

MOUNTED upon an ass, with the sealed and signed letter of the high priest folded in his tunic, and horses' feet clattering around him upon the stony road, Paul rode on with his face grimly set for Damascus, whither he was going as the representative of the great head of the Jewish Church. He had left far behind him the temple with its roof of gold. He had left that bare rocky mound without the city wall, so often visited by the Nazarenes, where the cross of Jesus stood. He had left the tree-clad Mount of Olives. People said the young Prophet wept as He rode over that hill surrounded by rejoicing friends—wept not for Himself, but for Jerusalem. The rabbis said that in the temple He told the people openly that he was the Son of God, and had called upon them to believe in Him.

As Paul rode along the ridge of the bare hills of Judea, and through the wide, stony valleys, he saw far down below him the trees that lined the banks of the Jordan, and he caught the flash of water in the sunshine. It was there that John the Baptist first told of the coming Christ, and people said they had heard voices in the air when Jesus was baptized. Looking from a hill-top, he saw the great blue Mediterranean, which he knew better than the windings of the Jordan. As he rode through the stony plain of Bethel, he saw the place where Jacob rested, calling it the house of God and gate of heaven. Was God in that stony valley as well as in the golden temple?

When the rich and fruitful plain of Esdraelon spread out before him, he saw it dotted over with many farms and villages, rich fields, fruitful vineyards, and olive gardens, bounded by the Carmel range, the round and wooded Mount Tabor, and the green hills of Nazareth beyond. Only a few years ago, the feet of Jesus had walked along these dusty roads and hard field paths, and through every one of these straggling villages, and He had rested from the heat in many of the white houses. There was not a tree that He had not seen, not a house in which His face was not remembered, not a man or woman but could tell a story of Him and repeat some of His sayings. Trees were there whose shade He had sought, stones on which He had rested. Through these red lanes in the fields He had been followed by little children, to whom He turned and spoke kind words.

Paul was riding through these peaceful scenes with soldiers

at his back. But were he to ask yonder young mother returning from the well, with a red earthenware jar on her head and a rosy child clinging to her dress, if she knew Jesus, and what she thought of Him, she would answer,—

“He who went about doing good? There was none like unto Him. He blessed my child.”

But the Law forbade Paul to speak to a woman by the way.

Across that wide plain and he would be close to the vale of Nazareth and the white village near the head, whence Jesus came, and over the round stones of whose streets He ran with bare feet when a child. He had heard that for seventeen years He worked there as a village carpenter, before coming to Jerusalem to tell the rabbis that they were false teachers and blind guides. While he, Paul, was learning year after year the weary Laws and Traditions, Jesus was cutting wood with axe and saw; and yet He had spoken with authority—a thing which Paul could not do. There, in the little white synagogue, Jesus had been rejected by His own friends and neighbours for speaking as if He were the Christ.

If Paul stopped countrymen on the road, or called them up from the fields to make inquiries, asking them what they knew about Jesus, he would find them very slow to say anything more than that He was good and kind. Had they ever seen Him? Yes; His face was like the face of an angel. Had they heard Him speak? Yes; no man ever spake like Him. At the inns where he slept he would hear stories of His kindness and of His sayings, which were the common talk up and down the country. He would hear, too, that Jesus had been killed by the priests at Jerusalem, but that some said He was not dead. He would find much to think about as he rode through Jesus' land.

Passing the Blue Lake.

GALILEE : AGED 30.

PAUL was now in green Galilee, the home of Jesus. Every man or woman he met had seen or heard of Him—the woman at the door, the man in the field, the shepherd sheltering from the sun under the tree; and there he could learn more in an hour about the real Jesus than in a year in Jerusalem, for the common people loved Him.

His eyes looked upon the blue lake of Gennesaret flashing in

the sun. Jesus had sailed there, and had lived for weeks at a time in yonder town of Capernaum. As he gazed at the surrounding hills, the fruitful plain, the winding streams, the white beach, the far undulating shore with towns and villages round it, the deep mirror and the brown-sailed fishing-boats upon it, his eyes were feasting upon a scene that was dear to the Nazarenes. Not only had Jesus lived and taught more beside these shores than anywhere else, but the eleven disciples who had lived with Him, and were now defending His memory and spreading His teaching so fearlessly, had come from near that lake.

People said that the young Prophet used to speak to crowds from a fishing-boat as it rocked in the water, while they stood close packed upon the beach. On a slope of yonder hill He chose His disciples, and told them what they were to do when He was killed. Capernaum, Bethsaida, Magdala, Cæsarea—in all these towns His appearance was familiar, and His sayings were better known by the common people than those of the greatest rabbis of Jerusalem.

What did the people by the lake side think of this young Carpenter from the hills above them? They thought He was indeed a great prophet, if He was not the very Christ Himself. Before Paul passed out of Jesus' country, he had reason to feel the full hopelessness of the task he had come out upon. Put down Jesus and His followers! stamp out the memory of His kind acts! blot out His sayings! He might as well try to empty yonder blue lake with his hand.

"What think ye of Jesus?" That question had been often asked. Now it had come home to himself. Whose Son is He? Could it be possible that all He had said and done in these three years was only the work of a man? Had He the spirit of evil in Him, as the Sadducees said? Paul rejected that slander of the hated Sadducees with rising anger. Whatever Jesus was, He was not wicked. Was He righteous, then? Was God in Him, as He himself said? Was it possible that, led on by the Sadducees of Jerusalem, they had killed a great Prophet, as their fathers had done before? Was Stephen right when he said so? And Stephen, too, they had killed.

Thinking and riding, Paul passed away from the lake and its towns and villages, where even the very children loved the name of Jesus, and kept on to the northward, past the marshy Lake Merom, where the black heads of the horned buffalo appeared amongst the reeds, and the wild fowl rose in flocks. Crossing the Jordan by the Roman bridge, he came to the gay and beautiful city of Cæsarea, where a Nazarene would have been

to him as a friend, compared with the idolaters who worshipped wood and stone.

The road from this high and breezy city was along the foot of the cedar-clad Lebanon range, with mighty Mount Hermon lifting a cap of snow into the blue sky above him. Over hills and through valleys he pursued his way, for he was still some days distant from Damascus. At length he was out of the country of Jesus. No one could ride through it on such an errand without feeling the influence of his surroundings; for the passionate Galileans loved Jesus as deeply and strongly as the proud Judeans hated Him. There, amid these hills, vales, and woods, He lived and taught without fear of priests or rabbis; and no traveller could fail to learn what the people thought of Him, for the great question was being raised again by the persecuted Nazarenes everywhere: “What think ye of Jesus? whose Son was He?” And the question pierced Paul like an arrow. Another shaft was from the hand of his teacher Gamaliel—“Beware lest you be found to be fighting against God.” “You *are* fighting against God,” his conscience kept saying, in ever-louder tones. “I am fighting *for* God,” his brain replied. “What if He be the true Christ, the Son of God?” And this question woke a train of Scripture which left him still in doubt. And so he rode on, with doubts that were becoming torture to one who prided himself upon keeping a conscience void of offence toward God and man.

“Why persecutest thou Me?”

DAMASCUS: AGED 30-40.

WHEN he was persecuting the Nazarenes in Jerusalem, Paul was exceedingly mad against them, and his mental excitement did not grow less during his ride, as he kept asking himself the question, Was he fighting against God? From among the masses of black shelving rocks and loose boulders, strewn with cinders and lava powder, that covered the hills below the mighty Hermon, the road gradually descended eastwards to the lower country and the caravan road that wound through shallow valleys towards the distant city. He was now on the last stage of his journey. On the one hand were the green and beautifully-wooded hills and valleys of Gilead, on the other the bare ridges of the lower Lebanons, covered with rocks of black and grey, with here and there the ragged tops of dark-green cedars rising from the clefts.

The country through which he was riding was watered by two rivers, making the district rich and productive whichever way they turned. Villages of square white houses, cultivated fields, and spreading trees told him that the soil was richer than any near Jerusalem. From every rising ground he saw the grey houses of Damascus in the far distance, with towers and spires glittering in the sunshine, amid a landscape rich in trees: a striking contrast to the barren ashes and lava rocks from which he had come down—not unlike the Paul of the past and of the future.

For three miles around the ancient city, which is charming to this day, the country was beautiful with the foliage of trees of every shade of green, marking out the spots where the rich citizens had their spreading woods, their plantations of vine and olive, their pleasure gardens and their farms; so that when the sun shone upon the white houses and gleamed upon the green trees, the city looked, as a poet said, like a handful of pearls in a cup of emerald. By others it was called a garden of Eden. For there grew the feathery palm with crest of brightest green, the silver-leaved olive, the wide-spreading sycamore, and the tapering poplar; while the sunny vineyards between were the richest in all Syria, fed and nourished by the sweet waters of Pharpar and Abana.

Paul's eyes might well have rested with satisfaction and contentment on such a scene, after the paths of hot ashes and black rock through which he had passed; but it was not in the power of earthly loveliness to bring peace to a mind on fire with impatience to be at his journey's end, and to stifle in the activity and crowds of a city these whispering voices which assailed him amid the solitudes of the hills and valleys.

He saw the end of his journey, and was eager to be there; but the road descended into hot hollows, and the prospect of the fair city and its green surroundings disappeared from view. It is usual on such a journey to stop and rest in the shadow of thick trees during the fierce mid-day heat. But Paul would not rest. Word had already reached the city that he, the terrible persecutor of the Nazarenes, was on his way to seize the leading men and make them prisoners. And they dreaded his appearing. Something urged him on, and not even the unbearable heat of noon could stop him.

They were not far from the city, urging their animals forward with drooping heads in the sun-glare that burned upon the white road like living fire, with light almost as torturing to his eyes as if he had been looking at the sun itself. The air quivered with

heat around him. In that land, at that hour, the stillness is intense. Cattle lie down in the scant shade of rock or bush. No sound of tinkling camel-bells is heard, for the roads are deserted. The brooding stillness of the hour of fire was broken only by the dull, slow beat of their horses' feet in the dust. Suddenly a blaze of light poured out of the skies, and shone round about them with dazzling glory, and they all fell down upon the white road.

The soldiers rose to their feet at once. Paul did not rise, but lay prostrate, for he had been struck blind. The blaze of light was followed by a sound in the air. To the soldiers it was only a sound; but to Paul, filled with terror and amazement, it was the voice of God, saying to him,—

“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”

He had escaped death, and question and answer followed each other in rapid succession in his mind.

“Who art Thou, Lord?”

“I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.”

“What am I to do?”

“Rise, and go into Damascus, and there it will be told thee what thou must do.”

The men did not hear the message. When he rose and opened his eyes, they saw that he was blind; for he could not see them, but held out his hands as if to feel his way: so they took him by the hand and helped him, leading his ass along the road towards the city.

With the soldiers the whole thing was over in an instant's blaze of lightning and crash of thunder; but to Paul it was a revelation. He saw Jesus in the light, and heard Him in the sound, receiving this further message:—

“For this have I appeared to you, to make you a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and of what I will make known to you: delivering you from the people and from foreigners, to whom I shall send you to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to the light, and from evil to God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, and a place among them that are made pure by faith in Me.”

And thus, in a moment of deadly peril, Jesus was revealed in him, taking the mastery of his distressed mind, and pointing the way to his bewildered feet; for he was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but yielded himself to it—a vision of Jesus such as Stephen saw. As they went he told the soldiers of his vision, and of the voice and the message. And they were aston-

ished to hear him, the persecutor of Jerusalem, speaking in this way of Jesus the Nazarene, of whom he had said such terrible things, and whose followers he had come so far to persecute.

As they rode between the flickering trees that lined the road on each side close to the beautiful city, listening to his strange words, his companions were amazed at the sudden change which had come over their leader, and talked in whispers of the vision he had, but which they did not see; and of the voice he heard, but which they did not hear. Going through the low stone archway of the gate in the walls, they entered the city; and as they went along the tree-shaded, flower-scented streets, the people passing by saw the strange sight of a young Jewish rabbi from Jerusalem, well known by his striking white dress, being brought into their city blind, his ass led by the hand, and soldiers following him.

And it was whispered from one to another that this was Paul who had been sent by the high priest at Jerusalem to take prisoners those of the sect of the Nazarenes in the city, and that he had been struck blind as he rode, only a little way out from the city walls. And the news of his blindness and of what he said about it was carried to the Jews' quarter, where the Nazarenes were daily expecting his arrival with dread and fear. He was to live with Judas in the Straight Street, and thither the soldiers took him, and after telling what had happened they left him there, ill and blind.

In Darkness and Misery.

DAMASCUS : AGED 30—40.

DAMASCUS, with its rivers and roses, is said to be the oldest city in the world, and it was there, on the edge of the desert, a thousand years before Paul was born, and is there still. It used to be reached on soft-footed camels, over dusty roads; but now there is a railway, and the whistle and rattle of the steam-engine are heard. But still the golden river Abana, that comes winding down from the distant Anti-Lebanon hills, flows through the city, filling the troughs, wells, and fountains in the streets and gardens with cool, sweet water, to wind away towards the hot, fiery desert, where it is lost amid reed marshes and sand hollows.

When Paul rode into the city, it was surrounded with thick

stone walls, with towers upon them, and dark archways for the gates, so low that a loaded camel could scarcely get through. The principal street was about a mile long from the east to the west gates, with stone pillars down each side, supporting a narrow stone roof over the footway, that made a shaded path for the people when the sun was hot; and there was a fine stone arch across it. Remains of these pillars are still standing, along with the arch at the western gateway, through which Paul would enter. The people now call this the Straight Street in which he lived. There can be little doubt that he went up that street a blind man, and that often afterwards he walked in the shade of these pillared footways.

Vitellius, the Roman governor of Syria, permitted Aretas, an Arab chief, to call himself king of the city, and also allowed the Jews, who traded there in large numbers, to worship as they pleased. The news of Paul's arrival made a stir in the Jewish synagogues, for, as in Jerusalem, there had been frequent discussions with the Nazarenes about Jesus; and while some were glad that Paul was coming with a letter from the high priest, other Jews who were Nazarenes were in terror, for they had heard of his terrible cruelty in Jerusalem.

Among them was one Ananias, who, like Paul, was a believer in the Jewish Law and the Traditions, and kept them so well that he was called a good man by the Jews, until he joined the Nazarenes. He was deeply moved when he heard what had happened to Paul, and that Jesus had appeared and rebuked him. He knew he was lying ill at Judas's house, and wondered what would happen next. Would Paul carry out his threats when he got well? He dreamed one night that Jesus bade him go to Judas's house in the Straight Street and ask for Paul, because he had had a vision that Ananias would come and put his hands on him, that he might recover his sight. And when he awoke he believed God wished him to go and tell Paul of his dream and help him.

Now Paul was very miserable. His sight had not come back, and he was so ill that he would neither eat nor drink. In pain and darkness he was fighting out a conflict that would change the course of his life, and bring him forth from darkness into light. His face was turning towards God as repentance entered his heart. In persecuting the Nazarenes he had indeed been fighting against God. Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Christ and Son of God, and henceforth his life must move to that faith. Between the bitterness of remorse and doubt as to his future, he was in a state of fever and despair. Ill, blind, in a strange city, with

his priest's letter turned to ashes in his hand—what would the Sanhedrim say when they heard of it? What would the Nazarenes say? Would they believe him, or think he was telling lies to deceive them? But ever amid his darkness the golden vision of Jesus shone over him, and the message throbbed in his brain.

Jesus the Christ! On that bright thought he would turn from death to life, dying to the Jewish law and living to the Spirit of Jesus. But what that great change would mean he did not yet know, nor what he would do. When he thought of the death of Jesus, and Stephen, and others whose faces peopled his night, in pain and darkness he prayed to God and Jesus for pardon and guidance. And an answer was coming by a Nazarene, Ananias of Damascus, who would lay his hand on his burning eyes—burning from too much light—and tell him of love, pardon, hope.

The Great Change.

DAMASCUS : AGED 30—40.

THE wind sighed in the green trees by the house, the sunshine flooded the white street, the golden stars throbbed and glowed in the indigo sky, but the night and the day were alike to Paul. Three days passed, during which he lay sick and blind in the darkened room of Judas's house, and the Nazarenes in their secret meeting thought that when he recovered he would begin his dread work of persecution again. But when Ananias told them of his dream, hope sprang up. Perhaps the young rabbi would be warned, and go back to Jerusalem and leave them in peace. They bade Ananias obey the message from heaven, and go to Paul and urge him not to disobey the heavenly vision and he would be forgiven.

Going to Judas's house in the Straight Street, the timid Ananias asked for Paul, the young rabbi of Jerusalem; and there, in a darkened room, he saw the terrible young Pharisee who had scattered the Nazarenes, and had come with soldiers to bind him and his friends. There he lay, sick, silent, blind, miserable, unable to see him. Judas would tell Paul who had come, and that he was a Nazarene, well known for his obedience to the Jewish law, and a flush of expectation would light up his face. Going over to his low bed, Ananias put his hands upon his head, saying in a solemn voice,—

“Brother Paul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you in the way as you came, has sent me, that you might receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Paul's heart was deeply stirred. This was an answer to his cry and prayer. A Nazarene had called him “brother!” One of those he had come to scourge and imprison had visited him in his affliction, to speak words of comfort and encouragement. Here was a hand held out to him, to lead him back to firm ground. Hope rose, and his spirit was strengthened.

Who was this who stood in his darkened room like an angel of light? Oh that he could see him! Light came, and when Paul looked he could dimly see the man. Sight, banished in an instant of excessive light, was slowly returning to his pained eyes. When hope returns, strength comes. And as Paul lay there with eyes closed, he heard a voice from without, urging, pleading with him to become a Nazarene; and a voice within, calling him to rise and follow,—

“The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, and see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from His mouth.”

The voice confirmed the vision on the Damascus road. Ananias continued,—

“For you will be a witness for Jesus to all men of what you have seen and heard.”

This Nazarene, then, believed his story of the vision and the message. He had not come to tell him he was too wicked ever to be received by the followers of Jesus, but had poured the oil of hope upon his broken spirit.

In despair, Paul doubted if he could ever be forgiven for his crimes. How could they be blotted out? “Obey the call of Jesus,” said this gentle Nazarene. “Rise from the couch of death into a new life. Repentance brings forgiveness. Water is the sign of purification and renewal.”

“Why do you wait?” the voice said again. “Rise; be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.” He knew this was the Nazarene sign of repentance and membership. It would mark the great change by calling not only upon God, as he was accustomed to do, but upon Jesus, whom he once hated and persecuted, recognizing Him as his Lord and Master. Was he ready? Having seen the light, having seen the Lord, could he sink back into darkness? Yes, he was ready; but who was there to baptize him and hear his confession? Ananias would.

And there Paul, the cruel Pharisee, the learned rabbi, who had reached his place in the Sanhedrim by years of ceremonial observ-

ance, was taken out of his old dead existence into newness of life, the great change being marked by a simple Jewish sign, similar in kind to those washings and purifyings in the temple with which he was familiar. Before these two strange men he prayed with the faith of a little child that all his sins might be forgiven for Jesus' sake, calling upon His name for the first time in the Nazarene way; and as a sign that his cry was answered, Ananias baptized him with water. Paul rose from his knees a new man. Old things had passed away. He had come from darkness into light. He had died to the Law, and it was dead to him, that he might live to the Spirit. His old life was dead with Jesus on the cross; his new life rose with His resurrection to live for evermore. He was forgiven, but he would prove his repentance by his life. This gave him deep joy, and when food was brought he ate, and felt stronger, as he talked with the gentle Nazarene.

Joyfully Ananias walked away in the sunshine, to tell the Nazarenes of Damascus that not only was Paul not going to persecute them, but he had become a Nazarene and was baptized. Daily after that he would be found sitting in Paul's little room, talking with him about many things; for days would pass before he would be able to go out into the sunshine and the glare of the white streets. And Paul would listen as he had never done before to the sayings of Jesus which Ananias knew, and he would astonish the Nazarene by the power with which he would prove to him from the Bible that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Son of God.

And before he was well enough to go about the beautiful city, more Nazarenes would visit him in his confinement, to bring him fruit and wine and cakes, and encourage him in his resolve to be a teacher of the gospel of Jesus, as the voice of God within called him to be.

Paul the Nazarene.

DAMASCUS: AGED 30-40.

PAUL was now a Nazarene, but he had yet to renounce his old religion, in which he had been so strictly brought up and had risen so high, and to learn the new religion of Jesus, so that he might teach it to others. Up to this time he was an ordinary man, with no difference between him and other young Pharisees, excepting that he was exceptionally clever and zealous, with much to condemn in his daily conduct. His cruelty towards the

Nazarenes, which was not shared in by some of the best of the Pharisees and rabbis, leaves upon his life stains which are hard to wipe out, and enough to rank him with Pilate and Caiaphas, of whose dark deeds he showed his open approval by whipping and killing those who accused them of murdering Jesus. Had the stroke which he received on the Damascus road ended in death, his name would have come down to us covered with infamy. But he would live to clear it.

He humbly believed that God had forgiven his dreadful crimes, but he never forgave himself, and mourned for them to the end of his life, as something for which he could never atone. He had now turned his back upon these deeds of darkness, but had hardly yet taken one step in the way of Christ. A religious criminal, who outraged the sacred liberty of the human mind, he was to be received into the companionship of those whom he hunted—persons who had walked with Jesus, and drunk deep of His sweet spirit. Henceforth the Holy One of Galilee was to be his soul's star, the pattern of his life. Jesus went into the wilderness; so would he. But before doing so he would no doubt write a letter to the high priest, and send it back with the soldiers, announcing his conversion. Bidding farewell to the Nazarenes of Damascus, he disappeared into "Arabia." Where that was we cannot tell, but it would be a lonely region where he could live in solitude, perhaps in the desert, beyond the marshes of the two rivers.

We do not know how long he remained away, but he tells us in one of his letters that he did not talk with men, nor was he taught by any one there, but the gospel of Jesus was revealed to him by God. How different from his twenty years of study of the religious Law and the Traditions! It is not difficult to understand what were the things that engaged his meditation and prayer, and how the truth grew upon him during these solitary days and nights spent amid burning rocks and under flashing stars. He had to unwind the false bindings of a lifetime to reach the simplicity of Jesus.

Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, promised in the Bible, and in his meditations he thought over what he had heard from Stephen, Peter, Ananias, and the Nazarenes, and of the sayings of Jesus as far as he knew them; and again he would seek out and put together in close argument all the parts of the Bible which proved Him to be the expected Saviour of His race. And now he could prove to any rabbi who might dispute with him that Jesus was the Christ foretold by the ancient prophets.

It would also become clear to his mind that it was an error, based on false traditions of men, to think that the Christ was

to be a warlike king of a material kingdom. The Christ was a prince of peace, whose kingdom was a spiritual one, of righteousness, goodness, and peace, in the hearts of men, women, and little children. That, too, he could prove from the Bible.

This kingdom of God was not to be for Jews only, but also for strangers and foreigners. Jesus had said so, and the Bible showed it. And as he thought over the righteousness by keeping the religious law, after which he had toiled, and which was impossible, he turned to the other way of righteousness opened up by Jesus. He remembered that Jesus condemned the false teachers and the traditions of men; he remembered, too, his own anger when he heard of it; but now he realized that Jesus spoke the truth. It had been his own bitter experience. Righteousness by the Law was impossible. He had tried it. He would try Jesus' way. Henceforth he was dead to the righteousness of the Law. It had no more life in him. Jesus was the hope of glory.

Jesus had saved him; he would save others. The Holy One called upon men to give up rules and laws and follow Him. And he would obey the heavenly vision of Damascus, and would preach and teach the glorious liberty of the glad tidings of Jesus to Jews and strangers alike. He knew the hatred which these sayings of Jesus had raised in Jerusalem, where the rabbis taught that none but a Jew could enter heaven. He, too, would be called a vile renegade, whose word was not worth a feather's weight. But he would not shorten the truth. The gospel of Jesus was for the Jews first, and for all mankind, and he believed that foreigners would not resist it so much as Jews, who had killed the Holy One, and would cling to their old religion.

And what a world of darkness lay outside Judaism! He had seen it at Tarsus, with its idols, idol altars, and idol temples—everywhere dead blocks of wood and stone. He would carry the glorious gospel into strange cities. He had had a bitter experience of law, and force, and the sword in religion. He was blind and mad to think that hatred and cruelty would convert men. Love alone was the key which could open the mind, and love was the gold of Jesus' teaching. He said that all men were brothers, all children of God, and all must love each other.

He was far from knowing all about Jesus, but he knew what the Bible said of the Christ, and enough of His life and death to settle in his mind what he should say when he came to teach others. He knew he would have to give a reason for the faith which was in him, and he was ready. He knew that as soon as he opened his lips in the synagogue he would be bitterly assailed by his old friends the Pharisees, who would sneer at his

change, and call him hypocrite, blasphemer, liar; and that he would have to defend himself and Jesus with all his might.

Later on he would learn more from Peter of the pious life and golden sayings of his Master, and from other men who had lived with Him or heard Him speak. But he knew enough to begin with. Jesus was the Christ of the Bible, and through Him righteousness could be reached which was impossible by the Law; he himself had got forgiveness for his terrible crimes through faith in Him, and he would devote his life to Him. He had killed others, and would offer his own life in exchange. As a follower of Jesus, he would face death without fear. With a mind calmed, deepened, strengthened by meditation, solitude, prayer, and inspired of God, he was ready to preach the gospel of Jesus with all the skill of a learned rabbi and the fervour of a simple Nazarene.

Many men and women mentioned in the Bible—Moses, Jacob, Samuel, Ezekiel—had had visions that changed their lives or guided their actions. Men and women since then have had them—Luther, George Fox, Joan of Arc—but none to equal that which changed a hating persecutor of Jesus into a loving follower.

His First Speech.

DAMASCUS : AGED 30-40.

AFTER a time he returned from his lonely wanderings in Arabia to the ancient city of sparkling wells and green trees, and going to Ananias and the Nazarenes, they rejoiced to hear from his own lips that he was determined to obey the heavenly vision. He could not speak of the sayings of Jesus, but as a rabbi he could prove to the Jews out of the Bible, which they all knew, that the young Galilean crucified only about five years ago was the Christ. It would be a hard battle, but he was eager to begin in the strength of God, and for Jesus' sake.

The first day that he appeared in the crowded and dimly-lit synagogue in Damascus was a great one for the Nazarenes. What would he say? Young and fearless, with dusky face and glowing eyes, sitting in his white tunic, he would not hesitate, for he was a trained speaker. In the language of a highly-educated Jew his countrymen heard him tell the story of his mission to Damascus, his vision on the road, and his conversion to the belief that Jesus was the Christ; then with a rabbi's skill he would recite passage after passage from the Bible to prove that Jesus was indeed the Christ and Son of God. Before he ended he had made a public

confession of the sins and errors of his life, and of the new faith that was in him. The people of the synagogue had heard something of the change that had come over this young rabbi, who had come to their city, but whom they had never seen; but they did not know it all, and could not believe what they heard.

"Is not this the man who in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on the name of the Nazarenes?" exclaimed one indignantly, when Paul ended.

"Did he not come hither to take the Nazarenes bound before the chief priests?" exclaimed another.

The struggle had begun. He had publicly broken with his old religion, and his countrymen were indignant. As he expected, his address was answered by the leaders of the synagogue, who exclaimed that he was a false teacher, and had not given the right meaning to the parts of the Bible he repeated; and they gave their meaning, and repeated more verses. He replied, and they disputed together; but they were not able to stand against his learning, his arguments, and his enthusiasm, just as he had not been able to stand against Stephen in Jerusalem.

The congregation broke up in groups, and the people, in cloaks of brown and blue, went home to talk about the strange thing that had happened to this young rabbi; and while some believed him, the most thought that he deserved to be scourged at the synagogue door and put out of their congregation. But the Nazarenes rejoiced over their new champion.

There were several synagogues in Damascus, so that on weekdays and Sundays he had plenty of opportunities for meeting his countrymen in debate. The Jewish opposition to him deepened into hatred, but his determination to proclaim Jesus as the Christ did not slacken as he went from one dark and crowded synagogue to another.

For a year or two he lived in Damascus with the Nazarenes. He would not confine his speaking to the city alone, but would go into the country round about, preaching the new gospel of Jesus wherever he could find men to listen. He had triumphed in the synagogue battle of words, but when his countrymen saw the effect his preaching was having upon their friends, they thought of what they could do to stop this young man who would not keep silence. Was he to be allowed to teach in peace? They did not forget Paul's past life. They would punish him as he had punished Stephen. Defeated in words, he flew to scourges and stones. It may be that the synagogue council got a message from Jerusalem telling them how to deal with the young rabbi who had deserted them.

Paul was now the leader of the Damascus Nazarenes, and had men about him who called themselves disciples because they believed in his way of living and in what he taught. He did not give up the manners and customs of a Pharisee, but he would drop many of the small rules and traditions against which Jesus spoke, for his mind was widening towards strangers and foreigners who had no such rules. As he dropped them one by one like links of a broken chain, each fresh act would be an offence in the eyes of the synagogue council, who would call him up before them and order him to receive one of those scourgings of thirty-nine stripes before the door of the synagogue of which he tells us in his writings. Not with sorrow but with joy he would suffer for the first time in his body for Jesus' sake.

They would order him to cease teaching and leave Damascus. But he did neither. In the end he would be expelled from the synagogue; but that would give him little concern, as it was only another step in the true way. What could they do next? They took counsel together and resolved to kill him. But he had a friend who told him, and he hid himself. Alas, how soon had his sins returned upon his own head! He had hunted others to take their life; now, at a little over thirty, his own life was being sought. But he was not afraid; his life was in God's keeping.

His enemies heard that he knew of their plot and might escape, and going to the governor of the city, they made a criminal charge against him; and he ordered soldiers to watch the city gates, and stop this criminal Jew if he tried to go out by day or night.

The city walls were old and high, with a moat round them, so that a man could not drop over and escape; and as there were only four gates, his enemies believed that they would soon have him. How bitter must have been his thoughts kept thus in hiding! But Jesus too had been hunted out of Jerusalem by the priests.

His friends saw that he must be got away somehow if he was to be saved. The old walls were so broad that houses were built upon them with windows looking over to the fields and gardens, sometimes projecting a good way out. And they had him conveyed to one of these houses which belonged to a friend, and when night came on, fastening a rope to a large basket, they opened the window and hung it out. Paul was not a big man, and quickly climbed in, and was lowered down to the ground. As soon as it touched the bottom he got out, and the basket was at once pulled up, and without a word of farewell the figure in the brown cloak disappeared in the darkness, running away as quickly as he could.

He was free! By lonely paths, through the scented gardens,

the tangled vineyards, and grassy fields, he hastened secretly away from the city, and it was some days before his enemies heard that he had escaped, and the watchers were withdrawn from the gates.

Three years before, he had ridden towards that city of green trees and shining spires, with soldiers behind him, a miserable man, the representative of the head of the Jewish Church; now he was running away from it, a hunted Nazarene, but with joy glowing in his heart, for he had found Jesus and the way of life.

Peter, the Old Fisherman.

DAMASCUS : AGED 30—40.

WHEN the day dawned with a rose blush over the limestone hills behind Damascus, lighting up its towers and pinnacles that glittered among the green trees, Paul was hastening on his way towards the black Lebanon ravines. He had passed the spot where, three years ago, he saw the face of Jesus in a vision. Around him were green orchards and rich fields, watered by the sparkling rivulets of the sweet river, and ringing with the song of birds. Behind him and overhead the clouds were changing from purple to scarlet and gold; before him along the black mountains the grey mists of morning coiled and clung, as they turned to waves of drifting snow. He had come down from these hills with a heart black with hatred and quaking with doubt. Now he returned a lonely traveller with brown cloak, and staff, a satchel and a bottle of water, but with a clear mind and burning heart.

His courage was high. To fly from violence and persecution is not defeat, and he realized something of the victory of Stephen praying for his murderers. He was going to Jerusalem, for he had a strong desire to see Peter, the chief of the apostles. Perhaps he had disputed with the old fisherman in the synagogues, when his heart was a furnace of hatred of the Nazarenes.

He would travel back by the same road that he had come, skirting the foot of the Lebanon range, past Caesarea Philippi and the Lake of Gennesaret, and into Galilee. With what changed eyes would he look upon these fields, roads, hills, and glens, over which the feet of Jesus passed, and these towns and villages that heard His loving voice! How blessed were the men who sailed with Him upon yonder blue lake, the women and children who gathered on the shore of white shells to hear the Son of God speak of heaven and His Father! And the country people would look in wonder at the stranger with his traveller's cloak and sandals,

who spoke so reverently of the young Prophet who no more moved among their villages. When he came among Nazarenes in the villages, he would stay a while and learn of them, and he may have declared the gospel to them as he had learned it at Damascus, for we know he proclaimed it in Judea.

It would take him some time to reach Jerusalem, travelling slowly and lingering by the way ; but at last he stood upon the ridge of Olivet, and the great city lay before him, defended by its massive walls, and crowned with its white temple. He looked with different eyes now upon the courts where Jesus had spoken to a deaf people. If he went round the city to the rocky spot by the roadside where He was crucified, it would be to kneel and weep. And the camel-driver and the herdsman, as they passed, would look and wonder who the stranger was in the brown cloak who knelt there with bowed head and clasped hands. Only one more Nazarene come to weep and pray.

When he entered the familiar city, it was not to seek Gamaliel, or the chief priest at the temple, and tell him of the Saviour. He knew where the Nazarenes met, and went to the house of Mary, the mother of Mark, and there he found a man who knew him—Barnabas, Mark's uncle.

Like Paul, Barnabas was a foreign Jew ; for he belonged to Cyprus, an island not far from Tarsus. He was well off and well educated, and had been a temple Levite before he was a Nazarene, and it is not unlikely that they had met long ago in Tarsus. When he heard Paul's story he believed him, and grasped his hand as a brother. But it was different with the other Nazarenes. Paul sought to join their company and mingle with them ; but they were afraid of treachery, and distrusted the strange story of his conversion. This was a bitter welcome, and yet in humility of heart he could not blame those people, whom he had persecuted, if they thought him a liar and traitor. He deserved it, and must bear it.

But Barnabas was his warm friend, and took him to the apostles, and James the brother of Jesus, who was the chief elder among the Nazarenes ; and he told Paul's story to Peter and James, and they believed him, and welcomed Paul. And when Paul told Peter that he had come to Jerusalem to speak with him, the warm-hearted disciple opened his house to the younger man and took him in, as he had taken in Jesus to his home at the lake side. He who had sat for years at the feet of Gamaliel, the doctor of law, hearing the wisdom of men, was now to sit at the feet of Peter the fisherman, and learn in a few days the truths of God from one who had walked with Jesus.

It would not be sitting in a small, dark room, or walking among the coloured marble pillars of the porches of the golden temple, that Paul would hear from Peter's lips the priceless story, afterwards written by Mark, of three years spent with Him who was without sin, and who spoke as never man spoke. Here, in this garden, by moonlight, this olive garden of sorrowful memories, the old disciple would show the place where he slept, while Jesus, fallen on His face, prayed yonder! Here, on the rocky side of Olivet, in the crimson shades of evening, He sat with us, looking down on the vast city, its towers and palaces. And here, on this narrow, stony path, we spread our cloaks that He might ride over them, the Prince of Peace, on His way to the temple. Here, in this vine-clad cottage of Bethany, the village of figs, He lived day after day with Martha and Mary, going out and coming in by that low door. Would Paul go in? At yonder steep and narrow part of the street of Jerusalem He stumbled and sank, while the women screamed in horror from these housetops. On this rising ground stood the cross, in the brazen heat of that morning six years ago; and there stood Mary, and there stood we. Here in Joseph's garden is the tomb where we laid Him, and there is the low doorway, overhung with wild roses, and there the stone that was rolled away, and down this path moved the feet of the risen One.

And Paul would hear from Peter how, while he was a fisherman on the lake, he first saw the young Carpenter of Nazareth, and could perhaps remember Him as a boy and youth in the streets of Capernaum, and of the day when he saw His white figure standing on the shore, and heard His voice calling to him over the water to leave boat and nets and come, follow Him. And Paul would say that he too had heard the voice of Jesus calling, and would ask the old disciple to begin at that first day and tell him all he could remember of Jesus, until the last, leaving nothing out. And day after day would pass as Peter drew for the future apostle the picture of the breathing, living Jesus—dead, alas! six years ago—as he saw Him walking about in Galilee, and repeated His sayings as he heard them. And before he was done Paul would feel as confident of his knowledge of Jesus as if he had seen Him with his eyes and heard Him with his ears, and would tell the disciple of the command laid upon them all to spread the new gospel far beyond the Jews and Palestine.

Paul was a scholar who knew the value of writing, and he would ask many questions, and, we cannot doubt, would write down many pages of the sayings of Jesus, of which he wished to keep the exact words. Nor need we doubt that those days of Peter's contact with Paul's wider mind had their influence upon

the old disciple, who in later years showed a broader and more active sympathy with Paul's work than any of the other apostles.

And thus from the rugged fisherman with the silver hair, who in his day had cheered his young Master, sheltering Him in his home or sailing Him in his boat, and had fearlessly spoken of Him after His death, Paul heard the story of that perfect life, until he felt His Spirit strong within him that would lead him into all truth.

The Brother of Jesus.

JERUSALEM: AGED 40-50.

JAMES, the brother of Jesus, was very different from Peter, and in some things the opposite of Paul. He was not a disciple or apostle, for Jesus did not choose him when upon the thymy hill of Hattin He chose His twelve disciples. It is said that James was not a believer in Jesus until after His death. Nor did the apostles choose him to fill the place of the dead Judas; but now he was looked upon as a man of great importance, chief of the elders, and head of the Jerusalem Nazarenes.

He belonged to a peculiar sect called Nazarites—a sect that had existed since before the days of Moses. By their strict rules he was not allowed to take wine or even grapes, or to eat flesh, and he never cut or oiled his hair, or bathed himself, and his dress was of white linen. He was a believer in the Law and the Traditions, and went every day to the temple to pray, where he knelt upon the smooth pavements until his knees were hard with kneeling; and it is said that he was called "James the Just," and was allowed the privileges of a priest in the temple.

Paul would look with hungry eyes into this man's face—the living brother of Jesus—but he would not be attracted by his devotion to the Law and the Traditions, of which he knew so much. And if he spoke to him about the foolish network of little rules which Jesus condemned, we can imagine that James would shrink back from this bold and dangerous stranger who wished to set aside things holy and sacred. If James was late in coming to the truth about Jesus, he was also slow in understanding the glorious liberty of the new gospel. Paul saw that this temple devotee had not yet got the whole spirit of Jesus, and it appears as if their first impressions of each other were not favourable.

There were many Jewish Nazarenes in the city who believed that Jesus came to fulfil the Jewish religious law, and James was

of that party. Paul believed that Jesus set aside much of the Law and all the Traditions. They believed that the new religion was for Jews only ; Paul believed it was for all mankind. These two divisions became known as the circumcision and the uncircumcision, and their differences grew as years passed, until there arose a bitter quarrel fomented by false Christians, in which Paul triumphed, as his teaching was that Jesus was the Saviour of the world, and not of Jews only.

Although he fled from Damascus, he was no coward. His danger in Jerusalem was great, but he did not hide himself. Following the example of Stephen, he went to the synagogues of the foreign Jews, and openly declared that he was a Nazarene. If his address in Damascus astonished his hearers, his first address in a Jerusalem synagogue would create greater surprise ; for there he was well known as a cruel persecutor of the sect he had joined.

With boldness and skill, in the very synagogues of Jews from Cilicia, Rome, Africa, Egypt, where he had opposed Stephen, he declared that Jesus, who was crucified in Jerusalem six years before, was the Christ, and he proved it like a rabbi by passages from the Bible. He was answered at once by men as skilful in debate as himself, who called Jesus a Galilean impostor who deserved death. The dispute was hotter and fiercer than at Damascus ; for his opponents would fling Paul's own words and actions in his face, and call him renegade, hypocrite, blasphemer, liar. He was among the most learned men of the Jewish nation ; but he was not afraid, and could retort on them with bitter irony, biting sarcasm, and cutting truth, from what he knew of them as a young rabbi.

The struggle was short and sharp. They began to say to each other with a sneer, "This is the man who used to persecute the Nazarenes, and now he preaches the faith of which he once made havoc." This was the hardest blow of all ; but he deserved it, and admitted his wickedness, and confessed the change that had come over him.

He had now raised up many enemies amongst his old friends and companions, and they consulted as to what should be done with this renegade from the national religion. Serve him as he served Stephen ! He was worse than Stephen ! Trained as a rabbi, he ought to have spoken as he was taught, and not this new gospel ; but he had turned all his skill and knowledge to defend Jesus as the Christ, and to expose them. Since he would not cease his attacks and would not be silenced with words, they would silence him with stones, in the old Jewish way.

But he had fellow-students amongst his enemies, and some one warned him. He must leave the city at once, and he was ready. He had proclaimed Jesus in Jerusalem with all his might, and they would not listen. He would go to strange towns, and great plans were forming in his mind that stretched far beyond Palestine. Had not Jesus said, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"?

Just fifteen days after he had entered the city of the golden temple alone, he was taken out of it by his friends—most likely disguised, so that he should not be stopped. He was going away back to Tarsus, the home of his childhood, the bearer of glad tidings of great joy.

And thus, with disappointed hopes, he left the city of his youthful dreams, rejected by his old friends and companions, and coldly received by many of his new friends, but not by all. Barnabas, and Peter, and Mark were there!

Sailing to Tarsus.

JERUSALEM: AGED 40-50.

LEAVING the city by the Damascus gate, Paul and his friends would keep along the paved Roman road, so often trod by armed soldiers, that went through the bare hills of Judea, towards Cæsarea by the sea-coast, sixty miles distant. It was one of the best-known roads in the country, for merchants were continually coming and going upon it, between the sea and the great Jewish capital. Passing through the stony plain of Bethel, they traversed beautiful Samaria, and descended through a hot valley, and crossed the rich plain of Sharon, towards the seaport where Paul was to wait for a ship. They would talk on the way about what he was going to do. One thing was clear—he must keep away from Jerusalem.

They were soon close to the walls of Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, with its splendid marble buildings, the work of King Herod. There was the huge stone breakwater jutting out a black angle into the blue sea, to shelter the ships from south-west storms; and there, high above the town, was the marble temple of Augustus, also the work of Herod the Jew, with the statue of the emperor glittering upon the top, that could be seen by sailors far out at sea.

Paul the tentmaker was at home in a seaport, and he had often been in Cæsarea when coming and going as a student from

Tarsus. In his brown cloak, with a striped kerchief pulled forward to hide his face from passing eyes, he walked in the sunshine round the double harbour, and out on the breakwater ending in high towers, to look at the foreign ships crowded there, with white eyes painted on their bows. In the heat of the day he would seek the shady colonnade of pillars, where he could sit and look out upon the blue expanse of tossing waves, watching for the yellow sail of a ship that would bear him home to Tarsus.

How changed from the days when he was, powerful and terrible, the friend of the high priest! Now he was a fugitive, let out of Damascus in a basket, driven from Jerusalem, having few friends, and none wishing him to stay, with cloak and staff, wallet and leather bottle, looking out for a ship to carry him away, that he might begin afresh. His strong heart would be far from cheerful as he looked out on the water, for he had keen feelings.

He would not have to wait many days. Trading ships laden with corn from Egypt often touched at Cæsarea on their way to Tarsus. And when his ship came at last, his friends would pay his passage; the large, square sail would again be hoisted on the single mast; and standing upon the high stern, beside the steersman with the large oar, Paul would hold up his hands, bidding farewell to Barnabas and his friends on the quay, as the ship with the large white eye slowly passed out into the open water.

There were three hundred miles of sea between him and Tarsus. For two weeks he would have the blue mountains of the coast of Palestine on one side, and the sea on the other; and every morning the rising sun fringed these mountains with scarlet fire, and every evening the sunset flamed upon the sea. As they passed the island of Cyprus, they saw the mountains of Antioch towering upon the mainland, and the sailors looked out for a blue line ahead—the coast of Cilicia.

When the ship entered the mouth of the familiar river Cydnus, the huge striped sail would come rattling down, and the oars be thrust out to row them ten miles up against the stream. He would know some faces among the brightly-dressed men when he landed to walk up the narrow street towards the city. And there would be friends to kiss him on each cheek and weep with joy when he entered the house; but we do not know whether his dear mother was still alive to throw her arms round his neck.

He told them that he was a Nazarene and a teacher of the new way of Jesus. No doubt they had heard of this before, for pedlars, merchants, and dealers were the news-carriers about the

country; but now they heard it from his own lips, and some were pleased and many angry. When last at home he was a learned scholar of Jerusalem who might soon be a rabbi. They had heard of his being a member of the Sanhedrim and a persecutor of the Nazarenes. It was strange.

Much had happened during his years of absence, and his first address as a Nazarene, in the little synagogue in which he sat as a boy, would raise cries of wonder and annoyance from his friends, as he told once more the story of his heavenly vision and the great change. And while we are not told that his friends were bitter against him as he preached to them the gospel of the way of Jesus, there can be little doubt that the men of his synagogue would oppose him to the best of their power, but they could not stop him. We do not know what he said, but this is what he afterwards wrote in his letters:—

“Brother Jews, I would not have you ignorant that our fathers were all under a cloud, and yet they drank of the spirit of the Christ. But with most of them God was displeased, and they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now that is an example to us, that we should not desire bad things, nor worship idols, as they did. For it is written in Exodus that the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us be unfaithful, as some of them were, when twenty-three thousand died in one day. Neither let us tempt God, as some of them did, and died by serpents. Neither let us rebel against Him, as they did, and were destroyed. These things also are examples to us, and were written for our guidance, to whom has come down the wisdom of the ages. Therefore, whoever thinks he stands sure, let him take care lest he fall. No temptation comes but such as you can bear: for God is faithful, and will not let you be tempted more than you are able to resist, but will with the temptation make also a way of escape.”

“I give thanks to Jesus the Christ, our Lord, who has counted me faithful, and appointed me to His service; although I was one who miscalled His name, and persecuted and injured His followers: but I have received mercy, because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. His favour is exceeding great with faith and love which is in Him. It is a true saying, and worthy to be accepted by every one, that Jesus came into the world to save sinful men, of whom I am the chief. But I got mercy, that in me, a chief sinner, He might show His kindness, as an example to all who should hereafter believe on Him unto eternal life. Now to the King of the ages, pure, invisible, and who cannot change, the only God, be honour and glory for evermore.”

Tentmaking at Home.

TARSUS : AGED 40—50.

IT is not unlikely that he would be called before the synagogue council of elderly Jews—men who knew him well, who would admonish him, as his friends, to cease speaking in a way contrary to the rules of the rabbis, with which he was familiar ; and on his refusing to do so, they would solemnly expel him from their congregation, and tell him that he was now worse than a foreigner, for he was an outcast and a renegade. And it is not unlikely that he would also suffer one of the whippings at their synagogue door, of which he tells us in his letters ; and he would glory in it, although his friends would not.

On week-days he would be found again in a workshop, perhaps his father's shed, weaving, sewing, and making tents ; but whereas his time used to be spent in the dreary task of learning off the Law and the Traditions, now he would sit with a group of listeners, in kerchiefs and coloured tunics, sitting cross-legged on the floor of the workshop, while he stitched the haircloth and told them of the Christ and the Nazarenes. Not as a rabbi, on a crimson mat, among the marble pillars of the temple, was he to teach his fellow-men, but amid the looms, ropes, poles, leather, and haircloth of a tentmaker's shed. If any one questioned what he said in the synagogue, the workshop, wharf, market, or street, he gave him passage after passage from the Bible, as only a rabbi could, in proof that Jesus was the Christ. And as in Damascus, so in his own city he soon had followers who called themselves his disciples. For wherever he went, he was now a bearer of glad tidings of great joy.

In Tarsus he was beyond the shadow of the temple and the Sanhedrim, and he worked there for years. He did not confine himself to the synagogue or the city, but preached the new gospel in the province of Cilicia, and also in the next province of Syria, beyond the Amanus mountains.

This country of shepherds' tents and camel-paths was all familiar to him, for he had often travelled over it, and knew the woods and valleys, the marshes, bridges, and fords, the passes through the hills, the villages and towns ; for he used to buy goats' hair and sell his cloth and tents there, as he had now to do again. The people who knew him as the red-cheeked boy driving his father's asses would be surprised to find him a young man and a Nazarene, who, with glowing words and flashing eyes, proclaimed to them a new gospel of Jesus the Christ, a carpenter in the

far-off village of Nazareth in Galilee, who had been crucified at Jerusalem not ten years ago. We do not know what he said on these long wanderings, and in these small, dark synagogues, but this is part of what he afterwards wrote in a letter :—

“Seeing I have this ministry, and have obtained mercy, I faint not; having given up the hidden things of shame, I do not live by using the words of God deceitfully; but by showing forth the truth that touches every man’s conscience in the sight of God. If the good tidings are not recognized, it is by them who are perishing, whose unbelieving minds are blinded by the world, that the light of the gospel of Jesus, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them. I do not preach myself, but Jesus the Christ as Lord, and I as your slave for His sake. God said, Light shall shine out of darkness; and the light has shined in upon our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus the Christ.”

Into whatever town or village he went, in his brown cloak, riding upon an ass, with his panniers stuffed with haircloth, he sought out his countrymen, and in their synagogue proclaimed the glad tidings that the Christ had come, calling upon them to seek righteousness in Him, and not in blind obedience to the dead Law and Traditions.

In his journeys to and fro, by hill and hollow, he encouraged the Nazarenes everywhere to hold meetings and worship together, after the manner of the Nazarene of Jerusalem, and to spread the new gospel from man to man and house to house. And thus in his own province he began the work of his life, forming congregations of Nazarenes, and instructing them to meet, worship, and break bread together, as Jesus did with His disciples.

It is thought that he spent about seven years thus, spreading the new gospel in the provinces around his native city; a period of which we have little record, for it was not until sixteen years later that he met Luke, who wrote down the story of his travels and sayings. And while he was thus engaged, there were things happening in Palestine that were broadening the minds of the apostles and widening their horizon.

The Emperor’s Brass Image.

TARSUS : AGED 40—50.

DURING the years that Paul, in cloak and sandals, was spreading the light of the gospel of Jesus throughout

Tarsus, Cilicia, and Syria, the Roman soldiers, with sword and buckler, were extending their empire beyond the Rhine and Danube, and over Germany. Their brass-helmeted men were landing again on Britain's soil, to make more sure and firm the grip which they had on our country.

In Rome, the young emperor Caligula, nicknamed "Little Boots," had gone mad, after being raised above all men, and he ordered that images of himself were to be worshipped in every temple in the empire. The Jews alone refused. No image had ever been worshipped in their golden temple. Other Roman emperors had respected their feelings; but Caligula flew into a passion, and ordered Petronius, the Roman governor of Syria, to have a large brass image of him cast at Sidon, and put into the Jews' temple by the blades of his soldiers. Petronius hated the task, and telling the brassfounders not to hurry, landed his soldiers under the headland of Carmel, and marched them slowly through Galilee towards the Lake of Gennesaret.

The Jews flocked to him at Tiberias, crying unceasingly against the emperor's orders, and saying that his image would only enter the temple over their dead bodies. Time slipped past, and word came from the young emperor that if Petronius did not make haste he would cut his head off; which was no mere threat, as the vile young man in purple had cut off hundreds of heads. Three years had gone by in preparations, and a frightful slaughter was about to fall on Jerusalem, when news came that the miserable emperor was dead, killed by his own guards; and Petronius withdrew his soldiers, and no more was heard of the brass image. And while the hand of Caligula was thus threatening their temple, the priests ceased to persecute the Nazarenes of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, who increased greatly in numbers.

Peter also, like Paul, left Jerusalem to preach the new gospel; and we hear of him at Lydda, by the sea-coast, where many became Nazarenes, and also at Joppa. Jesus had set aside the rules of the rabbis against eating certain kinds of meats, and against strangers and foreigners. Philip and Paul broke them, but Peter could not make up his mind to do so. He had a vision—perhaps it was a dream—in which he thought God told him that he might eat any kind of food, and he was perplexed. Then came a request from Cornelius, a Roman officer of Italian family, to come to Cæsarea and see him; and he went, taking friends with him. The officer gathered his friends to meet him, and Peter told him that it was against the religious law of his people for him to enter a foreigner's house; but God had shown him that this was wrong, and he went in, for he now believed that all men were alike before

God, whether Jews or strangers. He spoke to them of Jesus and God, saying, "I see that God is no respecter of persons, and that in every nation whoever fears God and does right is accepted of Him." And Cornelius and his family were baptized as Nazarenes.

News of this reached Jerusalem, and greatly displeased some of the Nazarenes, who said that no man could join them until he had first received the mark of a Jew and come under the Jewish law. When Peter returned they attacked him, saying that he had broken the laws of Moses by going into Cornelius's house and eating food with men who had never been circumcised—a mark made on every Jewish infant, and on every foreigner who joined the Jewish religion—an unchangeable mark. No man could be a member of the Jewish Church without it; and to call a Jew uncircumcised was an insult equal to saying that he did not believe in God.

Peter told the story of his vision, and defended himself so well that the Nazarenes who thought he had done wrong held their peace, and they of a more liberal mind rejoiced when they thought that the religion of Jesus was for strangers also. And thus we see how little these Nazarenes of Jerusalem yet understood the glorious teaching of Jesus when it went against what they had learned as children. These were the parties of circumcision and uncircumcision—a difference which seems very small and foolish to us, who live in the liberty for which Paul fought; but this distinction was to be one of the chief sorrows and difficulties of his life's work. And so, while the Nazarenes of Jerusalem were debating hotly as to whether the gospel of Jesus should be spread among foreigners, Paul was already spreading it.

Barnabas the Levite.

TARSUS: AGED 40-50.

WHETHER the crops were waving golden in the plain of Cilicia, or the Taurus mountains were white with snow, summer and winter Paul went about teaching in the two large provinces. During these years he did not keep up intercourse with the Nazarenes in Jerusalem, and they let him pass out of sight. What he said about the Law and the Traditions, and about admitting strangers and foreigners into the sect, had displeased many there, who regarded him as a dangerous reformer; but Peter and Barnabas understood him better, and shared his views.

Many of the Nazarenes who fled out of Jerusalem did not

rest in Palestine, but went out of the country. Some went over the hills of Galilee into the land of Phœnicia, others travelled to Damascus, while others continued on till they reached Antioch, the splendid capital of Syria, three hundred miles from Jerusalem. These could go by land, but others went by sea, taking ships from Cæsarea to Cyprus and other islands. Wherever they went they found Jews and synagogues, and keeping to the rules of their old church, these Jews of Jerusalem would not preach the gospel of Jesus to any but Jews.

Foreign Jews who had become Nazarenes were of a more liberal mind, and some of them, born in the Greek town of Cyrene, on the African coast, and in Cyprus, had come to live in Antioch. Many Jews were there, for a king had got them to come by giving them equal rights with Greeks. And these Nazarenes of Cyprus and Cyrene preached the gospel of Jesus to the Jews in their synagogue, and to the people of the city, and many who were not Jews joined the Nazarenes. This gave offence to the strict Jew Nazarenes, who thought that salvation was for Jews only, and they sent word to the apostles at Jerusalem, who sent the broad-minded, kind-hearted Barnabas to inquire.

He listened to the narrow-minded Palestine Jews, and to the broad-minded Greek Jews from his own Cyprus, and saw the crowd of foreigners who had given up their idols and turned to the living God through Jesus, and he rejoiced. When he addressed them, as a messenger from the apostles, he found no fault, but went right to the heart of the matter. Referring to their changed lives, he urged the converts, in few and simple words, to carry out their good resolutions and hold fast to Jesus. His words, spoken in the spirit of Jesus, delighted them, and caused more foreigners to join; but they did not please the stricter Jews, who said it was wicked that foreigners should be admitted into the religion of a Jewish sect without circumcision.

Barnabas saw that a great work could be done amongst the people of that city of battlements, and he needed help. Who could help him? Not the men in Jerusalem who sent him. The thoughts of the Jew of Cyprus turned back to the Jew of Tarsus who came to Jerusalem so many years ago on fire with a vision and a command from God to preach to foreigners, and who had been received coldly, and advised to leave Palestine and go home. He had gone to Tarsus, no doubt to preach. Here were foreigners thirsting for the gospel. If Paul were but here in Antioch, with his flashing eyes and burning speech he could do much good. Barnabas would tell his friends of this wonderful man, and that he would go and search till he found him, and bring him.

From the walls of Antioch, on a clear day, the mountains behind Tarsus can be seen, faint and blue, over the sea. Riding down the sixteen miles of well-made road to the port of Seleucia, Barnabas got a boat, and a long day of sailing across the Gulf of Scanderoon would bring him into the river Cydnus before it was dark—wondering, as the boat heaved under him, whether he would find his friend in Tarsus.

He knew the city; but Paul may have been on a journey, for he did not find him at once. But he sought till he found the man in the brown cloak; and they would embrace in grave silence, for they were friends, and had not seen each other for seven years. Paul would be surprised that Barnabas had come for him. Then he would hear of his friend's visit to Antioch, of what he had found, and that there was a great work for him to do in a rich and splendid city if he would go. This was joyful news, and he agreed at once.

Once more Paul bade farewell to his native city, his relations and Nazarene friends who had gathered round him; and going in the boat with Barnabas, they went swiftly down the river in the morning sunshine, away from his old home, which he would not see again for eight years. And as they sailed across the wide blue gulf, Paul would hear of the dispute in Jerusalem about Peter and Cornelius, and who were for and who were against the old apostle; and the two men would grow warm against those who wished to force circumcision upon strangers, contrary to the teaching of Jesus, who died to save all men.

In a little boat with one large sail, bearing across a windy gulf, with a strong, warm-hearted friend beside him, Paul was speeding swiftly towards the one spot on earth where his energy was wanted. With the matured mind of middle age, he was about to begin his life's task of establishing congregations of Nazarenes all over the Roman Empire—a task for which his life hitherto, as Jewish rabbi and as Nazarene, was one long preparation.

The City of Battlements.

ANTIOCH: AGED 40—50.

ABOUT the time that the Emperor Claudius, with purple robe and flashing helmet, was entering England, to overrun the country with his Roman eagles, Paul, in brown cloak and kerchief, was landing upon the sea-shore below Antioch—the messenger of the gospel of peace.

He was going to a wonderful city, the third largest in the Roman Empire, with five hundred thousand people. It was sixteen miles up from the coast, on the banks of the white river Orontes; and the palace was built upon a curving island joined by five stone bridges to the city on each side, that extended for four miles along the foot of rocky hills. All towns and cities of that time had walls, and those of Antioch were the most remarkable in the world. Their ruins can still be seen. They were broad and high, built from the side of the river in a line that climbed up the hillside over crag, cliff, peak, and ravine, with arches and solid masonry, right up to the very top of the rocky hills, along the uneven ridge, and down to the river again for seven miles, enclosing the city and half the hill of Silpius; and over the low archways of the city gates were massive square towers for additional protection. The top of Mount Silpius was crowned with a large castle for soldiers. At the foot of the cliffs were the rose gardens and lily ponds, among glittering streams fed from the river beyond.

Kings had spent large sums in beautifying the streets. The great Jewish king, Herod, lined one of them for two miles with pillars of white marble, to make a covered way for the footpath. The people were fond of amusement, and at the base of the hills there was a large amphitheatre, like that at Tarsus, for public games. They had their temples, for they were worshippers of idols or the stars; but they were proudest of all that their streets were lighted at night with oil-lamps, a thing which no other city had. A much greater wonder, however, was the large crag behind the city, which Licos the sculptor, at a king's command, had carved into the shape of a man's head, with a crown that could be recognized from the sea—a head which has come down to us on their copper coins as the emblem of Antioch.

The people, however, had a bad name for idleness, pleasure-seeking, and worse; and through the Daphne gate a road went out for five miles into the country, lined all the way with the houses and gardens of the rich, until it entered the groves of Daphne. There, amid countless trees of glossy-leaved daphne, laurel, myrtle, and dark cypress, spreading out for ten miles around it, was a magnificent temple, with priests and priestesses, containing a huge statue of Apollo in sparkling white marble, and this was the centre of feasts and wild orgies, so wicked that even the Romans in distant Italy called them shameful.

Traders from all parts came to this city, and in its streets might be seen the black African and the fair-skinned Greek; and coppery Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Jews, and islanders from

Cyprus, Crete, and Rhodes, who looked upon Antioch and the groves of Daphne as the lightest, gayest places in the world. It did not turn out philosophers and scholars, but their dancers, boxers, acrobats, clowns, runners, and conjurers were the most famous, as the fools and jesters were the wittiest, to be found anywhere.

This, then, was the city to which Paul was brought, and these were the streets in which he would preach the chaste, the temperate, the deep gospel of Jesus, and where he would rear up a congregation of Nazarenes richer, more numerous, and more powerful than that in Jerusalem, the most of whom would be strangers and foreigners.

Landing at the walled seaport of Seleucia, Paul and Barnabas would ride up to Antioch along a broad paved way by the side of the swift Orontes, and through wooded glens. A strong bridge of four arches brought them into the gay city. No doubt Paul had been in Antioch before in his journeys; for it was the capital of Syria, and its mountain walls could almost be seen on a bright day from Tarsus over the sea. The network of streets, thronged with all races of people, would move him deeply; for had not Barnabas told him that with his knowledge and eloquence, God's power, and the vision, he would persuade the people of the city to join the Nazarenes in hundreds! And as he walked in the shadow of Herod's pillars along the main street, he would see people of all nations, from the Greek in bright jacket and kilt of white, and the dusky Arab in woollen cloak of broad-striped green and black, to the smiling flower-girl with black hair crowned with roses. And every one who passed knew, by his brown cloak and striped kerchief, that he too was a travelling Jew.

Just as at Tarsus, the Jews kept to one part of the town, so that they might carry out their religious rules and worship; and Barnabas would take his friend there to live, near to the amphitheatre, where crowds gathered. There he met the Nazarenes, who were expecting him. Among the leaders were Simeon the Black, from Africa; Lucius of Cyrene, also in Africa; Manaen, some relation of the Jewish prince, Herod Antipas—a man of position.

He would rejoice to find so many foreigners among them, while they too would look with eager expectation upon this man, of whom Barnabas had spoken so highly, and who had nothing striking about him but his piercing grey eyes and his stirring Greek speech. For we may be sure that Paul would not delay to tell them at their first meeting together how gladly he had come over from Tarsus to help them.

First Called Christians.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40—50.

LIKE a true rabbi, Paul would seek out for a room where he could carry on his trade of weaver and maker of tents, and earn enough to pay for the simple bread and fruit, the fish, meat, and milk of his daily food, and where he could welcome all who wished to meet him. It is likely that Barnabas and he would live together.

It was his custom to speak in every synagogue where they would listen, and he would tell the Jews of Antioch that if they rejected the gospel it would be to their loss and not his, for there were strangers willing to hearken to this Jewish teaching and turn from their idols to the living God. He told his countrymen that a great door had been opened, that the foreigners might come into the kingdom by the saving knowledge of Jesus and of God, but that Jews should be first to come. We do not know what he said, but this is part of what he wrote years afterwards :—

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for my countrymen is that they may be saved. For they have zeal for God, but not right knowledge. Not knowing God’s righteousness, and wishing to set up their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to Him. Every one who believes in Jesus is as if he has kept all the Jewish religious law. Moses wrote that whoever kept the whole Jewish law shall live. Whoever believes in Jesus shall live. This righteousness of Jesus speaks thus to us : Do not say in your heart, Who shall go up into the skies to bring Jesus down? or, Who shall descend into the deeps to bring Him back from the dead? The word of life is near you, in your mouth and in your heart—the word of faith which we preach to you. If you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart you believe to righteousness, and with the mouth you confess to salvation. Isaiah wrote, Whoever believes on God shall not be put to shame. There is no difference between Jews and foreigners : for the same God is Lord over them all, and rich toward all who call on Him. Whoever calls upon the name of Jesus will be saved. But how can strangers call on Him in whom they do not believe? or believe in Him of whom they have not heard? or hear about Jesus without a preacher? And how can teachers preach to them unless they

are sent? Listen to the words of Isaiah: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!"

No chief priests were there to plot against his life; and with the strong help of Barnabas, he worked in that city for a year, amid the rains and snows of winter and the sunshine of summer, preaching the new gospel to all who would listen, and getting many to join the Nazarenes, and teaching them by his example how to live the higher life of faith in Jesus. And what did he preach? That Jesus, who was crucified in Jerusalem ten years ago, was the Christ and Son of God according to the Jewish Bible, who came into the world to save men from wickedness; and that whoever turned from their idols to the living God, and lived lives worthy of Him, would be saved. Again we do not know his words, but this is what he afterwards wrote:—

"There is no blame to them that are in Jesus. The Spirit of life in Him has made us free from sin. What the Jewish religious law could not do for man through his weak efforts at righteousness, God did, sending His own Son as a man to put down sin: that what the Jewish law required might be fulfilled in us, who live no more after our own desires, but guided by the Spirit of God. They who live for the world think of worldly things, but they who live for the Spirit pay heed to spiritual things; for the one is death, but the other life and peace. Our selfish desires are opposed to God; for we are not then obeying Him, and cannot so please Him. But you are not of the world if the Spirit of Jesus dwells in you. If a man has not His Spirit, he is not one of His followers. And if the Spirit of Jesus the Christ be in you, sin is as dead in you, and righteousness living, because of His Spirit. If the Spirit of God, who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwells in you, He shall also give you life."

"Jesus the Christ! Jesus the Christ! Jesus the Christ!" rang over the heads of those who came to hear this Jew in his brown cloak and sandals, whose eyes glowed as he stood in the shaded bazaars or dimly-lit synagogues, or stemmed the crowd of men thronging to the racecourse under the blue skies. Pleasure-seekers, trades-people, merry jesters and quick-wits, gaily-dressed women, and sober citizens stood on the fringe of these crowds, listening now to the tall Jew of Cyprus, now to the black-haired man of Tarsus, admiring the eloquence of the one and the answers of the other; and as they heard the words "Jesus the Christ" being constantly repeated, they called the Nazarenes by a new name, which they were glad to accept. In the streets of Antioch they were, for the first time, called Christians—followers of the

Christ. Some think it was a name given in jest in that city of fools and jesters, although it has not the sound of a nickname, but rather of a short description of men who had the name of Jesus the Christ continually on their lips.

And of all the names which have been given to the followers of Jesus, or which they have called themselves, Christians is the perfect name; and it would be a good thing for religion if all the others which have sprung up since it was first shouted in the streets of Antioch could be forgotten, and this alone remain. And by that name we shall henceforth know the Nazarenes.

Herod's Glittering Robe.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40—50.

WHILE Paul and Barnabas worked with such success in Antioch, things were not going so well with the Christians in Jerusalem, because of changes that were taking place with their Roman masters. When the Emperor Caligula was killed, the Jewish prince, Herod Agrippa, was in Rome, and rendered such important services to the new emperor, Claudius, that he was publicly thanked, and had a brass tablet put up to him in the city, and received power to rule over all the country of his grandfather Herod the Great.

Herod Agrippa was not a good man, but he said he was a Pharisee, and great was the joy in Jerusalem when he rode into the city to give gifts and sacrifices in the temple, and worship there with much solemnity. He put out Annas the Sadducee, high priest, and put in Simeon, a relative of his own; and he made Gamaliel president of the Sanhedrim. The priests rejoiced; although, when Agrippa went down to Cæsarea, he put off the Pharisee, and openly lived the life of a profligate Roman.

When the Nazarenes were being called Christians in Antioch, the Emperor Claudius was carving out with Roman short swords another Roman province, south of the Thames and London, to be called Britannicus. Claudius did not do much of this, but took credit for it all, and had a coin made with his head on one side and a triumphal arch on the other, and ordered statues, processions, and rejoicing in Rome over the conquest of the Islands of Tin. And when the emperor rejoiced, of course all his little kinglylets made merry also; and Paul and Barnabas, at work in Antioch, would hear of the conquest of the Islands of Tin, although they would have no idea where they were.

Herod Agrippa had many reasons for wishing to be on good terms with the rabbis, and he knew it would please them if he persecuted the Christians, as in the days of Paul's madness; and he caused the apostle James, the Galilean fisherman and cousin of Jesus, to be put in prison and beheaded, as Herod the Fox had done with John the Baptist. Jesus said that His apostles would have to face death, and James was the first to suffer. Seeing that this pleased the Sanhedrim, Agrippa next caused Peter, the old warm-hearted apostle, to be seized and imprisoned, intending to kill him when the Passover festival was over and the crowds had left the city; but Peter was marvellously delivered, and fled from Jerusalem.

The little Roman kinglets were ordered to hold days of public games and rejoicing in honour of the emperor's victories in Britain, and it is thought that it was on account of these rejoicings that Agrippa rode down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea; but he never came back to strike down the other apostles, for he died there.

It was early morning, before the dawn, and the great open-air theatre at Cæsarea was crowded with thousands of people, sitting in rows upon the stone benches, who had come together to see the young men wrestling, fighting, leaping, singing, dancing, in honour of the emperor. It was the second day, and the place was crowded with thousands, who wished to see the king come in and take his seat.

The stars overhead grew paler and the sky less deep, the hills of Carmel were turning from purple to faint red, when suddenly their rugged edges were tipped with fire that heralded the dawn. At the very instant when the sun's first rays came dazzling over the city, the king entered the theatre. He was crowned, and wearing a robe of silver threads; and when he moved, his dazzling mantle seemed to give forth light as the sun smote him, and his gold crown to burn.

He had a quarrel with the Phœnicians over their grain ships, and standing in his glittering robes, he made a great speech about it—for he was a trained orator who had held the Roman senate listening—and he delighted the multitude. The foreigners of Cæsarea were accustomed to worship the image of Cæsar Augustus in the white temple; Caligula had called himself a god; and when Herod ended they shouted, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man!" The next cry was one of alarm—"The king is ill!" For the shimmering figure with the crown had fallen backwards, to be carried away from these shouting thousands, while yet the primrose dawn had scarce covered the spring sky, away through gardens of dewy flowers to his gilded palace; but not to

recover, for he died within a week. And the Jews mourned for him in haircloth and ashes, saying as they did so that it was because he had allowed the people to call him a god that he was smitten by an angel. And thus died the last Jewish prince that ruled over Jerusalem, for he was succeeded as governor by Fadus the Roman; and again the Christians had peace.

Help for the Poor Christians.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40—50.

OTHER Christians came from distant Jerusalem to help Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, and the work went slowly on. They spoke with great earnestness. One called Agabus said it had been made known to him that there would be a widespread famine, and having just come from Judea, he could tell them of the state of that country. Perhaps he asked them to send help to the Jerusalem Christians, who were poor and persecuted; for the men of Antioch took it up in a loving and hearty way. They knew the saying of Jesus, "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them;" and guided by Paul and Barnabas, they resolved to gather money. What a contrast to the spirit of some Jerusalem Christians, who were indignant that the gospel should be preached there. In reply they were going to keep them from starving. Their teachers had good reason to be proud of them, and the collection was made in coins of silver and copper, with a man's head and Greek words upon them—all the Christians giving something, until they had a large sum gathered.

In those days money was valued very highly, and they asked if Paul and Barnabas would take their gift to Jerusalem, and see the men who looked after the poor. This was the beginning of an arrangement not unlike that by which Jews in all lands sent money to the temple. Paul afterwards developed it greatly, and it gave much satisfaction to the leading Christians who lived in Jerusalem. Besides helping them, it stirred up feelings of kindness among all Christians, who sent money to men whom they had never seen, but whom they revered for having lived and talked with Jesus.

Paul believed it was the will of God that he should go to Jerusalem to help those in distress, and to see the leaders about whether they thought foreigners were as free as Jews to become Christians, for the question was very troublesome. Those who

were against him had not ceased their opposition, and were being incited to mischief by some Pharisee traitors who had joined the Christians that they might hinder the spread of the new gospel. These Paul called false brothers, and spies from the outside.

Taking Titus, a young Greek who had joined the Antioch Christians, Barnabas and Paul bade farewell to their friends, and started on their long journey. They would be provided with warm clothing, food, money, and all else they might want during their absence, and be well laden with the money in leather bags. It is likely that Paul would sail from Seleucia to Cæsarea, taking with him corn and food of such kinds as could be bought cheaply there. A year or two later, Queen Helena of Adiabene, in Asia, who liked the old Jewish religion, hearing of the long famine, bought corn in Egypt and figs in Cyprus, and sent them in ships, to be distributed amongst the poor of Jerusalem.

Titus was to be a faithful worker for many years to come, and a teacher taught by Paul, who would yet go out alone; and while we do not know the instruction which Paul would give him during the long days of the three weeks' voyage, this is part of a letter which he afterwards wrote him, full of guidance for the young man:—

“Speak the things which fit right teaching. Bid aged men be temperate, grave, sober-minded, strong in faith, love, and patience. Bid aged women be reverent in conduct, not speaking ill of their neighbours, not given to much wine, teachers of what is good; that they may train young women to love their husbands and their children, and be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind and obedient, that the gospel may not be injured.

“Bid young men be sober-minded, and always show yourself an example of good deeds. In your teaching show faith, truth, gravity, and sound speaking, that cannot be blamed; so that whoever opposes you may be ashamed, having no ill thing that he can say of you. Bid slaves be obedient to their masters, and please them in everything; not speaking back, nor stealing, but showing faithfulness, so that they may be in all things an honour to the teaching of Jesus. The grace of God has brought salvation to all men, instructing us that, putting away unrighteousness, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world; looking forward to the blessed hope and appearing of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all that is bad, and make for Himself a pure people, zealous to do good works. Speak these things, and exhort, and reprove with all authority; and let no man despise you.”

The trouble of having the food and provisions brought from

Cæsarea and distributed in Jerusalem would be very great; and Paul and his two friends remained in the city, helping from day to day to serve out this most practical proof of the sound Christianity of the men of Antioch, and seeing the money rightly disposed of. Like Queen Helena, they would have to send to Egypt and the islands for corn, fruit, and oil, for the famine was widespread.

He does not appear to have preached in the synagogues during this visit. It was not a time to rouse the city authorities to fresh persecutions of starving people. He, however, talked privately and plainly with those leaders in whom he had confidence upon the vital subject of the admission of foreigners, telling them that he taught everywhere that they did not need to be circumcised to become Christians, and that the gospel was free to all men. The Christians of the circumcision, however, said that his friend Titus was not a Christian at all until he was circumcised. But Paul would not give way for a moment. He knew they were being stirred up by false Pharisees, who wished to get all Christians bound down to keep the law and the traditions of the rabbis, like the Jews of the old religion. But he insisted upon having the freedom he claimed for all foreign Christians; and the leaders in whom he had confidence—Peter, James, and John—took him and Barnabas by the hand, and bade them go and preach the gospel to foreigners without circumcision; all they asked was that he should keep the poor Christians of Jerusalem in mind, which he was most willing to do.

Paul was glad of their approval, but it left the circumcision question quite unsettled. While he and Barnabas were free to tell foreigners that circumcision was not required, others were free to tell Jews that it was essential to their being Christians.

He had now carried out his purpose, and his mind was uneasy as to whether he should remain any longer. From the time of his vision on the road at Damascus, he relied upon immediate guidance from God, in visions, dreams, and inspirations.

One day he was in the golden temple, praying for guidance, with his face turned towards the white pillars of the mysterious holy place. And as he prayed, a strange half-dream came over him, called a trance. He had a vision of Jesus, who bade him hasten out of Jerusalem, for the people would not believe what he said about Him. And Paul replied, "Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat them in the synagogue that believed on Thee. And when the blood of Stephen, Thy witness, was shed, I was standing by, consenting, and keeping the garments of them that killed him." Fourteen years had passed since that awful spectacle was branded upon his memory, and it was fresh as yes-

terday. His madness in Jerusalem rose like a wall of brass, and shut him out from doing any good there. "Depart," was the reply. "I will send you far hence to foreigners." When he recovered from his trance, he had got an answer to his prayer, and his duty was clear. Leaving the temple, he went down into the town to tell his friends that he must leave them and carry out the mission to foreigners to which he had been called.

A Familiar Voyage.

JERUSALEM : AGED 40—50.

WHEN his friends heard of the answer to his prayer in the temple, they agreed that he should leave Jerusalem and go back with Barnabas to Antioch. The leading Christians met in the house of Mary, sister of Barnabas, and Paul asked her son Mark, an earnest believer in Jesus, to come with them. Mark had often seen Jesus in Jerusalem, and had followed Him from Gethsemane into the city on the night when the temple guards took Him prisoner. He followed until a soldier seized his cloak, thinking he was a disciple. It is thought that long after this he wrote the Gospel of Mark, which he could easily do from his knowledge of Jesus and close friendship with the apostles.

Again Paul bade farewell to Peter and his other friends at Jerusalem, having come to an understanding that he was to preach his gospel in foreign cities, and rode with his companions down the familiar Roman road, over the breezy hills, to the port of Cæsarea. Again he was in a ship, and sailing on the familiar voyage of three weeks to Seleucia and the Orontes river. As they sailed in idleness from day to day, he would talk with his three friends, and this is what he wrote to one of them some years later :—

"Tell the people to obey their rulers and magistrates, to be ready for every good work, to speak ill of no man, and not to be quarrelsome, but gentle, showing respect to all men. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, and deceived, following wicked desires and pleasures, malicious, envious, hateful, and hating one another. But when the kindness of God and His love toward men became known to us, we were saved. Not because of the good which we did ourselves, but through favour did God save us, by the renewing of His Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being made just by His favour, we might have hope of the life that is for evermore. This also is true, and I wish you to repeat it con-

fidently to the end, that all those who declare their belief in God should be careful to work at an honest occupation. That is good and profitable for a man. But avoid foolish questions and inquiries, and strife and fighting about the Jewish religious law; for that is vain and useless."

The Christians of Antioch rejoiced to see him back, after a year's absence, accompanied by Barnabas, Mark, and the youthful Titus, and listened with interest to their story of the distress in Jerusalem, and the gratitude of the poor Christians. And Paul would tell them also that the leaders rejoiced that so many of them were becoming Christians.

There were now so many Christians in Antioch that they called the place they met in a church, meaning Christ's house. Gradually, however, that name was also given to the people who met in it, and the word went on widening until it came to mean all Christians everywhere. In our day it has so many meanings, great and small, that it is a very difficult word to use rightly, and may well be avoided.

Paul knew the usefulness and strength of the organization of priests, Levites, rabbis and scribes, and synagogue rulers and elders, of which the temple and the Sanhedrim were the head, and the synagogues and their courts and office-bearers were the branches. These synagogues held their feasts and fasts, and read, prayed, and worshipped all in one way, and the people were looked after by good and elderly men called elders; and Paul formed the congregations of Christians on the same plan, but with very great differences. And so our Christian worship to this day follows the lines of the synagogues of the time when Jesus taught in them. We do not know what Paul said in his addresses on this subject, but these are some of the directions he wrote some years afterwards:—

"First of all, let prayers and thanksgiving be made for kings, rulers, and all men, that we may live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and gravity. This is good and pleasing to God, who wishes all men to be saved and come to know the truth. For there is only one God, and One who stands between God and men, Jesus the Christ, Himself a man; who gave Himself for us all. This is the gospel, of which I was appointed a herald, apostle, and teacher of foreigners in faith and truth.

"I wish men to pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without doubt or question. Also that women should dress quietly, modestly, soberly, not richly, but as becomes good women doing good works. Let them learn in quietness, for I do not permit them to teach or rule over men."

Dead Idols and the Living God.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40-50.

THE chief Christians at Antioch were called prophets and teachers, and among them were Barnabas and Mark, Titus and Simeon, Lucius and Manaen ; and under their care the congregation continued to grow and prosper, for every one was a worker in spreading the new gospel. Going from door to door, and house to house, and man to man, they urged men to turn from their idols and the low life of idolaters to the living God and the higher life.

They had centuries of prejudice to contend against ; for the people were led by priests who taught them to worship Apollo, whose image as a beautiful man, carved in white marble, and pouring wine from a gold bowl, was in all their temples and some of their streets. By the roadsides stood square white altars, where the people could place gifts of corn, wine, and oil to this idol or to the nymphs. Their worship was accompanied by such feasting and drinking, such games, processions, tempting sights and revelry, that the people, and especially the young, were attracted by the laughter and fun, eating and drinking. Their priests laid down no rules for good behaviour, but rather encouraged licence and intemperance, asking nothing in return, only money and gifts.

In the spring of each year they had festivals in their temples of the most gross and shameful kind, led on by the priests, who sought by every temptation to make them attractive. The people crowded out to the green groves of Daphne, with their fountains and lakes, to worship the idol of the sun, and bathe and swim in the cool waters, and go to the public games, and feast, dance, and keep holiday. At such times the city was so interested in the great chariot race that the people took sides and made bets, and went about the streets wearing flowers and ribbons of red and blue, to show which charioteer they favoured, sometimes fighting and rioting over it. With beautiful idols before their eyes, and the figures of women and shapely youths sculptured in snowy marble and dark bronze, and enticed with the drinking and debauchery of their festivals, the people were tempted to live thoughtlessly, and were little disposed to listen to the Christians pleading for the higher life.

When Paul stood in his brown cloak calling upon the passers-by to give up their idolatries, and their temples of pleasure, and

worship the living, unseen God in a small building, and, following Jesus the Jew, live under the restraint of peaceful, chaste, and sober thoughts, there were many who turned on their heel saying he was a fool. But to others his demand was so new and wonderful that they listened. They had never heard speaking which appealed so to their better nature, and something sprang up within them, and they joined the Christians.

And when the men of the city—trades-people, merchants, slaves, freemen—came to the Christians' meeting-place, they heard Paul and Barnabas calling upon them, as men of common-sense and reason, to give up worshipping idols and offering sacrifices to figures carved out of wood and stone, and cease going to the temple orgies amid the green groves, and lead good and chaste lives after the pattern of Jesus. They did in Antioch what our missionaries do now in the crowded cities of India and China, where idols are worshipped in splendid temples attended by thousands of priests, who entice the people to come.

When Paul spoke in the Jewish synagogue, it was to tell his countrymen that the Christ, the Saviour of their people, had come, and to warn them. We have not got his addresses, but this is what he afterwards wrote:—

“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus: for it is the power of God to save every one that believes; coming to the Jews first, and afterwards to strangers. For in it is shown the righteousness of God by faith. Habakkuk wrote that the righteous shall live by faith. The anger of God is from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold down the truth; for the knowledge of God is made known in their consciences, God making it known to them. The unseen things of God since the creation of the world have been made known through the things that are, by His everlasting power and godliness. So that men are without excuse who, knowing God, did not glorify Him as God, nor give thanks, but became proud of their own reasoning until their senseless hearts were darkened. Saying they were wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the living God for an image and copy of a man, a bird, a four-footed beast, or a creeping thing. And God gave them up, their wicked hearts being unclean and their bodies dishonoured; for they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and served and worshipped the thing made rather than God the Creator, who is blessed for evermore.”

The Christians of Antioch were now large in number, and they were all of Paul's mind; for he taught them that the spirit of Jesus was not to keep His gospel to themselves, but to spread it. They considered together the other places where the people

worshipped idols of wood and stone, and had never heard of Jesus and the higher life. Like the Jews of the synagogue, although Jesus did not fast, they thought there was good in it, and held fasting days, in which they ate little or no food.

On one of those fasting days they had a meeting together, and one said he had a message from God that they should send away Paul and Barnabas to carry the gospel to other people, as they had been called to do by God's voice.

This was a very serious thing, and they held it over to another meeting, and continued fasting and waiting to see what was their duty. At the next meeting it became plain, and the chiefs of the congregation rose, and putting their hands one after another on the heads of Paul and Barnabas, prayed for them, and bade them go. This putting on of hands, and asking God to bless them, was a solemn act well known amongst Jews. I had come down from the time of Moses, and meant that the men were set apart to do this thing. The high priest put his hands upon the head of the bull that was to be burned in the temple, and priests, Levites, and judges were set apart in the same manner. Like the water of baptism, the hands of these men of Antioch did not convey to Paul and Barnabas anything which they had not before. It was only a solemn sign before all the people that they had received and accepted the duty which they were asked to undertake. It is still common among some Christians, when a minister is appointed to preach, for the man who asks the blessing to place his hands upon his head, and that is called the laying on of hands.

Whither were they to go? Men of Cyprus were among the first to bring the glorious gospel to Antioch. Barnabas was of Cyprus. They resolved to go to that island, where they would be welcomed by friends—taking Mark as a travelling companion, upon a journey that would last over two years.

Sailing out to Cyprus.

CYPRUS: AGED 40—50.

THE men of Antioch were not poor, and would see that the three travellers were well furnished for their journey. They would require thick travelling cloaks, and changes of clothes for heat and cold, wind and rain, long oak sticks to lean upon, leather satchels and small skin bottles to hang with a thong over

their shoulder, knives, and thick-soled sandals, and haircloth bags for the rolls of books which Paul wanted, and money in the purses at their girdle. Swords or spears they would have none, for they were messengers of the gospel of peace, and their trust was in God.

Paul was a traveller of experience, and would start in the spring-time, when the cold and the rains were over, and the days full of sunshine. A crowd of friends would accompany them over the long stone bridge of the broad river, and down the paved road, through the green ravines of trees in full leaf, tangled with the wild vine and honeysuckle, as they rode on their way to Seleucia, at the sandy mouth of the river.

From the end of the stone quay, on a clear day, the purple mountains of Cyprus could be seen rising out of the blue sea about seventy miles towards the golden west. Fruit-boats were always coming and going, and with a fair wind the trip could be made in six hours. Many would weep as they embraced Paul and Barnabas; and when the open boat moved out of the harbour, they would run along the stone blocks of the quay to the end, to shout farewells as the high-peaked sail swelled out upon the mast, and the boat leaped forward before the wind from the bay of dark sand.

Above the crowded seaport were the brass-tipped spires and turrets of distant Antioch, with its hill and streets and island palace; and as the boat sped seawards, Paul saw that Mount Silpius, behind the great city, was only a shoulder of the sharp grey cone of Mount Cassius beyond. Turning his eyes to the northward, the well-known shapes of the Taurus mountains drew an undulating line of dazzling snow across the blue sky behind his beloved Tarsus. The scene was familiar; for he had often sailed past Antioch, gazing from the ship's deck shoreward at the mountains behind the battlemented city, and seaward at the purple peaks of Cyprus, towards which they were now speeding. He hated Antioch then, for its idolatry and levity; he loved it now, for the men's sake who had turned to Jesus and sent him out.

In the spring-time, if the sun is not too hot, or the glitter of the waves too dazzling, there is no more charming morning sail than from Seleucia out to the island of Cyprus. The green woods of the mainland gradually fade into the dark hollows of the hills, and these take on the hazy violet, purple, and blue shades of distance, as the mountain ranges of Cyprus begin to part and divide into valleys of green cedars, peaks of white, cliffs of red, fields of brown earth, and yellow crops.

Approaching the narrow eastern point, they were at the most wild and rocky part, with hills behind gradually rising to the

distant Mount Olympus, blue and capped with cloud. The island is about half the size of Ireland; and after sailing round the low point they had still a good way to go, skirting the beautiful coast of black rock and white beach before they reached the harbour of Salamis, the chief town, at the mouth of the river Pedias.

It was a busy seaport, in a bay surrounded with flat country, with two long sea-walls built of huge blocks of stone that reached far out like arms into the clear blue water, to shelter the fleet of trading-boats. Some were large, clumsy, and dirty, that carried salt, and silver, and the rich copper ore from which the island got its name; others were light, fast-sailing fruit-boats, to carry the figs, dates, grapes, nuts, melons, and other kinds of fruits, and the special wines and rare stones for which it was equally famous.

So that when they entered the crowded harbour and paid off the boatman, they had arrived at a large town to which Greece gave the language and Rome the laws. Sailors of all countries, with their wool caps of red and blue, were jostling each other in the narrow streets; while on the wharfs red-cheeked, dark-eyed women, celebrated for their fine features and tall figures, were working in the sunshine amongst the fruit-baskets and wine-skins.

And as Paul went away with Barnabas to seek his friends, he saw that amongst the crowd of buyers and sellers, traders and merchants, there were plenty of black-haired Jews, for in Cyprus they were so numerous as to be a danger to the Roman rulers.

Through the Isle of Venus.

CYPRUS: AGED 40—50.

IN Cyprus Paul found the same worship of Greek idols, and of the moon and stars, with which he was familiar in Tarsus and Antioch, and the same wickedness connected with their temples; but whereas Apollo, the idol of the sun, was worshipped in Antioch, Venus, the idol of lovely womanhood, was the favourite over all the island.

The priests told a wonderful story, which the people believed, that long ago, Venus, as a lovely woman, rose out of the foam of the blue waves, and landing upon the sandy beach, made her home ever after on the beautiful island. This made the people think more of the idol Venus, particularly as some said that it was the cause of the Cyprus women being so tall and comely. It is more likely, however, that it was because of the beauty of these women that the story of Venus and the waves arose.

A great holiday festival in honour of the birthday of Venus was held there in spring, when the sunshine was brightest, the woods greenest, and the valleys gay as rose gardens with wild flowers. The fair is held still, and girls of Cyprus think it will bring them husbands if they attend. It was an island to be envied, and had belonged to the Phœnicians, Persians, Egyptians, Macedonians, Greeks, and Romans in turn. Seven hundred years ago it was taken by King Richard of England; but it became Turkish again, until twenty years ago, when it was bought by Great Britain.

Barnabas knew the kind of people they had come among. We do not read that Paul preached to the foreigners who crowded the streets and wharfs, but he went to the Jewish synagogues, of which there were several, and when, after the reading, the time came to speak, he rose and told them of the new gospel of Jesus. He would tell them that he was trained as a rabbi, and had persecuted Christians, until there came a vision which changed his life; and of the young Galilean who was crucified only a few years ago at Jerusalem and rose again. We do not know what he said, but this is part of what he afterwards wrote:—

“What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? God, who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us, shall He not freely give us all things? Who shall be able to condemn God’s people? If He makes them just, who shall condemn them? Jesus the Christ, who died, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, pleads for us. Who can separate us from His love? Shall trouble, or anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or the sword? It is written in the Psalms—

“For Thy sake we are killed all the day long;
We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

“But in these things we are more than conquerors through Jesus who loved us. For I am certain that neither death nor life, angels or princes, things present or to come, height, depth, or any other thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus the Christ, our Lord.”

In the dark synagogues, with the vine and leaves over the door, they listened to him as to one who gave them something new to think about; but we do not read that they either believed or did not believe what he said in Salamis.

After spending some days in this town, with the high walls round it, open only to the harbour and the sea, Paul and Barnabas bade farewell to their friends, and started to travel from end to end of the island, and preach to their Jewish countrymen wherever

they should find them—at the salt and ore mines, the quarries, the factories, the villages. Their road lay up a broad valley, with fields and vineyards on each side, that reached to the middle of the island. Looking back, they saw the blue bay in front of Salamis, where long ago the Greeks, Egyptians, and Persians fought a great sea-fight, while the people watched from the hill. Before them was a chain of mountains clothed with green myrtles, glossy oaks, and tapering cedars, under peaks of white rock that glittered, though not so white as the snow-cap on Mount Olympus. There were many villages in the midst of the island; for salt was dug from the damp caves, and copper ore from the red cliffs, while gold, silver, and rare and precious kinds of stone were found among the rocks. In the green plains there were flocks of sheep and herds of goats; so that the travellers saw many people, although they do not seem to have preached anywhere but in synagogues.

It would take some weeks to walk through the island—sleeping sometimes in a miner's hut, sometimes in a shepherd's black tent, sometimes in the open air under the sparkling stars. Having crossed the high ridge of hills, they left white Olympus behind them, and passed down a long valley that opened out till it disclosed the city of Paphos at the mouth, and the blue sea beyond. On the shell-strewn shore of this little bay Venus was said to have landed after her bathe; and Paul would hear that the white temple, with its pillars shining in the sun, upon a rising ground near the beach, marked the spot where she stepped on shore, and was called her temple.

A mile further inland there was a grander temple to Apollo, the ruins of which can still be seen. When Paul saw that temple it was roofed, and surrounded by tall white pillars, with broad steps leading up from the grounds, by which the priests ascended and the people came with gifts. Hundreds of figures of the beautiful Venus were set up in this and other cities, but in her own temple there was no figure of a graceful woman in snowy marble. In the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem there was only a rude block of stone, and so in the innermost shrine of this temple there was a coarse cone of white marble—a thing to make worshippers smile, were it not for the army of priests who guarded it and told lies about it.

After spending weeks among hills and valleys, vineyards in tender leaf, and fields rippling with grain, Paul was again in an ancient city surrounded with stone walls, and was seeking for the Jews' quarter, where his countrymen lived in streets together. He saw men of different countries as he passed along the broad

streets; not there, as at Salamis, to buy and sell fruit, and wines, and precious ores, but to visit the white temple a mile behind them. There, too, were the fashionable ladies of the city, being carried about on couches, in their bright robes of deep purple, sea-green, pale blue, and rose; their dark hair braided with gold bands and bright ribbons, their eyelashes blackened, their finger-tips—and sometimes their hair also—dyed a bright orange colour with henna: a curious fashion of the island, which had spread to the ladies of the mainland.

This was the capital, with the great white temple as its chief attraction; and here the Roman governor had his palace, his court, and his amusements, and Paul was soon to meet him in the company of a strange countryman of his own.

Sergius Paulus, the Governor.

CYPRUS: AGED 40—50.

SERGIUS PAULUS, the Roman governor of Cyprus, was a cultured man of good family. He took an interest in the science and philosophy of the time, and in the minerals, valuable stones, and products of the island, and wrote about them. Science and philosophy were often only other names for tricks and lies; and magicians, sorcerers, astrologers, and other mystery men were attracted to his court, where they sought to explain their opinions and show off their skill. Such things served to enliven the years of his governorship, which were a kind of banishment to him after living in Rome.

As usual in a city where there were Jews, Paul began his teaching in the little synagogue, telling them of the Son of God, who was the Christ promised in their Bible. We have no record of what he said, but this is part of what he wrote about Jews and foreigners:—

“Trouble and pain will be to every man who does evil; but glory, honour, and peace to every man who does good, whether they be Jews or strangers: for there is no respect of persons with God. Strangers who have sinned without knowing the Jewish law shall perish without law; Jews who have come under the law, and have sinned against it, will be judged by the law (for it is not the hearers but the keepers of the law who are just before God. Strangers who are ignorant of the Jewish law, and do naturally the things of the law, are a law to themselves, having

the law in their heart, their conscience and their reason bearing witness, and accusing or excusing them), in that day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to what has been said in the gospel of Jesus the Christ."

Among his countrymen he met one called Elymas, who said he was a magician who could work magic, and that his religion had to do with star-worship; but Paul said he was a false Jew. Elymas was in favour with the Roman governor, who liked talking with him.

Some one told the governor of the preaching in the synagogue of certain newly-arrived Jews of Antioch, and as it seemed different from anything he had ever heard, he sent a command to Paul and Barnabas to come and see him at the palace. How to place the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, with its faith in a God unseen, before a cultured and open-minded Roman accustomed to the idols of Greece and Rome, was not an easy thing; for Romans prided themselves upon their strength of mind, and smiled at matters of faith and belief, calling them foolish superstitions and wild fanaticism.

Through the palace gardens of trees and statues Paul went in his brown cloak, with the tall Barnabas and the younger Mark, to wait on the governor, who liked to receive clever men of all kinds, for he smiled on all. With naked feet upon the coloured floor of inlaid tiles, the three travellers stood before him, as he reclined on a low couch in his airy room. He would not be alone. His wife, in robes of soft rose, would be there also, interested and attracted, as many educated Roman ladies were, by the mystic Jewish religion of the living, unseen God. Officers in gold-braided tunics of purple and crimson, and notable men of the city, who came to the governor's receptions, and men who advocated strange religions, curious beliefs, and wonderful sciences, would also be there, for there was something new to be heard.

The governor would tell Paul in courteous words that he had heard about him and his teaching, and being interested in such things, he had sent for him, that he might hear and judge for himself. And the governor would be pleased to learn that he had before him a Roman citizen of Tarsus and scholar of Jerusalem.

He was now about to address for the first time a high Roman officer of education, and we can imagine with what skill he would touch upon the well-known points of Roman character—for Paul, too, was a Roman born—their love of truth, justice, and law, their openness to reason and conviction, their toleration of all religions, and their belief in man's need of a God. He would then unfold his gospel of the new way and the higher life, as shown in Jesus,

and contrast faith in a living God with the worship of dead images, or equally dead moons and stars, or a life without faith in anything. The fair-minded Roman was impressed with the power of this travelling Jew, whose cultured sentences pleased his ear, and whose bright grey eyes thrilled him every time their glances met; and he would offer Paul and his friends bread, and fruit, and wine before they left the palace.

Elymas, the Magician.

CYPRUS: AGED 40-50.

THE wonderful story of the living God, and Jesus crucified by Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea (who might be alive still, for it was only eighteen years ago), and the impressive words of Paul, clung to the governor's mind, and he thought much over them. Faith in Jesus the Galilean would give a moral centre to his thoughts, and lift his life to a higher level for His sake—a level such as Romans were not used to strive after. He talked to Elymas about his Jewish countryman in the brown cloak, who spoke so impressively and wisely; but the magician would tell him that Paul's ideas were not those of the Jewish religion, and that it was foolish to speak of the Christ as being crucified.

Sergius Paulus thought the two Jews should meet face to face—the mysterious, magical, gesticulating Jew, with his rhymes and incantations, his spells and compounds, who said he knew the secrets of the heavens, and could read the stars like a book; and the plain traveller in the striped kerchief and brown cloak, who spoke calmly of truth and righteousness, temperance, God and His Son the Christ, of a resurrection and a judgment, with warning hand uplifted and eyes that glowed.

They met before the governor. Paul spoke; Elymas denied what he said, growing ever more bold and truculent; and the Roman listened. And as he listened to reasoning like this, his face grew thoughtful towards the Christian, and stern towards the sorcerer,—

“The gospel that tells of the death of Jesus on the cross appears to be foolishness to men who are perishing, but it is the power of God to us who are being saved. It is written in our Bible that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and reject the thoughts of the prudent. Where stands the wise man, the writer and the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish

the wisdom of the world, seeing that by its wisdom it knew Him not? But it is God's good pleasure, through this preaching which is called foolish, to save them that believe. The Jews ask for wonders, and the Greeks seek wisdom; but we preach the Christ crucified, a thing which offends Jews, and sounds like foolishness to Greeks: but to them who hearken, both Jews and Greeks, He is the Christ, the power and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength."

The discussion was sharp, the controversy keen, Jew against Jew, for the possession of this Roman's open mind; and standing round them on the coloured pavement were the governor's friends, deeply interested as speech and reply, question and answer, flashed from man to man. As he disputed with this false countryman, who would admit nothing, and swept away everything with glib lies, even the sacred name and character of Jesus his beloved Master, something of the old spirit, that had slumbered for twenty years, rose up within Paul—the spirit of conviction and conversion by blows. His temper was rapidly overtopping his patience. He could stand no longer this lying juggler, this renegade Jew. Gazing at him, with hands clenched and eyes that burned with anger, he exclaimed,—

"O full of all guile and villany, you son of the devil, you enemy of all that is right, will you not cease to twist the right ways of the Lord? Now, see, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, and not see the sun for a time!" And we are told that Elymas was overwhelmed, and that a mist of blindness came upon his eyes, so that he could not see where to go, and holding out his hands, he asked to be led away.

The Roman governor had from the first been deeply impressed with Paul's speaking, and what took place that day settled his mind. Rising from his couch, he told Paul that he was astonished at his teaching, and that he believed in Jesus.

We are not told whether Sergius Paulus ever openly became a Christian, but there is little doubt that Paul and Barnabas would be frequent visitors at his palace during their stay in Paphos, and that before they left they had answered many questions from the cultured Roman, and had expounded to him the life of temperance, goodness, and peace which was required of him as a believer in the living God and Jesus His Son. And when Sergius Paulus returned to Rome, he would be able to speak of Jesus and His sayings as he had learned them from the travelling Jews who visited Cyprus while he was governor there.

In an Open Boat.

PAPHOS : AGED 40—50.

THE good impression which Paul made upon the Roman governor would help the Jews and their religion in the city, and when Paul spoke he would be listened to with respect, as the friend of the governor. What he said at these synagogue meetings we are not told, but we can see from his later addresses and his letters that he would speak like a trained rabbi. His letters read like addresses dictated with animation and enthusiasm. We can picture his countrymen sitting on their little mats on the floor, with bowed heads, as he spoke to them in words like these :—

“O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How deep are His judgments; His ways are past finding out! Isaiah wrote, Who has known the mind of God? who has been His adviser? Who gave to Him first, and it shall be given back to him? Of Him, and in Him, and through Him, are all things, and to Him be the glory for evermore.

“I therefore beseech you, by the mercy of God, to offer yourselves like living sacrifices, holy and well pleasing to Him, in your spiritual worship. Do not shape your lives according to the ways of this world, but be changed by the renewing of your minds, that you may prove to others what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

After spending some months in beautiful Cyprus, during which the spring, with its brilliant sunshine and soft breezes, passed into the quivering heat of summer, with yellow harvests in the fields and red grapes among the vines, they prepared to leave the island home of Barnabas and go on their journey.

The boat was hired for a voyage of two days and a night, westward over the blue sea, and Paul found friends ready to go with him besides Barnabas and Mark. They were going back to the mainland, not to Antioch, but to the coast of Pamphylia, another Roman province, one hundred and fifty miles distant, about the size of Devonshire, and only one hundred miles from Paul's own province of Cilicia. Waiting for a fair wind, they would start in the early morning, ere the mists had been scattered from Mount Olympus, and with sail hoisted to the wind, they glided out of the harbour of Paphos, and were at once in the open sea, with nothing between them and Pamphylia. They could see the line of the white-tipped Taurus mountains, but they steered for a more distant part of the coast, hid as yet from view.

They would be in what we should call a coasting boat, with one tall mast, and a sail that stood up higher than the mast, partly decked over at bow and stern to give shelter from the sun and a sleeping-place in cold or wet weather.

All day they sailed, amid curling waves and dashing spray; and when the red sun went down in the sea to the west, Cyprus had faded to a low purple island, and the hills of Pamphylia showed a rugged line of blue. When they slept, it would be wrapped in their cloaks under the bulging sail, whose peak, as it swayed to and fro, seemed to touch the throbbing stars and the flashing moon that turned the waves to silver. And when the breath of dawn came, they were in the wide Gulf of Attalia, with hills on each side and level country before them. Beyond the plains were rugged mountains, with patches of blue pines and white and grey rocks, and waterfalls foaming down to the sea.

In a bay to the left, upon a white cliff washed by the sea, were the walls of Attalia; but they were not going thither. Steering for the mouth of the Cestrus, the sail was pulled down, and long, heavy oars thrust out, to row them for eight miles up the river to the large town of Perga. The river-sides were covered with trees and high bushes of myrtle and acacia, dipping green streamers into the water. Golden-crested hoopoes strutted on the sandbanks, and grey herons stood as if asleep in the water, while blue-winged jays and white-breasted swallows flew from one side to another.

At a bend of the river Perga came into view, in a valley between wooded hills. Its grey walls surrounded a castle, an open-air theatre, and a racecourse to amuse the people; while on a hill outside stood a white-pillared temple of Diana, the huntress of the silver bow, and by the river-side were stone wharfs for shipping. This was the end of their second voyage, and paying the boatman, they landed on the quay.

The town was well built, with paved streets, and square stone houses after the Greek fashion; and the travellers would find countrymen in the Jews' quarter to take them into their homes.

We do not read that Paul went to the synagogue, for he left the town very soon. The heat at Perga in summer is almost unbearable, and strangers are liable to fever, and it is thought that he fell ill there. Indeed, it was so unhealthy that it was the custom for all who were able to do so to leave the low plains in flaming summer and go up to the mountains above for coolness. Shepherds drove their sheep and goats up higher to keep them alive. Paul wished to go up to the mountains, but Mark would not go. We do not know why. Perhaps he only meant to go to

Cyprus, and Paul had changed their plans in going further ; or he may have been afraid of the robbers and wild beasts of these mountain gorges, or perhaps he was anxious about his mother, left in Jerusalem. Barnabas was willing to go on, but Mark would not ; and bidding them farewell, he sailed back to Cæsarea and Jerusalem. Paul did not like this—it was like deserting his friends ; but Barnabas took a gentler view of his nephew's conduct.

Hot Plains and Cool Mountains.

PERGA : AGED 40—50.

IN his letters Paul speaks of a kind of illness which gave him severe pain, and he suffered much at this time in the heat and fever of Perga ; but Barnabas, the Levite, who was a strong, good-looking man, does not seem to have suffered. We can picture the strong man helping his flushed and drooping companion on to the ass's back that was to carry him up to a healthier region where he might recover. Going for safety with a company of merchants, shepherds, and travellers—men and women, children and animals—they would begin the hard climb up to the higher country by a well-known stony track, worn bare by the feet of countless heavy-laden horses, asses, and camels.

The pasture-lands of the shepherds were yellow with the fierce heat as they rode up the Cestrus valley, but the river foamed through black rocks. Crossing over by a rude stone bridge, they climbed up until they reached a level plain, and then they had a backward view down the gorge of amazing beauty.

Spread out below was the wide plain of fields, woods, and silver coils of the river, and stretching round the bay dark hills clasped a basin of brilliant blue from the Mediterranean that faded in a pearly haze. Towns and white villages hung upon the cliffs or spread along the shores. It was a beautiful but unhealthy land.

The view closed behind them as they toiled up the stony track, now over the marble shoulder of a bare hill, now through a stifling gorge, where the rocky clefts were clad with cypress, juniper, and poplar trees, and spreading sycamores covered the level spots. It was a land of green woods, white falls, glistening peaks, and slopes of tumbled rocks, wilder and grander than the passes of Scotland.

At noon, when the heat was fiercest, the travellers would dismount, and finding the shade of cave or tree, lie down and

sleep, to ride on again in the afternoon. At night they would seek the safety of the house for strangers in the village, which marked the end of the first day's journey. It was only an open square, built for protection, not comfort; and there, in a crowd of quarrelling travellers, noisy cattle, and yelping dogs, they would prepare their food by the light of blazing pine-knots, and lie down in their thick cloaks to sleep in the open air.

They were now among mountains and lawless mountain people, who lived in tribes and bands, and would rob them by day if they could. If they camped at night away from a village, they would not lie down without heaping twigs and branches upon the camp fire until the flame leaped up, to scare away the lions, tigers, wolves, and hyenas that they heard roaring and howling in the distance. In Paul's letters he speaks of having been in perils from robbers and wild beasts, and while we do not know that they were attacked on this journey, there is no doubt they were in daily danger.

In three or four days they would reach Adada, surrounded with thick forests, and leaving by a wild pass through the lonely hills, would see the mountain lake of Karolis, with forty miles of blue water dotted with islands. Descending from the hills at the northern end, they travelled on towards Neapolis. They were now up amongst the cities of the mountains, and had passed the wildest and most dangerous part of their journey.

A full week of weariness and pain to Paul, spent in riding up slippery, rocky paths, across rapid streams, and through hot glens, and of anxiety to Barnabas, whose strong arm would often be needed to keep his drooping companion in the saddle, had brought them to the healthy air and cooling winds of the highlands.

From Neapolis a paved Roman road of twenty miles extended to Pisidian Antioch, whither they were going, at the foot of the range called the Sultan Hills. It was the largest city and chief fortress of the district of Pisidia, in which they were, and had once been Greek, but was now a centre for Roman soldiers. Partly built on the slope of the hills, its walls were thick and high, with low arches for the gates, so that it was a vast mountain castle. But it had the usual open-air theatre and racecourse, and a temple to the moon, and another to Bacchus; and as the great buildings were of white marble cut from the hills behind, they looked clear and bright in the sunshine. Behind the city, the hills were clothed with hardy fir, ash, and oak, that withstood the severe winters; but southwards, the view from the walls was of grassy plains, glens, woods, and soft hills, that rose up to a magnificent circle of jagged peaks against the sky.

This was the great mountain city which our travellers reached, after toiling up a hundred miles from the sea, through wild and dangerous gorges.

Of course they found Jews there, ready to take them in ; for they were in all trading cities, and it was a part of their religion to shelter countrymen when they came to a strange place. Here the travellers were to remain for some time, and amid the cool airs of the mountains the fever and pain from which Paul suffered so acutely passed away.

Speaking in a Synagogue.

PISIDIAN ANTIOCH : AGED 40-50.

THE main road through these mountains and high table-lands of Asia, from distant Ephesus on the west to the Cilician gates above Tarsus on the east, passed through Pisidian Antioch ; and as that was the great highway for the caravans of traders, and for the bands of Roman soldiers who were moving from place to place, the city was always busy, until it was mantled and sealed by the snow and ice of winter. And when the people came up in summer from the coast to the hills, to get away from the terrible heat and malaria, it was crowded.

In the bazaars, lined with booths shaded by a stretch of brown cloth, the trades-people sat, with their yellow shoes and slippers, their red and white clay bowls and jugs, their long bronze knives and keen daggers, their cloth and their jewellery around them, calling aloud to the strangers to come and buy. On market-days the country people fastened their horses and asses with ropes to pegs in the ground, while they stood with long sticks in their hands, watching their sheep and goats, their cows and horses, brought in to the market for sale.

And Paul worked like the rest, weaving his thick haircloth, and carrying it to the bazaar. Or he may have worked with some tentmaker, shaping and sewing those thick tent-covers which he knew so well how to make. A true rabbi, he liked to work for his living, and be independent, while he spread the free gospel.

Following his usual plan, he and Barnabas attended the dimly-lit synagogue, where all were free to speak, and there he told his countrymen of the new gospel of Jesus the Christ. One had been a rabbi, and the other a Levite of Jerusalem, and they were listened to by their countrymen, who were not so intolerant as the Jews of Palestine. A Jewish synagogue was the same everywhere—

dark inside, with small windows to keep it cool, a paved floor for the men's mats, and a side screen for the women and children; a recess in the wall nearest to Jerusalem, covered by a curtain of the temple colours, where hung the ever-burning lamp, over the box full of Bible rolls.

We now come to Paul's first address which has come down to us. It was the Jewish Sunday, although the city knew it not, and the synagogue was crowded with Jews, the white-haired elders upon a raised place facing the people. The prayers and reading of the Bible were over. "Brothers," said the chief elder, looking towards Paul and Barnabas, "if you have any word of teaching for the people, say on."

Paul was ready. Standing up, he raised his hand, as a sign to the people to cease talking and listen. With their blue-tasselled praying shawls thrown over their heads or across their shoulders, the men sat cross-legged and barefooted upon their little mats and carpets, and soon their eyes were fixed upon the stranger in the grey tunic and striped kerchief, Barnabas sitting beside him. Paul speaks, and we find that his address is on the same plan as that of the dead Stephen. His first sentence shows that his words are for all, and the men of the city listen with curious interest to his sketch of the history of this strange people the Jews. This is part of what he said:—

"Listen, you Jews, and you men who fear God. Our God chose our people, and raised them up when they were slaves in Egypt, and with a high hand He brought them out. For about forty years He bore with them in the wilderness. He destroyed seven nations, and gave them their country, where they lived for about four hundred and fifty years. He gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet, when they asked for a king; and He gave them Saul, who was king for forty years; and then He gave them David to be their king."

This historic sketch was to introduce the name of Jesus, and he continued,—

"As promised in the Jewish Bible, of the descendants of this King David, God has brought a Saviour to our people—Jesus, whom John the Baptist proclaimed, telling of baptism and repentance to all Jews."

The coming of the Christ was a thing which these Jews yearned for, and they would listen in perfect silence as he went on,—

"John the Baptist said, I am not the Christ. But there cometh One after me, the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to unloose.

“Brother Jews, and you strangers who believe in God, these words of salvation are for us. The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not know that Jesus was the Christ, and did not understand the words of our Bible that are read every Sabbath in their synagogues, but they fulfilled the prophecies by condemning Jesus to die. They found nothing deserving death in Him, yet they asked Pilate, the Roman governor, to crucify Him. And having done this, they took Him down from the cross and buried Him.”

Having told them of Jesus being condemned and killed by the people of Jerusalem, as the Bible said the Christ would be, he unfolded the future life,—

“But God raised Jesus from the dead, and He was seen for many days by those who came with Him from Galilee, and who are now the witnesses of these things to the people.”

He may have pointed to Barnabas as he spoke, for he was a witness from Jerusalem.

With the skill of a rabbi, to prove his words he repeated passages from the Bible which every Jew associated with the Christ, and then continued,—

“We bring you good tidings about the promise of the Christ. God has kept His promise to us and to our children in raising up Jesus. Brothers, let it be known among you that, through this man Jesus, we proclaim forgiveness of sins. Every one that believes in Him is made just, from the things from which you never could be made just by the law of Moses.”

These were startling words to come from the lips of a Pharisee, that faith in Jesus the Christ was greater than the law of Moses. But to a Jew, if Jesus were indeed the Christ, all things were possible to Him. The elders shook their grey heads. Could Jesus the Nazarene be the Christ? Paul ended with a warning,—

“Remember the saying of the prophet Habakkuk, See, you despisers! Wonder, and vanish away! I work a work in your time which you would not believe though it were told you.”

He sat down, and the people were thrilled and astonished, for no more exciting thing could be said in a meeting of Jews than that the Christ had appeared. His flashing eyes, his voice, his upraised hand held them listening; but, as usual, the dim synagogue was at once filled with suppressed talking. The Christ he spoke of was a peasant of Galilee; they looked for a prince who would keep the whole law. This was strange, new teaching. “Was it true?” they asked each other.

The ruler of the synagogue gave the sign for the meeting to

break up, and going over to Paul and Barnabas, asked them to come back next Sabbath and repeat what had been said. He was not a ready man. With a week's reflection and searching of the ancient Scriptures he hoped to be able to answer the strange teacher and his new heresy.

In this synagogue scene we have a picture of how Paul had been putting the new religion before his countrymen, in synagogue after synagogue, for many years. In learned, touching, stirring language, he fearlessly told them that the followers of Jesus had found in Him the righteousness which could not be got under the Jewish religious law.

A Strange Synagogue Scene.

PISIDIAN ANTIOCH : AGED 40-50.

OUT from the door of the synagogue, with the vine and grapes, the people came in their bright garments of red and blue, white and yellow—the men loitering in the sunshine, the women and children hastening home by back streets, looking neither to one side nor to another. When the figures of Barnabas and his companion appeared walking down the narrow street, they were followed by men who had been waiting for them. Some were Jews, some people of the town, who had turned from idols to the living God, and were allowed to worship at the back of the synagogue; and they were going home with Paul and Barnabas to hear more about the new religion. And there a second meeting was held of men, whom Paul and Barnabas urged to have faith in God and Jesus the Christ. His address in the synagogue was talked about in every Jewish home, and the foreigners who heard it spread the news of the new religion, and that this wonderful man would speak again next Sabbath in the Jews' synagogue. And during the week, as Paul worked at their trade of weaving and tentmaking, he would be visited by his own countrymen, and by people of the city—Greeks and Romans, Pisidians and Galatians; and there was a stir in the city, for some of the wives of leading citizens believed in the Jewish religion.

The worship of the people was the same worship of Greek idols and the starry skies with which Paul was familiar; the priests and priestesses, and their servants and slaves, did not care to what wild and degrading scenes they invited the people, so long as they got them to come in crowds to their groves and

temples. So bad had this become in the white temple of the "Moon" that, some time before Paul's visit, the Romans had ordered the orgies of that temple to cease, and the vile priests and their slaves to be banished. They did not believe in a future, or in living a higher life here; for the priests taught them that to eat and drink, and have pleasure and amusement, were the chief things to be sought after.

And so when Paul spoke calmly of a future life, and of a God who would punish wickedness, and of the higher life here of unselfishness, temperance, and truth, in Jesus the Son of God, the people listened as to a voice from heaven. When he compared such a life with their drunkenness, gluttony, and worse, and their kneeling and giving gifts to a carved block of brass or stone, and bade them turn from such grovelling wickedness to the living God and His Son, the people listened and wondered. Women, degraded and crushed by the tyranny of idolatry, looked up, and blessed in their hearts the messengers of light. How different were these two travelling Jews, in brown cloak and striped kerchief, who spoke of a living God, from the shrieking, foaming, drunken, and sometimes naked and bleeding priests of Cybele, who danced and yelled in the streets, exciting with their horrid gestures the youths of the town to follow them.

And so next Sabbath, not only Jews but foreigners came again to hear the strange new gospel; and the quiet synagogue was crowded, and many could not get in. The strangers who came to the dim, whitewashed building noticed its plainness, compared with their temples of carved pillar and corniced roof, and wondered why there was no image in marble or gold, but only a small lamp burning like a star before an embroidered curtain of purple, scarlet, and white. They listened to earnest prayers to the unseen God, and to readings from the sacred book of the Jews, to quiet blessings and low responses, so different from the wild scenes in their own great temples. Again the ruler invited Paul to speak, and again the man in the grey tunic, wearing a traveller's striped kerchief, rose, with hand upraised for silence. A glance of his keen, grey eyes, and he saw his own countrymen sitting close packed, and strangers crowding behind, out into the street. He was glad to see those foreign faces; but the Jews were not, for they were jealous of them, and angry with Paul, who had said they could become Christians.

Paul went over again what he had said last Sabbath; but when he said that Jesus was the promised Christ, he was interrupted by voices saying it was not true. Such interruptions were common in a synagogue; and turning round, he answered them,

only to be contradicted again. He was accustomed to this, and was ready with more answers; but they brought more interruptions and fresh objections as he argued on. Soon the Jews were dangerously excited, and each time he said Jesus was the Christ the leaders denied it loudly, and a hoarse murmur of approval rose from the men sitting on the floor. With rising voice, first Paul and then Barnabas asked them to listen to reason and argument; but the Jews only shouted louder, and began to jeer and call Jesus names, and each name as it sprang into the air was like a scourge across the face to Paul. They had roused the lion in him, and turning to the row of leading Jews sitting before the lamp, he exclaimed in a ringing voice,—

“It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you Jews; but seeing that you will not listen, and consider yourselves not fit for heaven, see! we turn to the strangers, for so God has commanded us.” And with a sweep of his naked arm he pointed to the faces at the door, where the people of the city were in the street, listening, and hearing at times the loud tones of Paul’s voice, and the hoarse shouts within. “Remember the words of Isaiah, I have set thee for a light to strangers, to be for salvation to the furthest parts of the earth.”

The Jews could not dispute these words, which filled them with deep indignation and rage; and when they reached the ears of the people outside, they rejoiced. When Paul and his tall companion came out of the little door, they were spurned by most of the Jews; but the townspeople welcomed them, and followed the two men in a crowd to their house, where many joined the Christians.

And their house, which was also their workshop, became the centre of a congregation of foreign Christians, with a few Jews among them. And Paul and Barnabas remained in the city working at their trade, and teaching the glorious gospel of Jesus to all about them. Many who had had no religion, and many who worshipped idols, came to believe in the living God and Jesus His Son, and changed their lives and became Christians. We do not know what he said to those people of the city who had turned from idols, but this is part of what he wrote to others:—

“If, then, you have risen with Jesus into a higher life, seek the things that are above, where He is seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind upon the things that are of heaven, not upon worldly things. For your old life is dead, and your new life is hid with Jesus in God. When He who is our new life is made known, then will you also be with Him in glory. Therefore keep down your earthly passions, unfaithfulness, anger, greed, idolatry, because of which the wrath of God comes upon the disobedient, and

which things you also used to do when you lived among them. Put away all anger, and malice, and shameful speaking out of your mouth, and tell no lies to each other, seeing that you have put off your old life and its doings, and put on a new life, which is being kept new by knowledge, after the pattern of Jesus. For there is no difference with Him between Jews and foreigners, Barbarians, Scythians, slaves or free men : for the spirit of Jesus in us all is everything."

And as summer passed into the russet and gold of autumn, they went out among the towns and villages in the district of Phrygia, spreading the gospel of Jesus everywhere. And the Christians of the bazaars carried the news of the strange teaching along the plains, into the glens, and over the mountains, where it was talked about in the hamlets and homes of the country people. So that when the fierce cold of winter came, and the mountain roads were impassable with ice, and the streets thick with trodden snow, not only that great city but all the country round about had heard of the new gospel.

Put out of the City.

PISIDIAN ANTIOCH : AGED 40-50.

DURING the months of winter the city was almost cut off from communication with other places ; for the roads were snow-blocked, and the view from the walls was of glittering peaks and white valleys, so that travelling ceased. Even when spring had brought leaves and wild-flowers to the coast plains below, it was long before the roads through the gorges were passable, because of the floods and torrents that swept through them.

Paul and Barnabas spent these months of bitter frost, biting hail, and blinding snow within the walls of the city, confirming and binding the Christians together into a congregation, and teaching them how to spread the gospel. They succeeded so well that the Jews of the synagogue became alarmed. They thought that these two men had no right to bring foreigners into a sect of the Jewish religion. But Paul and Barnabas continued to put before the people the higher life in Jesus, and to urge them to turn to the living God, from idols and temples, where lying and cheating were called cleverness, and honesty and truth were considered foolish.

The temple orgies were attended mainly by men. The women of the city did not like them, for they did not make the men good husbands and sons. It was no uncommon thing for the wives of these men to go to the synagogue, where they heard about the living God, and listened to pure and holy teaching for parents and children, read out every week from the Jewish Scriptures. Some of them had joined the Jewish religion, and that was a great thing to do with so much idolatry going on around them. The Jews of the synagogue stirred up such of them as were married to leading citizens, to get their husbands to have Paul and Barnabas banished from the city; and the women did this, so that Paul and Barnabas could no longer live quietly.

They were brought before the city magistrates, who ordered them to cease teaching this new religion; but they refused, and then it is most likely they would get one of those cruel beatings with birch-rods which Paul afterwards mentions, and which would leave them with bruised and bleeding backs. But punishment could not stop them, and the magistrates ordered them to be expelled from the city.

We can picture the tall, strong Levite, and his companion in the brown cloak, with ragged-looking guards on each side, weeping friends around, and an idle crowd following, as they were led along the paved streets through the low arch, and thrust out of the eastern gate, and along the open road, until they came to the city boundaries. With a push on the shoulder, and perhaps a blow from the end of a spear, they were ordered to go on, and not come back again if they valued their lives. Their Jewish enemies would be there, jeering and cursing; and the reply was a very Eastern one. Untying their stout shoes, our two travellers shook out the grains of dust upon the road—a well-known sign that they disdained to carry away even the dust of their city with them. And thus the synagogue Jews, who began so well, got their two countrymen turned out of the city; but it did not terrify them, for they were back again in a few months.

Riding upon asses, with their rolls of cloth, and books, their bundles of spare clothing, their water and oil bottles, and other travellers' things stuffed into the saddle-bags, the two travellers bade farewell to their friends, urging them to hold fast to their new faith, and resist all temptations to return to the worship of idols, and took their way down the broad Roman road towards Neapolis. A little over six months ago they had ridden up that way, bringing Paul tired and ill from Perga, and they had cause to be of good cheer.

Soon they left the slope of the mountains, and were riding

on a level plain, where the spring floods were disappearing, and the trees were in green leaf. They would spend the night in the home for strangers at Neapolis, near the great blue lake Karalis; and as travellers and traders were now moving about after the winter storms, the place would be thronged with laden camels with jingling bells, peddlers with their asses and bundles of country stuffs, shepherds with their sheep and goats, all trying to get the best places. When darkness came on, clad in thick cloaks and sheep-skin jackets with the wool inside, the dusky men, with knives in their belts, would sit round the fires in the open air, with the wind sighing overhead, and the flames lighting up their dark faces, as they ate their hard-boiled eggs and black bread, and drank sour milk and oil, with hungry yellow dogs watching every movement, and fighting for whatever was thrown away. It was rough company to be in, but they were the servants of God, and without fear.

When the rising sun flushed the snow peaks with deepening rose, Paul and Barnabas would be up and mingling with the noisy throng of rough and poor-looking travellers, cooking food at the fires within the walled enclosures, and ready to start with others. A short distance out of the town they turned off the paved Roman road, traversed by bands of soldiers with their mounted officers, and followed a path over a low range of hills green with trees and thickets, where they heard the nightingales before the sun was high, and saw the country people in their brown huts of stakes and woven reeds, which they carried with them as they moved from place to place.

From the top of the hills they saw the walls of Iconium, forty miles distant. The country between, of lakes and marshes in winter, was now partly dried up, and dotted with the black and brown tents of shepherds, who came there for the earliest grass for their huge flocks of sheep. Riding past these wild men, they heard the strange shepherd cries of alarm with which they brought their sheep running together, and the curious shrill notes of the plaintive reed pipes with which they led them away.

Like Pisidian Antioch, Iconium was an old walled city, in the same Roman province. Built upon level ground, it had two peaks of grey rock rising behind its white and yellow houses, and was surrounded with miles of fields, gardens, and orchards, where figs, dates, apples, cherries, and grapes grew in plenty, the secret of its fruitfulness being the fine river that flowed past the town.

In following Paul's travels, we are impressed with the size and age of the towns he visited; and explorers tell us that the ruins

in these parts, of places whose names have been long forgotten, are conclusive proof of the cities of crowded streets and splendid temples which were to be found only a few days' journey from each other. The walls round Iconium were two miles long, with low archways for gates out to the tree-shaded roads and lanes that led to the gardens and vineyards of the citizens. It was a Roman garrison, where discharged soldiers lived whose duty was to chase the robbers back to their dens who came down from the wild mountains to steal sheep and cattle from the plains. For if they got back to the mountains with their plunder, no one would venture to follow them.

Adonis and Cybele were the idols worshipped in Iconium, but many people believed only in wealth and pleasure. The priests told the people that Adonis was a beautiful shepherd youth who was killed, and that a lovely maiden called Cybele brought him to life again. And so each year when the blue hyacinths and tulips, the yellow marigolds and anemones, began to colour the brown grass, where they had seemed to be dead, the people spent weeks of feasting and drinking, rejoicing and playing, in the large temples; and the priests, clad in armour, danced like madmen through the streets, to the din of blaring horns, crashing brass cymbals, and hand drums, shouting that Adonis had come alive again. But more touching was the faith of the young girls, who went in procession, clad in white, their loose hair decked with crimson flowers; for they really believed that somehow, somewhere, a beautiful maiden had won back to life a beautiful youth. But they never saw Adonis, dead or alive, and the only resurrection was of green grass, crimson flowers, and nodding trees.

Here thousands of Jews lived in their own part of the town, who sent so many bags of shekels to the far-off temple in Jerusalem that the robbers heard of it, and plundered the bearers. But they sent more, for by the Jewish law every man must send his half-shekel each year.

Riding through the low archway into the city, Paul and Barnabas sought the streets of the Jews, and were welcomed by their countrymen. But they were going to stay some time, and would seek out a lodging, where they could weave cloth, and cut and sew tents, and be a burden to no one, while they spread the glorious gospel of Jesus.

Stone Them !

ICONIUM : AGED 40—50.

THE people of Iconium were so fond of ploughing and sowing, keeping sheep, and growing vines, that the old Roman soldiers called them rough names for being so peaceful. Paul and Barnabas worked quietly among them, going as usual to the synagogue of the low doorway, and dark chamber, and the ever-burning lamp, and spoke of the nation's hope of a Saviour. We have not got his address, but this is part of what he afterwards wrote :—

“ In bygone years our countrymen did not all listen to the glad tidings of the gospel of peace. For Isaiah said of them, Lord, who hath believed us? Belief comes by hearing the words of Jesus. They heard a voice then, for we read, Their voice went out into all the world, and their words to the ends of the earth. Did our countrymen not know God's voice? Isaiah said, I, God, was found by them that did not seek Me; I became known to them that asked not of Me. But as to our countrymen he said, All day long God spread out His hands to a disobedient people. Now I ask you this question, Did God ever cast off His people the Jews? God forbid; for I also am a Jew, a child of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. You remember that Elijah pleaded with God against them, saying, Lord, they have killed Thy prophets and dug down Thine altars; and I only am left, and they are seeking my life. But God answered, I have left for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to an idol. And so, my brothers, at the present time, by God's grace, there are a few faithful Jews left. But it is by His grace, not by their own good deeds. And so what our countrymen sought to attain by their own way, they did not get; but by the favour of God some got it, the rest being hardened. As Isaiah said, God gave them a stupid spirit, eyes that they should not see, ears that they should not hear the truth, as it is to-day. And King David said, Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back always. I say then, Did the Jews of old stumble that they might fall? God forbid. By their stumbling salvation went forth to foreigners, provoking our countrymen to jealousy. If their stumbling and their loss brought the riches of the gospel to foreigners and the world, how much more if they had believed?”

At first they heard Paul and Barnabas quietly; but when they returned day after day, repeating the same gospel and urging men

to believe, and when the chief men saw some of their countrymen joining them, they began to interrupt, oppose, and deny what they said. But they spoke to the townspeople also ; and we can picture them standing in the cool of the afternoon, in a corner of the wide market-place, with a group of men about them, telling them to turn from idols of wood and stone to the living God, and live the higher life of honesty, temperance, and goodness, through faith in Jesus. The people listened to the wonderful orator in the brown cloak and sandals, and to his tall friend—listened gladly ; and many said they wished to be Christians. No man had ever spoken to them as Paul spoke. This is what he afterwards wrote to them :—

“You, my brothers, have been called into freedom ; but do not make freedom an excuse for excess, but serve one another in love.”

Repeating one of the beautiful sayings of Jesus his Master, he added,—

“For the whole Jewish religious law is contained in these words, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if, like wild animals, you begin to bite and tear each other, take care lest you be all destroyed together.

“Be guided by the Spirit of Jesus, and you will not give way to bad passions. For these passions are opposed to His Spirit, and His Spirit is against them, being contrary one to another. In such things you may not do as you please. But if you are guided by the Spirit of Jesus, you are not under the Jewish law.

“Men who are not guided by His Spirit are easily seen and known by their unfaithfulness, idolatry, sorcery, strife, jealousy, anger, drunkenness, revelling, and such like, and by factions and divisions. Of these things I tell you plainly, they who do them shall not enter the kingdom of God. But what are the fruits of the Spirit of Jesus in your lives? love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, faith, meekness, self-control : against such things there is no law. They who believe in Jesus are as if they had crucified and put an end to their evil passions and desires. But let us not boast and annoy one another or envy one another ; for as we live by the Spirit of Jesus, so also let us be guided by Him.”

Their success outside annoyed the synagogue Jews, who told the townspeople that they were false teachers ; but Paul and Barnabas spoke only the more boldly about Jesus, doing signs and wonders. The people liked speeches and discussions, and some sided with Paul and some with the synagogue Jews, who called them names ; and the division became very bitter. Now, calling names was never far removed from sticks and stones in these towns, and in most disputes the stronger put down the weaker

by force. And the synagogue Jews arranged with their friends of the city to stone the two strange Jews if they did not stop teaching, and they followed them and treated them shamefully in the streets. But before the stoning came they were warned by friends, and hastily left the city by the south gate, taking the road across the plains.

Are they Jupiter and Mercury ?

LYSTRA : AGED 40-50.

THEY had been in Iconium for some months, and left many Christians there, to whom they would return. Again they had been driven out of a town by their own countrymen, and they were now going to Lystra, another Greek city. To reach it they had to cross a wide plain and climb a range of low rocky hills. From these hills they looked over undulating country of yellow grass and low hardy bushes, where the winter marshes had been, and towards a range of hazy hills, with the white houses of a town at the foot. They had left green orchards and gardens, to ride through a riverless plain of myrtles, flowering canes, reeds, and spear grass, frequented by large herds of black buffaloes and wild asses. These wild animals came to the marshes because of the salt, which was so thickly crusted that the people could gather it. If Paul and Barnabas spent a night on the plain in a shepherd's low black hut, there would be a blazing fire of brushwood kept up at the door to scare off the wolves and hyenas that but for it would creep up to attack the sheep and goats ; and their howling and shrieking would be heard near and far all night long, until the dawn silenced them.

Lystra was built upon a curious hill of black rock, standing by itself in a wide valley, and the town had a river flowing through it that was lost in the salt marshes below. It had also walls round it, and a large temple. Here again the travellers found countrymen of their own, to welcome them in the narrow streets, and take them to the Jews' quarter to find a house to lodge and work in. There they stayed, preaching to the people, and making short journeys in the district of Lycaonia, and to Derbe, twenty miles southward along the hills. They were in another stronghold for Roman soldiers, with a paved road to Pisidian Antioch, beyond the blue lake Karalis ; and caravans of merchants from a distance were daily passing through the town, and Paul would find no

difficulty in selling his haircloth and shepherds' tents. Going to the bazaars and markets, they spoke to the people about the living God, and Jesus His Son, and of the higher life of soberness, honesty, charity, and goodness to which His voice called them, contrasting it with the degrading worship of idols. And the people listened to teaching like this, which is from one of his letters :—

“We speak the wisdom of perfection : a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, for that would be nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God, a mystery, hidden and fixed by Him, for our glory, before the world began. But the rulers of this world did not know it ; for if they had, they would not have crucified Jesus the Lord of glory. Our Jewish Scriptures say, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love Him.

“But God has made it known to us through the Spirit of Jesus, which searches all things, even the deep things of God. Who among men knows the things of a man but the spirit of the man which is in him ? and so the things of God are known only to the Spirit of God. We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which He freely gives us. And these things we speak, not in words taught by the wisdom of man, but taught by the Spirit of God ; and so we teach the things of the Spirit by His power. Men whose minds are darkened will not receive the things of the Spirit of God ; and call them foolishness, not understanding them, because they have not the Spirit of Jesus to help them. But the man whose mind is enlightened by His Spirit examines all things, but He himself is not judged by men. Who has known the mind of God, that he should teach Him ? But we know the mind of Jesus the Christ.”

Their preaching became popular in the city, and the people listened and turned to the worship of God and His Son, joining the Christians.

One thing made a great impression. Paul was addressing a crowd not far from the temple of Jupiter, and there was a lame man there who had never walked ; and he saw that he was believing what he said, and had pity on him. Looking at him with a steady gaze, he bade him rise, saying, “Stand upright upon your feet.” The man rose and walked, and a murmur of astonishment went through the crowd, and they shouted for joy.

There was a common story told among the people that once upon a time two imaginary persons, called Jupiter and Mercury, had come down from the skies to that part of the country, and

done wonders. Perhaps Paul and Barnabas were visitors of the same sort, and the crowd shouted loudly, "Gods have come down to us in the shapes of men! Gods have come down to us in the shapes of men!" And Paul could not get them to cease shouting this foolish cry. What it led to we shall see.

Bulls and Flower=Ropes.

LYSTRA : AGED 40-50.

AS the people shouted in the sunshine, and gazed in wonder at Paul and Barnabas, men ran out of their shops, stalls, and little houses; passers-by stopped, and the crowd grew. Who could these strangers be, who said they were the messengers of the living God, bringing good tidings of hope and joy? Jupiter was said to be a fine-looking person, and Mercury a wonderful speaker. The tall man must be the one, and the silver-tongued orator must be the other.

Paul and Barnabas went away, and the crowd broke up. But the two strangers grew more wonderful the more the people thought of the modesty with which they had ceased speaking and gone quietly away together, as if to get beyond their cries. Some sought the priests of Jupiter, in the white temple amid the grove of dark-green trees, passing on their way a marble statue of Jupiter sitting, with Mercury standing behind his chair. The priests listened to their excited story, and saying they would offer sacrifices to these two wonderful beings, ordered two young bulls to be brushed and oiled till their brown hides shone. Ropes of red roses, blue convolvulus, scarlet geraniums, and lilies of white and gold, fastened with myrtle and bay leaves, were wreathed round their glossy bodies and thick necks, and twined about their shining horns, while two strong young men held them. In a solemn procession of white-robed priests, bearing axe and wood, fire and incense, knives and cups, with peal of trumpet and clash of cymbal they left the temple, going slowly through the long avenue of trees and out by the gates, to make the usual procession through the streets, and pass the house, on their way to the public altar of Jupiter, where they would slay and burn the bulls as a sacrifice to the two strange beings.

A joyful messenger told Paul and Barnabas what was being prepared; and the slow crash of cymbals and the booming horns and gongs of the shouting priests confirmed it.

“What! going to sacrifice to them on the altar of Jupiter near the city gate!” They were shocked beyond measure. To be worshipped in place of God! The idea was terrible! Seizing their tunics of grey wool, they tore them from hem to neck, the Jewish sign of grief, and fled into the streets, exclaiming as they ran, “What is this you are doing? what is this you are doing?” They came to the priests and the glossy, flower-garlanded bulls; and standing upon a rising ground, with hands upraised, and torn tunic, Paul implored them to listen. The gongs of the priests ceased as he called loudly,—

“We are only men like yourselves, who have brought you the glad news, to turn away from useless sacrifices and images of stone and worship the living God, who made the earth and sky and all that is in them.”

Their attention was caught with his words about God, of whom they had often heard him speak. Why sacrifice to men, or stone figures of men, with a living God to worship? There in the sunshine were the white priests, the glossy bulls, the flower-strewn altar, and the people ready to worship God or a stone, as Paul might persuade them, and he took a quieter tone,—

“In long-past years God left the nations of the world to their own way, and yet you are never without evidence of God’s constant care for you, in the rain He sends, and the fruitful years which fill your homes with food and your hearts with gladness.”

It was autumn, and Paul’s eyes had caught the gleam of red apples, crimson cherries, golden dates, purple grapes, amongst the yellow leaves of the gardens, ripe witnesses of the care of the unseen God.

When the silver-tongued orator ended, the priests were not so pressing; but the people were still eager for the sacrifice, and it took Paul and Barnabas a hard struggle to get them to give way. It may have occurred to some that if these two strangers were from heaven, they ought to be obeyed; and if they were not, they need not slay bulls and burn incense to two men.

And so the shining bulls, with their flower garlands, were led lowing back to their stalls in Jupiter’s temple, and the people went home. And Paul and Barnabas felt as if they had escaped from a great danger—not from enemies, as at Iconium, but from mistaken friends.

Stoned and Cast Out.

LYSTRA : AGED 40-50.

AND so Paul and Barnabas stayed on in that city of the black rock, surrounded on three sides with jagged mountain peaks, over which the sun sank in the evening, filling the head of the valley with floating mists of rose and crimson.

Among those who joined the Christians was a youth called Timothy, of whom we shall hear much later on ; and his mother Lois, and his grandmother Eunice, were very friendly to the two travellers. We do not know what Paul said to him at this time, but this is part of what he afterwards wrote :—

“Stir up the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness. Be not ashamed of Jesus, nor of me ; but bear hardships, spreading the gospel in the power of God. For God has saved us, and called us with a holy call, not because of our goodness, but by favour, and for His own purpose. And this was given us in Jesus the Christ from long-past times, but has only now been seen and made known by His appearing as our Saviour. He has conquered death, and brought the future life to our knowledge through His gospel, of which I was made a herald, apostle, and teacher. And for that I suffer : but I am not ashamed ; for I know Jesus in whom I have believed, and I am sure that He is able to guard what I have committed into His care until that day. Keep to the sound teaching which you have heard me speak, in that faith and love which is in Jesus the Christ. The good thing which has been given you guard and keep, by the Holy Spirit of God which dwells in us all.”

The Roman road from Pisidian Antioch ended at Lystra, and besides bands of foot-soldiers, Paul would often see the light two-wheeled chariot of crimson and gold of a Roman officer dashing out through the low city gateway and along the road, the driver whirling his long whip and shouting to the galloping horses that drew the light wagon, bumping and clattering over the stones, while the officer stood beside him holding by the front rail. Through these low archways groaned and creaked the heavy wooden-wheeled wagons, dragged by horned oxen, bringing in loads of wood, wool, leather hides, bricks, blocks of stone, or sacks of grain into the market or to the merchants' stores. Chief among these merchants and traders, whose laden asses brought the finest rolls of silk and cotton cloth into the city, were the red-

cheeked, black-eyed Jews, many of whom travelled the country as peddlers, with a bale of goods strapped on a pack-ass, going long distances, and calling at far-off towns and villages.

Forty miles across the salt plain was Iconium, and there the synagogue Jews heard from their companions that the two strange travellers had stopped at Lystra, and that the new gospel was much liked by the people. The news was carried to the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch, and they were also annoyed that these men should teach what they considered to be a false Jewish religion, and they sent learned men to contradict them. And soon the disputation and quarrelling amongst the Jews of Lystra was very great; for these men denounced Paul and Barnabas as false teachers, who had been put out of Pisidian Antioch, and had fled from Iconium. And they told the people that this Jesus of whom Paul spoke was crucified as a criminal by the Roman governor at Jerusalem, not twenty years ago.

And so the people of the city were stirred up by the lies of Jews, whom they knew and did business with, against two strangers whom they did not know. And they gradually changed right round, until they thought that they were cheats and vagabonds who should be driven out. But Paul and his friends did not know of the change, and continued to preach openly in street and market, thinking all was well, and it came suddenly upon them.

One day, as Paul was standing speaking under the hot autumn sky, the Iconium Jews came forward and disputed with him, and, with fists in the air, shrieked out their rage, calling on the common people to stone him. There are always enough scoundrels in an Asiatic crowd to kill a man, if the rest do not defend him; and soon stones were flying through the air at the man in the brown cloak, who did not run away; and more stones came, until one heavier than the rest struck him, and he fell bleeding and insensible upon the street. His cowardly enemies thought he was killed, and did not care, for life was cheap in these places, and, as if he were a vile criminal, they took him by the cloak, and, with shouts and jeers, dragged his senseless body through the dust of the street and out by the city gate, where he was tossed aside, as if they had rid the city of a murderer. And there they left him.

His friends had followed, not knowing whether he was dead or alive, as he was being dragged along; and when his body was cast aside they gathered round. There lay the messenger of Jesus, his clothing covered with yellow dust, bleeding from stone cuts. Was he dead or alive? We can imagine how tenderly Barnabas would pillow the head of his friend upon a cloak, as

he dashed water in his face, and called him by his name, while others stood weeping and lamenting round him.

To their great joy Paul returned to consciousness, and opening his eyes, spoke to them, asking what had happened and why he was there. After a time he recovered enough to be taken away, and, assisted by friends, he was helped to his feet and taken into the city, perhaps after dark, so that his enemies might not see him or know what had been done with him.

And thus he was all but killed by the same hands that had been held up to worship him. Great heart! he was neither exalted by the one nor terrified by the other, for he believed he was treading the path marked out for him by Jesus—a road beset with scourgings, imprisonments, stonings, insults, buffetings, and death itself, such as in his days of madness he himself had dealt out to others. They suffered in innocence, but he believed he deserved to suffer, for nothing that he could bear for Jesus could atone for the days when he persecuted Him through His followers.

He had now felt the pains but not the broken-hearted innocence of Stephen, when, on that never-to-be-forgotten day, he stood outside the walls of Jerusalem and held the cloaks of the ruffians who killed him. In the secrecy of some friend's house he lay bruised and wounded, sore and ill, from the stones and blows of the streets, thankful that his life was spared. And Timothy would not forget the sight of Paul stoned by his countrymen for bringing the tidings of peace to them.

Next morning early, mounted on an ass, with his strong companion Barnabas by his side, bidding a secret farewell to his friends, bruised and sore, Paul rode out into the country, and towards the town of Derbe, where they had been already well received, there to begin again scattering the seed of life, to spring up and bear fruit when he was gone.

Amid Snow and Ice.

DERBE: AGED 40-50.

THE road from Lystra to Derbe was across miles of undulating country, with short grass and few trees. The hollows here and there were filling out with the rains into shallow lakes, where flocks of grey geese and black-winged ducks rose on low wings. The town towards which they were slowly riding was in a sheltered hollow at the foot of a black mountain, and surrounded with strong walls, as a protection from robbers; but it was not large, and its

houses were of wood and brown bricks, closely crowded together. The swift river through which they rode turned away and did not come near the town, so that it was not surrounded with those miles of green orchards and bee gardens which were the beauty of Iconium, but tapering poplar trees bowed before the wind.

When Paul, still sore and weak, rode through the archway into the town, in the care of Barnabas, he found friendly hands held out to take him to their house, for Jews were always ready to take in travelling countrymen. Again he would work at his trade of a weaver and tentmaker, so that he might not be a burden on any man; but there was no synagogue in Derbe, so that he would speak to small meetings in friends' houses, for he was a rabbi of Jerusalem, and would be listened to by his own countrymen and by foreigners also.

Among the mountains of Galatia winter comes soon, and by the end of autumn the winds in the streets of Derbe were chill and cutting, and heavy rains fell for days together. Sometimes the frost comes so suddenly that farmers have to gather in their stooks of corn from among the snow. The first thick fall of snow was the sign that travelling any great distance should be given up, if the traveller did not wish to be lost in a snowstorm.

Winter was now at hand, and travelling was over for a time, when all who could lived within the walls of a town. With cold winds sweeping through the crooked streets, and hills covered with glittering snow, the two men would require all the protection they could get from sheep-skin coats and heavy cloaks. His house would seem poor and comfortless to us, with a large fire of resinous wood knots burning in the middle of the stone floor, the smoke curling upwards to a hole in the roof, and doors and windows closed to keep out the bitter cold.

Amid such surroundings, the great scholar, with his rolls of papyrus, his notes written in black Greek words, his genius, and his eloquence, spent the short days and long nights of winter in a mountain town, snowed up, cut off from all the world. But he and Barnabas preached the glorious gospel of Jesus to the people, who sat by the hour on mats in the small crowded room, listening, and weeping as they heard words like these:—

“Be strengthened with the grace which is in Jesus. What you have heard me say before many witnesses, commit to faithful men, who may be able to teach it to others also. Bear hardships with me, as a good soldier of the Christ. No soldier when he is out on service entangles himself in other affairs, that he may better please the one who enrolled him as a soldier. If a young man takes part in the public games, he is not crowned with the green

leaves unless he has kept the rules. The man who digs a garden ought to be the first to taste the fruit. Think upon what I say, for God will give you understanding in all things. Do not forget that Jesus the Christ, who rose from the dead, was descended from King David, according to the gospel which I have taught, and for which I suffer: but I bear everything for the sake of others, that they too may get that salvation which is in Jesus the Christ, with glory for evermore. It is a faithful saying, that if we die with Jesus, we shall live with Him; if we endure, we shall reign; if we deny Him, He will deny us: but though we be faithless, yet will He remain faithful."

And many who listened to him in these little meetings turned from their idols to the living God, to live the higher life in Jesus His Son. And they got the Christians to join into a congregation, to meet, read, pray, and worship together, and encourage each other to stand firm in the new religion, and not go back to idols. They also chose the best men to be over the rest, in taking care of the poor and widows and orphans, and providing their common meal and a place to meet in. And at their meetings, any one who felt called upon to speak a word was free to do so. Fasting, as you know, was a part of the synagogue system, and Paul also encouraged them to fast when they had any very solemn thing to prepare for.

And so, while he lived among them, he taught them how to keep together and strengthen each other in the new faith. And when the rains and gales of spring came, and black patches of rock began to appear on the white hillsides, telling that the snows were melting, the two travellers thought of moving on again, for the roads would soon be open.

Melting Ice and Vanishing Snows.

DERBE: AGED 40-50.

THEY had now been a year away from Antioch, and had reached the farthest town in Galatia, and were about to retrace their steps, visiting the Christians on their way, in the different towns they had passed through. Before leaving, they had a last meeting with the Christians of Derbe, urging them to be faithful to Jesus, and resist all temptations to return to the worship of idols, and not to be afraid of trouble, for it was only by holding to the faith that they could become children of God's kingdom;

and they prayed that God would watch over them, and then rode out of the town towards Lystra.

Although the sun was hot at mid-day, the road across the plains would still be thick with snow, frozen and beaten hard with horses' feet. The marshes were no longer lakes of snow-laden ice, but tracts of water, rippling into waves with the wind. And when the day's ride drew to a close, they saw the mountains to the west, of rose, and purple, and crimson, transfigured with colours so brilliant that they were more like peaks of amethyst, ruby, and coral than of snow kindled by the setting sun.

The Jews of Iconium had gone home months ago ; so that when Paul and Barnabas rode into Lystra they were received joyfully by the Christians, who chose elders and office-bearers, and were instructed how to keep together as a congregation. At their farewell meeting they would listen to words like these before Paul rode on again over the beaten snows :—

“ If any man thinks differently, and does not agree to sound words, even the words of Jesus the Christ, and the gospel of goodness, he is conceited, knowing nothing, but taken up with questionings and disputes over words, out of which come quarrelling, scolding, suspicions, and wranglings among men of bad minds, who do not know the truth, and think that goodness is a way to make money. Goodness with contentment is great gain. We brought nothing into the world, and we shall carry nothing out ; and with food and clothing we should be content. They who wish to be rich fall into snares and temptations, and many foolish and hurtful desires, that sink men into destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil ; and some, by reaching and following after it, have been led astray from the true faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

Riding on to Iconium, they met the Christians, and did the same as at Derbe and Lystra, urging them to be true to the new faith, in words like these :—

“ Finally, my brothers, pray for us, that the word of God may speed and be glorified, with others as with you : and that you may be delivered from wicked men who have not the true faith. But Jesus is faithful, who will strengthen you, and guard you from harm. We have confidence in you, that in Him you will both will and do what He commands. And may God guide your hearts unto the love of Him and the patience of Jesus.”

After staying with them for a time, they rode out of the walled city and through miles of orchards and gardens, where trees were budding into green leaf, and birds building their nests ; for although the earth was cold and white, the air was warm with sunshine.

Following the paved Roman road, they came, with many slips and stumbles, up to the gates of Pisidian Antioch, out of which they had been thrust some six months before, when skies were blue and hillsides glowing with midsummer. There they told the Christians what they had done, and got them to form a congregation, and choose those who were to be over the rest. But before leaving, Paul and Barnabas spoke of the temptations that would beset them to go back to the worship of idols and the pleasures of the temples, urging them to hold to the new gospel and the higher life in Jesus. We are not told what he said, but this is part of what he wrote:—

“Wives, obey your husbands; husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for that is pleasing to God. Fathers, irritate not your children, lest they be discouraged. Slaves, obey your masters in all things; not with eye service, as men-pleasers only, but in singleness of heart and the fear of God: and whatever you do, work heartily, as to God and not man; knowing that from God you shall receive your reward: for you serve Jesus the Christ. Masters, give your slaves what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a master in heaven: and he that does wrong shall be punished for what he has done; and there is no respect of persons with God.

“Continue steadfast in prayer, watchful always and thankful; praying also for us, that God may open to us a door for His word, that we may speak the mystery of Jesus the Christ, and make it known, as we ought. Behave wisely towards them that are not Christians, and use your time well; and let your words be always gracious, that you may know how to answer every one.”

The mountain passes were still blocked with snow, and the flooded rivers so dangerous that they would remain with their friends at this large city until the spring was well advanced, for it was not until May that hardy mountaineers and adventurous packmen went down the broken and flooded tracks to the coast plains below. Paul seems to have avoided the synagogue, as he did also in Lystra and Iconium on this return journey, keeping to quiet meetings with the Christians.

By Flowery Fields.

PISIDIAN ANTIOCH: AGED 40-50.

WHILE Paul waited in that walled city at the foot of the Sultan Mountain, spring came smiling over the plains

below, where the light-green leaves were shaken out upon the branches, and the lark rose from the springing grass to sing by the edge of the luminous cloud, for winter was over and gone.

Bidding farewell to their many friends, the two travellers rode down the paved way towards Neapolis. The winds were piercingly cold that swept down from the snow-covered mountains, but beds of purple and yellow crocuses, and glades of twinkling white snowdrops, told them that there would be no more ice. When they passed through woods, masses of sulphur primrose, and sheets of blue hyacinth, and lilac cyclamen spread pools of colour among mosses of brilliant bronze and red. In the open country the ground was seamed with dark-brown lines, where farmers, with wooden ploughs and horned oxen, were slowly tilling the fields. Others were flinging in the seed, while flocks of black crows, glossy starlings, speckled partridges, and crested lapwings wheeled in the air, seeking to snatch it away before it could be covered over by the harrow of thorn bushes. Again they saw the sparkling waters of the blue lake. White storks passed in long trains above them, and from the woods came the call of the cuckoo, which marked there, as in England, the coming of summer.

After some days they reached the rocky descent through the gorge in the mountains, to the plains by the sea, up which Barnabas had toiled with his sick companion nearly a year before. The climate changed quickly to midsummer, and bare cliffs of marble, stained with lichens of orange and red, became banks of bushes and trees. At parts, the precipices on each side almost shut out the sky; and at others, the black tents of wandering bands warned them to be on their guard for attack, for even Roman soldiers were not able to clear the robbers out of these mountain passes. And if they camped at night, lying under small black tents beside a blazing camp fire, they would hear in the stillness the hooting of the grey owl and the scream of the hyena, and perhaps the roaring of a lion; for there were no hunters there, and fires by night and shouts and noise by day were the travellers' protection.

When again they saw the sea, it was over woods in full leaf, and country bathed in hot sunshine, which never knew the nip of winter. On the plains the crops were rippling green, and by the water-courses the oleander and hawthorn reared crimson hedges and towers of snow. The time of wild-flowers was brief and brilliant, with hues which no one could number. Here a hollow of sky-blue forget-me-nots, there a thicket of spotted yellow lilies, yonder a field white with narcissus, while crimson roses and scarlet geraniums grew to the height of small trees. Butterflies of crimson and black, pale blue, golden yellow, and paper-white fluttered

in the sunshine ; and at noon the nightingale still sang in the shade of thick bushes. With sunshine burning on leaf and flower, the gleam of wings, the hum of bees, it seemed strange that those sweet flowers should ever fade, or heat fill those plains of paradise with poisonous airs.

Crossing the flooded river Cestus by the narrow bridge, they came to Perga in its broad vale, and there they stayed for some time. Paul proclaimed the gospel to the people of the town, and it is likely he would also speak to the Jews in their synagogue, and we can picture them listening to words like this :—

“You are inexcusable, O man, whoever you may be that judges another man. In condemning him, you condemn yourself ; for you do the same things. And we know of truth that God’s judgment is against all unrighteousness. Do you think that you will escape ? Or do you despise the goodness and forbearance of God, not knowing that His goodness should bring you to repentance ? By the hardness of your heart you heap up punishment for yourself of God, who will judge every man according to his life. To them that by patience in doing well seek honour and glory and immortality, He will give life for evermore ; but to them that are factious, who obey not the truth, but follow unrighteousness, will be God’s wrath and indignation.”

They did not find a ship to suit them at Perga, and continued their journey, a full day’s ride farther on, through level country, ever descending towards the cliffs by the sea on which the town of Attalia stood.

Sunshine and Waves.

ATTALIA : AGED 40—50.

THE town is still there ; its streets are shaded with trees ; fruit gardens still surround the houses of the rich, as when Paul saw it. It was then a great seaport for the cities on the plains and among the mountains, and the country people for many miles around came to its paved market-place to sell their hides and wool, their wine, oil, cheese, and dried fruits for shipment. Many Jews were there ; but Paul seems only to have passed through the streets to reach the harbour, built of huge stone blocks, at the curve of the bay, some of which can be seen still.

There the two travellers found a ship bound for Seleucia ; and after paying for a passage, in brass and copper coins, they got provisions for the voyage, and went on board. When the wind was

favourable, the great brown sail was shaken out from the tapering yard, and they were again heaving upon the sea, as the little ship swept out from the shelter of the stone quay. They saw the white houses of the town grow smaller, with dark cliffs behind them and foaming waterfalls; while afar off, cutting the light blue sky with rugged line, were the glittering peaks of the mountains, among which they had spent a winter of bitter cold and snow, of danger and of success.

After a long sojourn amongst the mountains and passes of Galatia, a voyage in a coasting boat in early spring would be a time of strength-giving zest and change to the two men. With a favouring wind, they could sail to Seleucia in fourteen days, but it is not likely that they would have just the wind they wanted all the way. The weather would not be too hot; and some nights they would sleep with the stars shining over them, and on others, scourged with wind and rain, they would find what rest they could amongst a crowd of other men under the deck at the bow. There would be no fire in the boat, so that their food would be the hard fare of Eastern travellers—cakes of bread moistened with oil, dried fish, eggs, dried dates and figs, wine, and stale water from an earthenware jar or leather skin.

They were sailing along the coast, and every night they would anchor in a creek or bay until the red dawn flushed the clouds, when the anchor would be taken up, and the large sail shaken out. These days of idleness, spent in looking towards the changing line of purple mountains, watching for the blue peaks of Cyprus or the mist-shrouded mountains of Syria, would be days of reflection and conversation, in which Paul would hear all that Barnabas knew of Jesus, and many things would become clear between them. In their first long journey together, they had succeeded better amongst foreigners than they could have expected; and they would talk of the prospects of the gospel amongst their own enlightened God-fearing countrymen, compared with the ignorant people of cities and countries sunk in the darkness and iniquity of idol worship. Let others convert the Jews; they would carry the light of the glorious gospel into lands where the fear of God was unknown. Wherever there was a Roman road or a Roman city, they would plant the gospel of the world, for did not Jesus say,—

“Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Wherever two or three are met together in My name, there am I in the midst of you.”

And every fresh day of golden sunshine and rocking seas, and every night of dashing spray and rain or whistling wind, brought

them nearer to Antioch and their friends who had sent them out as the messengers of the truth and the way, to the nations lying in darkness.

A Wide=open Door.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40-50.

SITTING on the raised deck at the stern, where the steersman worked the long oar with which he kept the boat on its course, they saw again the familiar shapes of the mountains, and the white houses of the town ; and soon they were in the quiet waters of the harbour of Seleucia, and behind the stone break-water, with the sail looped up to the tapering yard, and the voyage at an end. There were no friends waiting for them as the boat glided alongside the stone quay, and the ropes were thrown out and caught and tied fast. The grass was dry and yellow as they rode up the wide glens towards Antioch, crossing the bridge of five arches, and passing through the low gateway, to stand once more in the busy street thronged with people seeking the shade of the pillared footways. They had been away for about two and a half years, and word of their return soon spread amongst the Christians, who gathered to their house to hear the news of their journey and ask them to come to the meeting-place of the congregation and give an account of their wanderings.

Through the narrow streets, in the autumn sunshine, the Christians of Antioch went towards their place of meeting, and friends who were not Christians came to hear the story of the first missionary journey of two brave men. Sitting on bright-coloured mats, they listened to the story of the ride through Cyprus, and of the Roman governor, Sergius Paulus, at Paphos ; of the voyage to Perga, and of Paul's illness, and Mark's return home ; and of their going up through the mountains to Pisidian Antioch, where they spent their first winter. They heard also how they worked there and were put out, and went on to Iconium, whence they fled to Lystra, where Paul was all but killed, and went thence to Derbe, spending their second winter there, and returning in the spring through the same towns to Perga, Attalia, and home by sea. And this was their golden news, that whereas the Jews in the synagogues were against them, the foreigners in the streets heard them gladly, and joined the Christians in such large numbers that they had formed congregations in almost every town they visited. Everywhere the foreigners were giving up their idols, and turning

to the living God and Jesus His Son. And the men of Antioch rejoiced that God had opened a door of faith to foreigners to come into His kingdom.

Paul saw from this first journey the golden dream of a new age for the world outside Palestine, and that his work was to be there. He found the people careless and ignorant about their idols, and only held to the temples by the enticements of the priests; and they were startled and attracted by a new gospel which bade them rise up and live the higher life of which their own priests never spoke. The Greek and Roman religions had got mixed up with wild Asiatic beliefs and customs, and together they had sunk to such a low level of feasting and revelry that the time was ripe for a call to quit the life of beasts and live the lives of men. God had opened a door to foreigners—not the narrow door of the Jewish synagogue, with its rules and traditions, which, Jesus said, kept the people out of the kingdom of God, but the wide door of Christianity, through which all men could enter who believed in God and His Son and lived the higher life.

With the great thought burning in his soul that he would spread the gospel of Jesus throughout the whole Roman Empire, Paul settled down in Antioch to weave and stitch and work for his daily bread. Toiling at his loom, he expounded to his listeners and to the world the gospel of salvation as Jesus taught it, and as it had been made clear to himself; and we can picture these grave-faced men sitting round him, listening to words like this:—

“Brothers, if a man be discovered in a fault, speak to him in a spirit of humility, looking to yourselves, lest you should also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so keep the Spirit of Jesus. If any man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he only deceives himself. Let every man examine himself, and he shall have satisfaction in himself, and not praise from his neighbour. Let him that is being taught communicate all good things to his teacher. Do not be deceived; for God is not mocked. Men shall reap what they sow. He that sows for this world shall reap worldly things; but he that sows in the Spirit of Jesus shall of Him reap life for evermore. Let us not be weary in doing well: for in due time we shall reap, if we do not faint. So then, as we have an opportunity, let us work for good toward all men, especially toward Christians.”

But his large heart was soon to be vexed by contact with smaller minds, who had not risen to the height of Jesus, and who would seek to force Paul into their view that Christianity was **only** for those who became Jews and received the mark of a Jew.

False Jerusalem Christians.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40—50.

PETER, the large-hearted apostle, was also a traveller, although he did not go so far as Paul; and hearing of the congregation at Antioch, he came thither on a visit. The old fisherman rejoiced when he heard from Paul and Barnabas of the great success of their visit to the cities of Cyprus and Galatia, and he mingled with the foreign Christians of Antioch, sharing in their work, and sitting at their meals as freely as if they were all Jews. According to the Jewish religious law, no Jew could eat food with one who was not circumcised, or enter his house. Paul said that this did not apply to Christians; but there were other Christian Jews who said it did, and since he was last in Jerusalem their influence had grown.

When they heard there of the great journey of Paul and Barnabas, and of the numbers of foreigners who were becoming Christians, they resolved to try to put a stop to it; and men came all the way to Antioch to tell them that they were not Christians unless they were circumcised, and that the Jewish Christians should separate themselves from the foreign Christians.

But they little guessed the man they had to meet in Paul of Tarsus. He knew they were not sincerely wishing Christianity to spread, but were hypocrites belonging to a sect of the Pharisees—the kind of men who had tried to entrap Jesus in the temple by pretending to be followers of His. They had got secretly in among the Christians of Jerusalem, to spoil the liberty of Christianity and make it a buttress of the old Jewish religion. But Paul was also a Pharisee, and was armed to meet them. Although they brought no letter from the leading Christians at Jerusalem, they came with an air of authority which deceived many.

Standing up in the meeting of Christians, as messengers from the apostles, they amazed the people by saying, with an appearance of great sincerity and learning, "Unless you are all circumcised, in the way described in the laws of Moses, you cannot be saved." The laws of Moses! The sayings of Jesus were their laws. Paul had told them little about Moses, but much about Jesus their Master, and said that if they believed in the living God, and Jesus the Christ, they would be saved. And now these strangers in white tunics had come all the way from Jerusalem to tell them that this was wrong. Paul answered them at once that they either did not understand the glorious gospel of Jesus, or else they were

false Christians who wished to prevent it spreading over the world. We do not know his exact words, but this is part of what he afterwards wrote :—

“If you bear the name of a Jew, and trust to the Jewish religious law, and glory in God, and approve of what you think excellent; and being taught out of the Jewish law, are confident that you are a guide to the blind, a light to them that are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, and a teacher of babes: if you find in your law a form of knowledge and truth, and teach others, why do you not teach yourself? You who teach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say that a man should not be unfaithful, are you faithful? You who hate idols, do you rob temples? You who glory in the Jewish law, do you dishonour God by breaking the law? Isaiah said, God’s name is despised among foreigners because of you.

“Circumcision is of some use to a Jew, if he keeps the Jewish law; but if he breaks the law, it is not. And if an uncircumcised person were to keep the Jewish law, would it not be just as good as if he were circumcised? Would not he, by keeping the law, condemn you who, with your circumcision, are law-breakers? For he is not a real Jew who is one to outward appearance only, nor is he truly circumcised who is so outwardly only; but he alone is a true Jew who is one in his inward life. True circumcision is a pure heart, that obeys the spirit, and does not merely keep the letter; whose praise is not from men, but of God.”

But these Jews were men of position, and their words had a different effect upon Peter. He was a Jew of Palestine, and when they argued they convinced him they were right and Paul was wrong, and that he himself, a circumcised Jew, was doing wrong in keeping company with uncircumcised men; and he drew back from the men of Antioch, and would no longer sit at table with them. The Jews of Antioch, who had become Christians, did the same, and there was a split between the Jews and the foreigners deep enough to ruin the congregation. Even Barnabas, Paul’s faithful friend, was so carried away that he was inclined to side with Peter and the men from Jerusalem.

What a spectacle for scoffing unbelievers! Peter and the Jews on one side, Paul and the foreigners on the other. Both could not be right, and it must be settled quickly. They said his whole plan of work was wrong, and that the elders at Jerusalem said so too. Who was Paul that he should set himself against James, the brother of Jesus, and the apostles who had lived with Him?

But Paul knew the mind and teaching of Jesus, and that he was in the right. The change that Jesus required was of the heart

—not a mark upon the body. What were His sayings? “He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.” And at Capernaum, in reply to Peter himself, did He not say, “Nothing which a man eateth can defile him, neither eating with unwashed hands”? And yet Peter had forgotten this, and was now for narrowing the door into the kingdom of God.

Can Foreigners be Christians?

ANTIOCH : AGED 40—50.

THROUGH the sunny streets of the city, the Christians, Jews and foreigners alike, were gathering to their meeting-place to discuss the vital question raised by the men from Jerusalem. Had Paul made Christianity too easy? Had they to revise his work, and learn and obey all the laws of the Jewish religion? Had he taught what was not true? The discussion grew warm in the crowded meeting, and as Paul saw the white-haired apostle Peter being deceived, and lending his great weight to the hypocrites who were striving to put out of the congregation men who showed the spirit of Jesus, by giving money for the poor Christians in Jerusalem, he was deeply moved. Turning upon Peter, as the man whose example was greatest, and who had forgotten himself, Paul exclaimed,—

“You are a Jew, and since you became a follower of Jesus you have lived like a foreigner, free from all the rules of the Jewish religion, no longer obeying them as other Jews do. Why then do you wish to make these foreigners obey them?”

Paul’s glowing eyes were turned upon his friend as he put this piercing question, and Peter felt that he had been led into trying to bind the yoke of the Jewish law upon the necks of strangers, although he considered himself free. Paul then stated what was the broad gospel of Jesus, and that, as honest men, they must not make it narrower.

“We who have been born Jews know that a man cannot be made good by obeying the laws and traditions of the Jewish religion, but only through faith in Jesus the Christ. We Jews believe in Jesus the Christ, that we may be made good by faith in Him, and not by obeying laws, for no man can be made good by keeping them.”

There was no one there who had sunk deeper into the mire of the Jewish law, in a vain striving after righteousness, than he,

or who knew more of its hopeless bitterness, and the joy of deliverance. Free himself, would he make slaves of others? He continued,—

“If I were now to set up the rules which I have not kept, I should show myself to have been a wrongdoer. Obedience to them is nothing to me, for I obey God. When Jesus died on the cross, my obedience to the Jewish law died also. Now the Spirit of Jesus lives in me, and the life which I now live is not a life of obedience to the Jewish law, but of faith in Jesus the Son of God, who loved me, and died for me. I have no wish to make light of the grace of God, but this I say, If a man can be made good through obeying the Jewish law, Jesus died for nothing.”

These warm and stirring words touched Peter, who felt that he was right at first, and should not have listened to these false men. Barnabas now joined with Paul in telling them that they did not understand the gospel of Jesus, which was freedom, and not bondage; but they were unmoved.

From what they had said of the opinions of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, Paul felt that this division between Jews and foreigners, which had come down from the ages, could not be settled in Antioch. He must go to Jerusalem, and have it made clear by the leaders that he was right in what he taught. If they said yes, it would put down these mischief-makers. Even if they would not support him, he would not yield up to man what he had received of God, but would return to Antioch again. And the congregation agreed that he and Barnabas should be sent to Jerusalem to have the great question finally settled, Must foreigners be circumcised?

It seems strange to us that such a question should have been forced upon Paul; and it shows the strong hold their early Jewish training had upon the apostles, that, so soon after the death of Jesus, they should have been in doubt about those little rules and ceremonies which He so often broke, and bade the people disregard. They had to be shaken by the strong hand of Paul before they fully realized that the religion of Jesus the Galilean was not a thing of race or place, but was for all men everywhere, and that in its mighty sweep all things that would limit or restrict it must go down. And yet we see many Christians deeply divided to-day as to how and when they should be baptized, or whether they need be baptized at all, and in regard to many other things. But the large heart of Paul was bent on this only, that men must turn to the living God, and have faith in His Son, and live lives worthy of that great change; and the

world was not too large, nor men too diverse, for all to enter by the door which Jesus opened into His kingdom.

A Winter Ride.

ANTIOCH : AGED 40-50.

IN the winter months the voyage along the Syrian coast is so stormy and exposed that the frail coasting boats were all beached or kept in harbours, and so Paul and his companions would have to go to Jerusalem by land, if they were to go at once. It was a journey of about seven hundred miles, and would take about six weeks ; but they were not now amongst the snow-clad mountains of Galatia, where travelling was impossible in winter, but close to the sea, where, although there were storms and rain, there was little frost, and many days of sunshine.

Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and some men of the city were going, and the Christians would see them well provided with money, food, and clothing for the journey, with asses to carry their stuff, and tents to sleep in at night ; and friends accompanied them out a part of the way, for they were going to plead for them all. The Jerusalem Jews who had caused all the trouble were already gone ; for although Paul spread his own views upon the foreigners question wherever he spoke on the journey, they are never mentioned.

The winter road from Antioch to Palestine was well known, for merchants and traders were coming and going by it all the year. It was paved with Roman flag-stones, and went by the side of the sea, with stone bridges over the rivers. They would not travel alone, but in a caravan of camels and asses, laden with goods, going southward on business, accompanied by plenty of men armed with sticks, swords, and spears, to defend them from the robbers of the hills and caves, who were ever on the watch for people with well-laden beasts.

It was the rainy season, with grey clouds drifting along the hillsides ; and in every gorge and glen channels that for months in the summer were beds of white stones, without a drop of water, were now rivers deep and broad, that flooded the country, and often surrounded the bridges, so that they had to wait days before they could cross over. With roads washed away and bridges flooded, travelling was slow and often dangerous. We can picture them walking their animals cautiously into the

deep water of the fords, with asses here and there stumbling and falling, half-drowning the riders and drenching the saddle-bags, for that would be every traveller's experience on such a journey.

Day after day they rode along by the grey sea, that broke against black rocks, and poured white-crested waves far up the pebbly bays, and over banks of yellow sand; while on the other hand rose bare hills, glittering with moisture, and seamed with water-courses. Often the clouds parted into blue sky, and a burst of sunshine swept along the hillsides, turning the falls into glistening snow, and the sea into cobalt blue. At night they sought the protection of the village house for strangers, where they got little warmth from the wood fires, and but scant sleeping space in a crowded room, which you would not think good enough or clean enough for your horse, but where they had to wrap themselves in thick cloaks and skins of sheep and buffalo, and sleep as best they could.

Passing through the province of Phœnicia, they stayed for some time at the large towns of Tyre and Sidon, and spoke to the workmen, who could make glass of all colours, and twist it into beautiful shapes, and melt tin, brass, silver, and gold in their brick furnaces, that smoked round the harbours crowded with winter shipping. They told the Christians of the great success of the gospel in the cities of Galatia, and that they were going up to Jerusalem about the question of admitting foreigners; and as Paul bade them farewell in words like these, the Christians of Phœnicia were glad,—

“Now to Him that is able to establish you according to my gospel of Jesus the Christ, revealing the mystery that has been silent for ages, and, according to the Bible, is now being made known to all nations, that they may obey the true faith in the only wise God, through Jesus the Christ, be the glory for evermore.”

Still keeping along by the sea-coast, they travelled on into Palestine, with the wooded hills of Galilee above them, until they turned up into the hills of Samaria, where they had many friends. And as they went from village to village, and glen to glen, they spread the news amongst the Christians of their success in Antioch and Galatia, and why they were going to Jerusalem. And the people of Samaria rejoiced greatly, for they did not like the rules of the Jerusalem rabbis, and favoured Paul when he said that the religion of Jesus was for Jews and foreigners alike.

“Having this hope, therefore, we use great boldness in speaking: not as Moses spoke, who put a veil upon his face, before a people whose minds were hardened. And even to this day, with the Jews, at the reading of the Scriptures, the veil remains; but it is done

away in Jesus. Still with them, when the words of Moses are read, a veil is upon their hearts; but when they turn to the Lord Jesus, that veil is taken away. The Lord Jesus is the Spirit; and wherever His Spirit is, there is liberty. And we all, with faces unveiled, seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into a likeness to Him, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."

Soon they were traversing the bare hills of Judea, where they had few friends, and at last they rode through the Damascus gate into the great city. Six years had passed since Paul was last there, as the bearer of a message of goodwill from Antioch. Now he was back, to defend himself and them from the attacks of men who had travelled seven hundred miles to do him an injury—a poor return indeed for the kindness which rich and poor alike among the Antioch Christians had shown to the poor Christians of Jerusalem, when distressed by famine and persecution.

Trying a Middle Course.

JERUSALEM: AGED 40—50.

IF they rode into a city with sunshine in its streets, and on the golden roof of the temple, it would not be many days until the coloured pavements of the open courts were washed with rushing rain or lashed with hail, for in winter the days changed quickly from bright to grey. They went to the chiefs among the Christians—most likely to the house of Mark's mother; and Paul soon found that the men who had travelled so far to trouble them at Antioch were not leaders in their own city, for he and his friends were welcomed by the apostles and elders, who called a meeting of the Christians to hear what they had to tell.

The meeting was in a large room, and there he and Barnabas told the story of their distant travels, preaching the glorious gospel of the living God and faith in Jesus, and of the numbers of foreigners who believed and gave up their idols, and of the congregations, especially at Antioch, gathered together.

But other men spoke after them, Christian Pharisees of Jerusalem, who believed that Jesus was the Christ, but that all foreign Christians must be circumcised, and taken bound to obey the laws and the traditions of Moses. They said that the foreigners whom Paul had admitted as Christians were not Christians at all, for they had not been circumcised, and ate all kinds of flesh with

blood in it, married whom they should not marry, did not keep the laws of Moses, and went sometimes to festivals in the idols' temples.

Paul replied that they did not need to keep rules which Jesus had set aside, and that righteousness was to be reached, not by obeying the Jewish law, but by faith in Jesus, who, without circumcision, opened the door of the kingdom to all believers. And he would remind them that they approved of his teaching six years before, when Titus was with him in Jerusalem.

The apostles and elders thought it was a matter that should not be quickly disposed of, and no decision was come to that day. After a time another meeting was held, which the chief Christians attended—James, the aged brother of Jesus, sitting in his white dress as head of the meeting. Again the Pharisee Christians urged their objections to Paul's foreign Christians, and again Paul and Barnabas replied that they did not require to receive the mark of a Jew and keep the Jewish law. The dispute grew sharper, for these Christians were backed by false spies from the outside, who had joined to spoil the glorious liberty of Christ's teaching; and they violently attacked Paul and all his work, and said he was a false teacher, according to Moses. He replied that he was a follower of Jesus, and a true interpreter of the will of God to all mankind. When a dispute arises about matters of faith and belief, and the sweet spirit of Jesus is absent, it soon grows bitter and uncharitable. Amid the confusion of words one thing was missed. What about women? They did not receive any mark of a Jew. Were they to be shut out? Paul made them equal with men by faith. Had not Jesus said to a woman who sat at His feet, "Go in peace; thy faith hath saved thee"? and to another, "She hath chosen the better part, which shall never be taken from her"?

Peter rose—the rugged fisherman whose arms sheltered Jesus, who toiled, and wept, and prayed with Him, and who questioned Him on this very thing—the chief of the apostles; and there was silence to hear him, for who could better tell the mind of Jesus than the man who was the first to recognize the Christ in Him? He was older than in these days of rain and cloud, of fishing and swimming, of walking in storm and sunshine; and he knew, better than any, the clearness of vision, strength of will, and strong, fiery soul that was in the grey-eyed Jew of Tarsus, who sat among them in his travel-stained cloak.

"Brothers," he said, "you know that a good while ago, God chose me from among you, that by my mouth foreigners should hear the words of the gospel of Jesus and believe. And God,

who knows men's hearts, showed us the truth of their conversion by giving them His Holy Spirit, just as He gave it to us. God makes no difference between a Jew and a foreigner, making clean their hearts by faith in Jesus. Why then do you now tempt God by seeking to put a burden upon the necks of foreigners which neither our Jewish fathers nor we were able to bear? We all alike believe that we shall be saved through the grace of Jesus the Christ, in the same way that foreigners believe."

Peter used the same arguments which Paul used with him in Antioch. There was no answer to his attitude; for after his vision of the white sheet at Joppa, when he himself admitted Cornelius the Italian without circumcision, it had been confirmed by them in Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas then told them of all the signs and wonders which they had done among foreigners through the power of God; and the meeting listened, and when they finished no one spoke, for the Pharisee Christians could no longer defend their behaviour. James, the aged elder, sat with his grey hair falling over a white linen robe, and it was his place as chief to say what was the feeling of the meeting. When he leaned forward to speak, all listened to his words, as to a judge deciding between Paul and his assailants—between faith in Jesus and obedience to the Jewish law.

"Brethren, listen to me," he said slowly and with great solemnity: "Peter has told you how God first came to foreigners, to take from among them a people for His name, as foretold in the Bible. Therefore my judgment is, that we trouble not with circumcision and the law those foreigners who have turned to God, but that we write them to keep from eating meat that has been put before idols, and from forbidden marriages, and from eating blood, or the flesh of animals that have been strangled. For in every city, for hundreds of years, there have been men who teach the laws of Moses, and his books are read every Sabbath day in the synagogues."

Paul had won! Foreigners could be Christians without circumcision or keeping the whole Jewish religious law. James had advised that they should avoid doing certain things which all Jews held in abhorrence, but that was advice only, not law. And yet it was an unsatisfactory result, for it made the decision a compromise or middle course between Paul and his opponents, so that it did not grant all that Paul demanded, but granted enough to turn his opponents into bitter enemies.

Riding and Rejoicing.

JERUSALEM : AGED 40-50.

AFTER the meeting broke up, and men had gone to their homes to talk, it became apparent that the judgment of James would not settle the great dispute. It was not agreed to by all, and the Christian Pharisees were of the same opinion still. Paul, Barnabas, and Peter also held to their opinion that no Jewish rules should be forced upon foreigners. James was a man who never had his hair cut, and would not taste butcher meat or wine, and spent most of his life in the temple, obeying the rules of the Jewish law. He placed value on outward observances, but Jesus paid little heed to them. And so, while James leaned to Paul about circumcision, he also leaned to the Christian Pharisees about eating meats, and spoke favourably of the reading of the Law in the Jewish synagogues. And the effect was that the Christian Pharisees were as bitter as ever against Paul and the foreign Christians, and they in their turn paid little heed to the Jewish advice given by James.

But the compromise pleased the other apostles and elders, and Paul having won in the main, was willing to let it pass, so long as he was free to preach what he had been preaching. That there might be no mistake, James and his friends wrote a letter; but they did not hand it to Paul, who had come seven hundred miles for it. They appointed Judas and Silas, two good men of Jerusalem, to go back with Paul to Antioch and read and explain the letter to the Christians there. Why Paul and Barnabas were not left to do it themselves we do not know.

This is the first circular letter to Christians of which we have any record. They became common in later years, and the most important are Paul's own letters. It began with a greeting from the apostles and elders to the foreign Christians in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia,—

“We have heard that some men who came from us, but to whom we gave no instructions, have troubled your souls with their words. We have made up our minds on the matter, and think it good to send Judas and Silas to you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, who have risked their lives for Jesus; and these men will explain the matter to you.

“It seemed good to us, and to the Holy Spirit, to lay no greater burden upon you than these necessary things: keep from eating food that has been put before idols, or meat that has blood in it,

or any animal that has been strangled; and keep from forbidden marriages. Do this, and it shall be well with you. Farewell."

Did Paul see this letter before he left Jerusalem? For it did not plainly say that foreigners need not be circumcised, and left his enemies free to argue still, while it asked foreigners to obey Jewish rules for which they could see no reason. In Jerusalem, with its golden temple, college of rabbis, numerous synagogues, Sanhedrim, festivals, sacrifices, there was scarcely breathing space for Christianity, as Paul knew it. With many there it was only a branch of the old Jewish religion, something added to the laws of Moses, a fresh sect of the national church. But to Paul it was a new religion which owed no allegiance to the old order of things.

He had before preached in Jerusalem, but he would not do it now. Cities and nations steeped in darkness were waiting for the light; men who had never heard of the living God were kneeling before dead idols; multitudes grovelling in bestiality were ready to strive after the higher life in Jesus. The door was surely wide open now. He must leave Jerusalem, for the air of the city of bondage stifled his soul.

Bidding farewell to the aged Peter, his first warm friend amongst the apostles, he rode out of the narrow city gate, accompanied by Barnabas, his fellow-traveller Mark once more, and Judas and Silas; and with them also rode the men of Antioch who had come up with him to get the great question settled. With wonder and awe they had looked upon the living brother of Jesus, and on men who had walked and talked with the Lord, and on many Christians who had seen Him die on the bitter cross, and had seen Him again as the risen Saviour. They had stood in the magnificent outer court of the golden temple, and heard the pealing trumpets of the priests; they had gazed upon the rock-hewn grave in the rose garden with tears running down their cheeks. Now they were going home to their own city—Christians who could speak of what they had seen and heard.

It was still winter, with leafless trees, dashing streams, and white mantles upon the northern hills, as they returned by the road they came, publishing their success as they went, to the Christians by the way, who rejoiced with them. It would take six weeks to get back to Antioch, and the news of their arrival soon spread among the Christians, who came together to hear their report. The letter was opened, read, and explained by Judas and Silas, from the reader's desk, to the congregation, who rejoiced and wept for joy when they heard that Paul and Barnabas were right, and that the men who had so vexed them had no right to speak for the apostles. They were all true Christians, saved by faith in

Jesus! And they listened while the two men urged them to stand fast in the faith, and confirmed their resolution. And so the trouble among the men of Antioch was put to rest, but only for a time, for the Christian Pharisees would visit them again, and try to put enmity between Jews and foreigners.

We do not read of Judas and Silas going to any other towns of Syria or Cilicia; but having read the letter at Antioch, they were ready to return. At a parting meeting the Christians told them they were free to go in peace, as they had delivered their message; and Judas went back to Jerusalem, but Silas preferred to remain. He liked the people, and the letter had yet to be read to other congregations that had been troubled by the false Christians from Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas also remained in the city, teaching the gospel with many others, for Antioch was now the most vigorous and wealthy centre of Christianity.

A Hot Dispute.

ANTIOCH: AGED 40-50.

THE winter went slowly past in Antioch, with snow and sleet, sunshine and rain, winds breaking the branches of the trees, and floods washing away the mountain paths. Spring came over the chain of hills and the green woods below the city, and in Seleucia harbour the sailors tested ropes, hoisted sails of yellow and brown on sunny days, repaired and painted boats, and launched them into the bay. The summer coasting trade among the islands was beginning.

Soon the banks of the broad river were fluttering green with leaves of oak, laurel, and juniper, where the wild vine was stringing the branches with green ribbons. Wild-flowers covered the ground in the track of the sunshine, filling every glen and hollow with the gold of coltsfoot and trefoil, scent of clover, blue-starred periwinkle, and pomegranate and oleander, towers of crimson fire. The storks returned in long trails across the sky, and merchants and shepherds were moving on the roads, with strings of asses and flocks of sheep. The season for travelling had come.

Paul had been back in Antioch for some months, strengthening and encouraging the Christians, and his spirit was burning for another journey. There were now plenty of teachers and preachers in the city—they could well spare him; and he proposed to his warm friend Barnabas that they should go away together.

“Let us go back and visit our brothers in every city in which we have proclaimed the gospel of Jesus, and see how they are doing.” He proposed to visit all the towns in which he had preached the gospel during fifteen years, in Syria, Cilicia, Cyprus, and Galatia, and his friend was ready. Barnabas thought Mark, his nephew, should go with them as a companion; but Paul thought not. He had left them at Perga on their last journey, when they got to the most trying part, turning back from the great work they were sent out to do, and Paul said he did not wish him. He may have thought that Silas would do better, as he could explain the letter from James, which they would read wherever they went. But Barnabas insisted that Mark should go, and Paul would not give way. And so it came that Barnabas would not go without Mark, and Paul would not go with him, and these two warm friends had a sharp dispute, in which their journey together was given up.

When good men quarrel, they are apt to be unjust, like other people. Paul proposed the journey, and Barnabas, leaving him to do as he liked, took Mark, and went down to the harbour of Seleucia. There they found a boat, and sailed away to his own island of Cyprus, that lay like a purple cloud on the glittering water, to begin a journey through the towns, in the same order that Paul and he had visited them years before. But we do not read that any of the men of Antioch assisted his sudden departure.

It was not without regret that Paul saw his old friend leaving in this way, who had done so much for him; but Paul had a strong will, and if he thought the thing should not be, not even Barnabas, his dearest friend, could alter him. And so he parted from the man who welcomed him to Jerusalem, who sought him out at Tarsus, and stood by him in sickness, and who so recently went to Jerusalem to fight for him against those by whom he was attacked. And we do not read that they ever looked into each other's faces again. Barnabas went to Cyprus, but we do not hear of his returning to Antioch. Mark, however, came back, and Paul afterwards spoke of him and Barnabas in such friendly terms that, although he would not have Mark as a fellow-traveller, he had no enmity against him.

Paul started more leisurely. He required another travelling companion. Silas was a Roman citizen like himself, and not born in Jerusalem. He had seen his zeal in Antioch, and asked him to go instead of Barnabas; and he consented and proved a good fellow-traveller. The Christians held a solemn farewell meeting, and with many earnest words and prayers they commended the two men to the care of God, that He would keep them in safety and prosper their work. And Paul admonished them to be faithful

in his absence; and while we have not his address, this is part of what he wrote:—

“Wives, obey your husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives as you love yourselves; for he that loves his wife loves himself. And a man shall leave his father and mother and join his wife, and they shall be as one. Let each one love his wife as himself, and let the wife respect her husband.

“Children, obey your parents; for the first commandment and promise is, Honour your father and your mother, that it may be well with you, and that you may live long in the earth. And you fathers, do not tempt your children to be angry, but bring them up in the fear and knowledge of God.

“Slaves, obey your masters, in fear and trembling, in singleness of heart; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers only, but as the slaves of Jesus, doing God’s will from the heart. Serve with good will, as to God, and not to men: knowing that whatever good thing you do, you shall receive the same from God, whether you are a slave or a freeman. And you masters, do the same to your slaves, and keep from threatening: knowing that your Master and theirs is in heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with Him.”

When he was living alone in Tarsus, he preached the gospel throughout the province of Syria, of which Antioch was the capital, and throughout the province of Cilicia, of which Tarsus was the chief city, and formed congregations of Christians; and he decided that they should travel through these two provinces, cross the dark Taurus Mountains, and reach Derbe in Galatia, the farthest point of his former journey. He was thus about to travel round the cities of Galatia the reverse way from Barnabas, and perhaps they might meet.

Reading the Letter in Syria.

ANTIOCH: AGED 40—50.

WITH their parchment rolls, cooking dishes, food bags, leather bottles of water, oil, wine, and bundles of spare clothing tied upon asses’ backs, along with a small tent-cover and a bundle of tent-stakes, with strong sandals on their feet to keep them from being cut with sharp stones, cloaks on their shoulders, and thick sticks in their hands, Paul and Silas went out by the northern gate of the city, accompanied by friends who were going to see them on their way.

Like all lonely travellers, they would start with a company of traders as soon as the dawn crimsoned the white crests of the mountains behind the city, and would be well on their way before the sun was hot. Crossing the winding Orontes by the bridge of five arches, they were soon riding through fields of scarlet poppy and purple anemone on the grassy plain of Antioch, towards a wide lake, where the wild ducks reared their young, and the storks fished at the edge of the water. They were on the great highway of the country, along which Paul had gone with his father and mother on his first visit to Jerusalem. Strings of hairy-legged camels met them, laden with bales and sacks, that had travelled for hundreds of miles, in charge of fierce-looking drivers with torn cloaks, jackets of sheep-skin, and head-coverings tied on with a rough twist of camel rope were going on for hundreds of miles more, to Damascus, and beyond.

Paul and Silas were to visit the Christians of Syria, and would turn off the paved highway into glens, valleys, and plains, where there were village congregations, to read James's letter to them, and speak words of admonition and encouragement like these :—

“Praise be to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Christ, who has given us every spiritual blessing in Jesus, and who chose us in Him, that we should be holy and without blame: making us of His good pleasure sons of God through Jesus. Through Him we have redemption and forgiveness of our trespasses, by the riches of His grace. We have hoped in Jesus and believed to His praise and glory; and you also, having heard the word of truth and gospel of your salvation, have also believed in Him, and are sealed with His Holy Spirit.”

By stony paths and rough ways, they slowly made their way through the province of Syria, going from place to place, until they approached the pass in the mountains that divided Syria from Paul's own province of Cilicia. He knew the long ascent through wild gorges, revealing fir-clad spurs and snow-crowned peaks, as they climbed upwards to the Syrian gates, for he had passed that way before. They would turn aside to huts of earth and wood in the little villages by the way; for they would not have to sleep in the house for strangers, or in their own small tent, but would find friendly doors opened to them, with a pallet of straw, a bowl of buffalo's or ass's milk, and a piece of rough bread, which would be all that they required.

From the top of the Amanus Mountains they went down through gorges equally wild and narrow, but wooded with thickets of myrtle and arbutus, towards the marshy plain, crowded at

that time of the year with black buffaloes and wild geese. The road went down to the edge of the sea, and looking across the blue gulf at evening, they saw the white peaks behind Tarsus bathed in purple and rose, as the sun went down over them. Again they would leave the Roman road to wander by tracks and footpaths, over plains, and up wide glens, for Paul knew Cilicia better than any other province. Wherever they went they read the letter from Jerusalem, and strengthened the Christians to hold to their faith in Jesus. And Paul would speak to them in words like these :—

“Remember, you who are not Jews, and whom those of the circumcision party call “uncircumcised,” that at one time you were separate from Jesus, outside our nation, strangers to our promises, without hope, and without God in the world. But now you who were once afar off have been brought near in Him. For He is our peace, who has made one of both Jews and foreigners. He has, as it were, broken down the middle wall and partition that separates them in the outer court of the temple at Jerusalem, and put an end to the enmity of commandments and rules under the Jewish law, that He might of the two make one in Himself, and so make peace.”

White daisies shone by the wayside, as the travellers went from place to place, and purple violets scented the air; but at night they heard the scream of the hyena and the howl of the wolf, for in the mountain gorges lions might be seen coming down to drink at the streams in the moonlight. They had many rivers and streams to cross, and as there were few bridges off the main road, they would have to ride, wade, and swim, at the risk of drowning in deep water. When they came to the Pyramus they would seek the narrow stone bridge, and the yellow dogs of Missis would attack them, as they did all strangers who sought to cross into the town; and there they would find many friends, for they were again on the great highroad. At the next town of Adana they would meet with the same reception, as they passed the towers at the bridge of the Sarus, and looked on the thick green woods of the country beyond the walls.

The distance from Antioch to Tarsus was one week's riding, but it would be several weeks before Paul rode in and took his companion to a friend's house, where he knew he would be welcomed, whatever their mission. His father and mother were perhaps dead, but he would have other relations, who would be glad to see him and hear of his travels, although some would think that the Jerusalem rabbi had strayed far from the old Jewish religion, while others took his part.

And there he would meet with the Christians, and read the letter of James, and urge them not to be drawn away from their simple faith in Jesus by the idolatrous festivals and other temptations of the priests of Sardapolis and Semiramis. He may even have gone to the dim synagogue, that was so dear to him, to tell his old friends again of the glorious gospel of faith in Jesus, offered to Jews first, and also to foreigners; and they would listen, whether they believed him or not. What he said at Tarsus we do not know, but this is what he wrote:—

“And thus did Jesus, by His death, reconcile Jews and strangers in one to God; having slain the enmity between them: preaching good tidings of peace to the foreigners afar off, and to Jews who are near. For through Him have both found a way to enter in one Spirit unto God the Father. Foreigners, then, are no more strangers and travellers, but fellow-citizens with the Christians, and members of the household of God, in a house built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, rightly put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. And thus are you built together for a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit.”

But Paul was only visiting Tarsus by the way, and his next stage was up to the terrible pass of gloom and cloud, the Cilician gates, through the mountains.

Where Armies Pass.

TARSUS: AGED 40—50.

THE time of year was at hand when the plain of Tarsus became so hot and unhealthy that many of the people packed their simple household things upon camels and asses, and moved off in straggling bands of men, women, and children, over the plain, and up the rugged glens to the hills; so that Paul and Silas would easily find travelling companions going up the pass.

Bidding farewell to his friends in Tarsus, they rode out of the city gate along the road by the river, which he had so often taken when a boy; through miles of orchards, where the white and pink blossom of the trees covered the ground, and ripening fields of wheat, sesame, and barley; past flat-roofed cottages, and stone watch-towers in the vineyards. Under the falls was the tree-crowned island, and above, the blue lake, a mirror for the mountains.

They were riding towards one of the most famous passes in history, through which, in centuries gone by, had poured for days and weeks the horse and foot soldiers of the armies of Alexander the Great, of Assyria, of Egypt, of Greece, and of Rome, passing and repassing through this cleft in the mountains, where the path at some places was so narrow that only two men could walk abreast. So many travellers went up and down this long defile that there were shelters built every few miles; but as these consisted of four bare walls and no roof, their only use was to protect travellers from attacks from robbers. The first stop for the night was at the foot of the dark pass, where the road from Tarsus was joined by a greater road direct from Antioch, bringing a constant stream of merchants at that travelling season.

Next morning, as they rode on, the mountains rose ever higher, now clothed with blue pine woods, now grey with wind-swept peaks, and, higher still, white with sparkling snow. A dangerous river boiled through the pass, with a paved path winding along the cliffs on one side, and crossing by a stone bridge to wind along the cliffs on the other side, until it could go no farther, and recrossed again. There was no footing for man or beast anywhere else; and the blue sky above was only a span's breadth. A slip and roll, and the ass and his burden would go over the path's edge, to be dashed to pieces before reaching the torrent. At the narrowest part a loaded camel could scarce get between the walls of rock. Yet tens of thousands of armed men had passed round that corner, and the black rocks had been rubbed by the shoulders of the kings and princes of many nations.

The sun's rays could not reach Paul and Silas as they led their asses, slipping, climbing, toiling up this black path worn with the feet of armies; and owls, vultures, eagles, hawks, and ravens flew back and forward across the blue span above to their nests in the cliffs. It was a dark and ominous place, dreaded by all travellers, full of the hoarse noise of waters and the screaming of wild-birds; and they were glad, after toiling for hours, when the cliffs began to open out and the blue sky again spread over their heads. At the top of the pass they were able to take the burdens off the asses, and cook their food at the house for strangers. They had now reached the high table-land among the mountains, with roads winding through glens and hollows; and the view backward into the lower world from which they had just come was terrible in its grandeur. Mountains rose out of the gloom, their chasms filled with cloud and mist, into which the wild birds dived and were lost. Coiling and flowing round jagged peaks moved a sea of pale-blue mist; farther off, white crests

glittered in the sunshine, of mighty cones that propped the blue sky. They had climbed to a great height, for they could see nothing of the green plains and golden fields of the world bordering on the sea, but only dark clefts, gorges, and clouds, and barren peaks and crests of snow. They were crossing the highest mountains in that part of the world.

Over the Dark Mountains.

TAURUS : AGED 40—50.

THE road by which Paul and Silas went down the other side of the Taurus Mountains was long and steep, before it brought them to the level country of Antiochus, which they had to cross. It was hilly country, with wide glens, and rivers that were lost in the lower marshes, swelling into lakes in the winter, and shrinking to the richest of pasture-lands in summer. It would take them several days to ride through the country of King Antiochus before reaching the Roman province of Galatia beyond; and we do not read that Paul taught there, as he rode on towards Derbe.

Within a few hours after crossing the boundary of the two provinces, they would come by a good road to Derbe, at the foot of the black mountain, and ride through the low archway of the city wall, where they had been so well received a year before. The Christians would be astonished to see him riding in from that side, and without Barnabas, and would ask him many questions—where he had come from, and about his travels since he was last there.

He and Silas told them about the dispute with the Christian Pharisees at Antioch, and read and explained to them the letter from James; and Silas, having been chosen by the living apostles of Jesus to read this letter, would be received as a great man. And they would rejoice that Paul had secured the right to all foreigners to be Christians without circumcision; and he would inquire about the state of their congregation, and would urge them to keep their faith in Jesus. We can picture them crowded together in a small place, listening again to the wonderful Jew, as he spoke in words like these:—

“This I say, and testify in the name of Jesus, that you must no longer live as many live, with foolish minds and darkened understandings, strangers to the life that is in God, because

of their ignorance and hardness of heart: who without right feelings give themselves up to lives of wickedness and greed. You did not so learn the Christ, if so be that you heard and were taught the truth that is in Him, which is this: put away your former manner of life, your old life, which grew more and more corrupt through deceit; and being renewed in your minds, put on the new life, created in righteousness, holiness, and truth, after God."

After strengthening them much, Paul and Silas, accompanied by friends, rode away upon their one day's ride towards Lystra, skirting the foot of the hills, and crossing the level green plains and wide marshes stretching away towards the misty blue hills. And on their way they would see dazzling shifting pictures in the hot haze, now of a fir-clad mountain with cap of snow, now of a green-fringed lake, now of a leafy wood and tall trees; but the constant changing of these ethereal scenes would tell them that they were only mirages caused by the quivering heat. And there were the wild shepherds who moved about over the plains, feeding their huge herds and flocks, with curious beehive huts, covered with black felt, brown haircloth, and thatch of yellow straw. But these were only for sleeping in, for they lived in the open air, the women lighting a fire before the door, where they baked thin cakes, boiled broth, and roasted mutton, in the sunshine. There, too, was the dining-table on the ground, where the men and boys sat cross-legged, and dipped their supple scones into the broth and sour milk, while the women waited on them until they were quite done. And if Paul and Silas were unable to reach the house for strangers for the night, they would ride into one of these camps, where the shepherds were ever ready to let them cook their food at the fire, or creep into one of their small huts to sleep, for it was a rule among them always to shelter strangers on a journey.

When they reached Lystra, they sought out their friends, and read the letter to them also, and inquired of their state, and exhorted them in the same way as they did at Derbe. And they were greatly encouraged when they heard of other places where there were Christians who had turned away from idols to the living God, through faith in Jesus their Master. Gathered together in an upper room, with doors and windows closed, the silent Christians would listen to words like these from the great teacher:—

"Put away falsehood and speak the truth each one with his neighbour: for we are all joined together. Do not sin in anger: let not the sun go down upon your anger, and do not give way to

evil. Let him who stole steal no more, but labour, working at good work with his hands, that he may have something to give to others who are in want. Let no ill-talk come out of your mouth, but only what will do good to them that hear; and so you will not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whose followers you are. Put all bitterness away from you, anger, clamour, scolding, and ill-will, and be kind and tender-hearted one to another. As God through Jesus forgave you, so do you forgive one another."

Paul rejoiced to meet again the young man Timothy, and hear him praised for the work he had been doing since his visit; and he took such a liking to him that he asked him to come away with them and be their travelling companion. Young as he was, Timothy agreed to go; and we shall see that he proved to be of great use to Paul, who often called him his son.

The Youthful Timothy.

LYSTRA: AGED 40-50.

THERE must have been something singularly pleasing about the youth Timothy for Paul to take such a strong liking to him that, with his father dead, he should take him away from his mother. We can picture him slim and graceful, with light hair and brown eyes, his father's Greek features, and his mother's ruddy cheeks. Seeing his earnestness, modesty, and cleverness, Paul loved him, and he was to be like a son to the travelling Jew with brown cloak and staff, who had neither home, wife, nor child. And if Paul impressed Timothy with his ceaseless energy and devotion to the higher life, he in turn helped at times to move the will and soften the judgments of the lonely man, now past middle age, who was apt to be impatient of the follies of others, and firm even to sternness.

This youth of Asia grew up to manhood at Paul's side, writing letters for him, and taking long journeys for him; so that he was able to render many services to the man with heart on fire who first persuaded him to leave his mother's home. Years afterwards the aged teacher wrote him a letter full of tenderness and wisdom, which shows us how he loved the youth from the first. In it he calls him his true child, and warns him not to listen to foolish stories about idols, such as that Venus rose out of a green wave near Cyprus, or that Jupiter dropped from a golden cloud near Ephesus, but that he was to be loving, and keep a pure heart

and a good conscience, and that he was not too young to be an example to others of the faith, love, and purity of a good life.

We can gather from that letter the kind of conversation which Paul would have with his young friend, warning him against the foolish myths with which the idols of Greece and Rome were surrounded, and adding words of sweet counsel and strong and steadfast encouragement.

Timothy was to go, not as a servant, but as a helper, who would accompany him into all the places into which he went, and speak also, if he had anything to say. It was still Paul's custom in a new town to go first to the synagogue and speak there; but no one who was not circumcised dared to go thus amongst Jews, or, if it were discovered, it might cost them their lives, just as a Christian dares not go to-day into a Mohammedan mosque. The synagogue Jews would not sit at the same table with such a one; and if he also were a Jew, it was all the worse. Now Timothy had been a Christian for some time, and circumcision had nothing to do with his Christianity, but it had much to do with the social customs of the Jews, and going in and out amongst them. And so they thought it right, before starting on the journey, that Timothy should be circumcised, as he would then be in no danger from his own countrymen; and it was accordingly done by Paul himself.

The men of Lystra were greatly pleased that Paul should have chosen Timothy, and, like the men of Antioch, they held a special meeting, at which he was solemnly set apart to be a preacher. And his mother saw him standing in his white tunic, red-cheeked and excited, before the older men of the meeting, where, in answer to their questions, he confessed his faith in Jesus, and his wish to be a teacher. One after another they blessed him, laying their hands upon his head; and last of all, Paul, the dark-faced Jew with the glowing eyes, prayed for him, and with hands upon his brown hair blessed him also. And the advice which he gave we find from his letters to him.

“Timothy, my true child in the faith of Jesus. Do not listen to made-up stories and endless histories, which only cause disputes, instead of strengthening your faith. Let your aim be love, a pure heart, a good conscience, and unpretending faith, from which some have turned away into useless talk. They would like to be teachers of the Jewish law, although they do not understand what they are talking about. We know that the Jewish law is good, if rightly used; for it is not made to check good people, but bad people, murderers, liars, and such like, who wish to do things contrary to the teaching of the gospel of God which was given to me.

“This charge I give you, my child Timothy, according to what has been told over you. Fight a good fight; hold to the faith; keep a good conscience, which some have lost. Put Christians in mind of these things, and you will be a good minister of Jesus, kept strong with the words of faith and good teaching which you have followed until now. But refuse to listen to bad stories and old wives’ tales. Be active in goodness. Exercise for the body is good, but activity in goodness is better, both for this life and for that which is to come. It is a faithful and true saying, that we should work and strive to the end, because our hope is in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe.

“Teach and command these things. Let no one despise your youth; but in words and behaviour, in love, faith, and purity, be an example. Attend to reading, speaking, thinking. Do not neglect the good gift which is in you. Be diligent in these things. Give yourself wholly to them, that your progress may be seen by all. Be careful of yourself and of your teaching, and continue in these things, for in so doing you will save both yourself and them that hear you.

“Timothy, thou man of God, turn away from the love of money, and seek righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight, the fight of faith, laying hold upon the future life, to which you have been called. I charge you, Timothy, before God, who preserves all men, and Jesus the Christ, who before Pilate made the good confession: keep this command, without spot or fault, until Jesus shall come again in God’s own time, who is the blessed and only Ruler, King of kings and Lord of lords, who only can give life for evermore, dwelling amid dazzling light; whom no one hath seen or can see; to whom be honour unending.

“Tell them that are rich, not to be high-minded, and not to set their hopes upon money, but on God, who gives us all things to enjoy. Bid them be rich in good deeds, doing good, ready to give, willing to be kind, heaping up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, and laying hold upon that better life which is life indeed. Guard, O Timothy, the good gift which has been given to you; turn away from all base talk, and the opposition of learning which is falsely called knowledge, by following which some men have missed the true way. And now, to the King of the ages, everlasting, unseen, the only God, be honour and glory for evermore. May the favour of God be with you.”

Many in that meeting of strange-looking Christians felt their hearts glowing as they listened to Paul’s prayer and words of

counsel to this young hero among Christians, who was to follow him over land and sea for the sake of the dear Master whose cross shone before their eyes. Friends were there who had known the youth from childhood, and when they spoke in words of praise and encouragement of what might yet be, his heart was fired with enthusiasm, and he felt inspired by the Holy Spirit of Jesus to trust in God and go forward. And of all in that crowd who saw his face lit up with divine enthusiasm, none felt prouder of him, no one felt a deeper joy, than the mother who trained him, and who was about to lose him for years to come.

The Sultan Mountains.

LYSTRA : AGED 40—50.

AFTER spending some time at Lystra, taking the youthful Timothy with them, the travellers left the city of the black mountain to go on their way for twenty-five miles across the salt plains, so much frequented by shepherds and cattle-traders, with their huge droves of animals, towards beautiful Iconium, amid its orchards and gardens. There, too, they gathered the Christians together, and read James's letter, and encouraged them to hold fast to the faith and spread the word. And as they sat in a friend's house listening to Paul's explanations, they would hear words like these :—

“ Finally, brothers, rejoice in the Lord. Beware of the dogs, the workers of evil, the teachers of the party of circumcision. We are the true men of circumcision, who worship by the help of the Spirit of God, and glory in Jesus the Christ, and have no confidence in ourselves. If any man thinks he might have confidence in himself, I might have more confidence. For I am a Jew. I was circumcised when a child, according to the Jewish custom ; and I am descended from the old Jewish stock belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, a Jew of Jews ; concerning the Jewish law, a Pharisee ; as to zeal, a persecutor of Christians ; and as to the righteousness which is in obeying the law, I was found blameless. But nevertheless, what things seemed gain to me then, I count as loss for the sake of Jesus the Christ. Indeed, I count all such things as loss compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as dust, that I may gain Him, and be found in Him.”

This time they did not rouse the synagogue hive, and were not touched by the magistrates, and after a quiet visit they left the city to ride along lanes where ruddy apples, dark-green olives, and purple grapes were already ripening in the sun, while the stubble fields were cleared, and the harvest stored away.

Riding for two days to the westward, they came to the paved Roman road up which Paul and Barnabas had ridden for the first time three summers ago. Two days more and they were again in Pisidian Antioch, on the slope of the Sultan Mountains; and there they read the letter to the Christians, and held meetings urging them to hold fast to the faith, and keep away from idols and the degrading customs with which they were surrounded. And before he left that mountain city, they heard him often speak like this:—

“So then, brothers, we are no more slaves of our passions to live the lower life: for if you live it, you must die; but if by the Spirit of Jesus you have put an end to that lower life, you shall live indeed. For as many as are guided by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. You have not received the spirit of slaves, but of children, by which we cry ‘Father’ to God. And He bears witness with us that we are His children: and if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus; and we shall be glorified with Him, if we suffer with Him.

“For I do not consider that our present sufferings are to be compared with the glory which we shall have hereafter; and creation earnestly waits for the sons of God. And we who are the first-fruits of the Spirit of Jesus do groan and wait for our being made sons by the redeeming of our bodies. By hope are we saved: but hope seen is not hope, for it vanishes away with sight. But if we hope for what we do not see, then have we patience to wait for it. In the same way the Spirit of God helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit pleads for us. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and are called by His voice.”

Where would they go next? Would Paul venture down to the lovely but unhealthy plain of Pamphilia by the sea, with Perga on the river banks and Attalia on the cliff, and on to Cyprus? It was now midsummer, and the heat of the plain would be terrible to men who had been travelling for months in the hills. Naturally they should have gone down, but Paul changed his plan, and turned his face towards the cool, high table-lands of the north.

They had now travelled four hundred miles, gradually climbing up from the blue Mediterranean Sea beyond Tarsus to the foot of one of the highest mountains in Asia Minor, and they were

about to go over the table-lands of the mountains, where the country is comparatively level, with flat-topped hills and shallow valleys, across Asia to the Black Sea.

Bidding farewell to the Christians of the city and the country round about, Paul told them that they were going into Asia for the first time, a Roman province about the size of England. Riding along the road at the foot of the Sultan Mountains, they were soon out of the province of Galatia and into the province of Asia, where he intended to preach the gospel.

There were trading roads through the country, with many towns and villages; but whether it was through a dream or a vision, before they had travelled far, Paul felt that they were forbidden by God to preach there, and he told his two companions. Men who live like him, so close to God in prayer and thought, are moved by inspirations which they cannot always explain to others. We read of many such. We have no further explanation why Paul believed he was not to preach in the high parts of Asia; yet he did not turn back and go down to the sea, but kept steadily on what proved to be a very long journey.

Across Asia.

PISIDIAN ANTIOCH: AGED 40-50.

THEIR road was now through a country of bare hills and stony glens, with flinty rocks in beautiful colours of pink and pure white, pale yellow, and grey, and light green, that sparkled in the sun, and few trees. They were crossing the table-lands of Central Asia to the Roman province of Bithynia, one hundred and fifty miles distant, that sloped down in rich woods to the shores of the Black Sea. They would go with a band of people for safety, riding steadily on under the hot autumn sun, resting in the heat of the day, and sleeping at night in the shelter of the house for strangers at the village, or in their own little tent, if it was thought safe enough to camp out under the stars. There were many villages in the hollows, and walled towns along the line of the main road; but it was a country where lions, leopards, and wolves were common, and travellers were never safe unless there were enough of them to shout and make sufficient noise to scare them away.

After riding for about a week along the hot, stony path—now winding round a low hill of grey rock without a tree, now crossing

the dry bed of a mountain stream, now toiling up a barren glen, with brown grass in tufts and patches among the hot stones—they reached the other side of the table-land, rent with great ravines, through which rivers flowed down to the far-distant Black Sea, hid as yet by hills. They looked upon richly-wooded glens and gorges filled with the crimson and red, the brown, russet, and gold of autumn foliage, with a line of blue hills beyond, over which was the rich Roman province of Bithynia, about the size of Denmark. But over these blue hills their feet would not go; for, whether by a dream or a vision, Paul felt that God did not wish him to enter Bithynia.

And so he again changed his plan, following the road westward, towards the district of Mysia, bordering upon the Sea of Marmora and the Dardanelles. They were still in Asia, so that Paul did not feel free to preach, and day after day they gradually rode down from the high table-lands, by rich vales through which the river Rhyndacus winds among spreading plane trees, larch, golden oak, wiry fir, and evergreen laurels. They passed by the side of lakes larger than Loch Lomond, and many villages of flat-roofed houses, with large olive gardens, where the dark fruit was being shaken from the twisted branches, and black grapes hung ripe among leaves of purple and gold.

We may be sure that they did not ride in silence over these breezy table-lands, and through these wooded glens, or sit without speaking in the mid-day shade, over their bread and goats' milk. Timothy had much to learn, and Paul had much to teach. Of what did they talk? Again we turn to Paul's letters to him:—

“In later times some will fall away from the faith, listening to the teaching of wicked men and hypocrites who speak lies; whose consciences are burnt with a hot iron; who forbid people to marry, or to eat meats made to be eaten with thanksgiving by all Christians. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving.

“Put them in mind of these things, charging them before God not to dispute about words, which only does harm to those who listen. Be careful to show yourself a workman approved of God, who does not need to be ashamed, rightly using the words of truth. But avoid low talk: for it goes on into further wickedness, with words that spread like an evil disease. Among them are men who have gone astray from the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; destroying the faith of some.

“But the foundations of God stand secure, having this mark, that He knows them that are His. Let every one that names the name of Jesus depart from evil. But in a palace there are not

only dishes of gold and silver, but of wood and pottery; some for special use, and some for common use. If a man keeps himself pure, he shall be like a dish of honour, cleansed and fit for the master, and prepared for every good use.

“Fly from youthful temptations, and seek righteousness, faith, love, and peace with people who call upon the name of Jesus out of a pure heart. Refuse to discuss foolish and ignorant questions, knowing that they lead to quarrels. And the servant of Jesus must not strive, but be gentle towards all, ready to teach, patient and gentle, correcting them that oppose you. For perhaps God may give them a changed mind and the knowledge of His truth, and so by your help they may return from the snare of evil.

“From a child you have known the Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus the Christ. Every such writing which has the Spirit of God in it is good for teaching, reproof, correcting, and instructing in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete and ready for every good work.

“Before God, and Jesus the Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by His coming and His kingdom, I charge you: preach the gospel; be active in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, and teach with all patience. For the time will come when men will not listen to sound teaching; but, with itching ears, they will seek teachers after their own mind, turning aside from the truth to hearken to false stories. Be sober in all things, suffer hardships, do the work of a preacher of the gospel, and fulfil your ministry. And the Lord will be with your spirit.”

With conversation such as this, to which Timothy would listen as if to the words of his father, they rode on their way, resting wherever they could find a lodging for the night, but stopping nowhere, and preaching nowhere; for Paul had said it was the will of God that they should ride on, and later it would be made clear what they were to do in the country whither they were going.

The White Plains of Troy.

ASIA : AGED 50—60.

THE three travellers had yet a long way to ride before they came to a town at which they would feel free to stay. They were still among the highlands of Asia Minor, a region that to this day is very little visited by strangers. In the blue distance

to the north rose Mount Olympus, belted with pearly clouds in the sunshine, to whose top the country people climbed once a year, at the end of the harvest, to dance, and drink, and make merry among the black rocks. They knew not why, but for hundreds of years it had been so; and a thousand years after they were gone, the peasants at the foot of that cloud-girdled mountain would still climb to the top and do the same.

After riding for two hundred miles from Pisidian Antioch, the valleys widened out into beautiful country, which the hand of the farmer, with wooden plough and hoe, had made fruitful grain fields. They were on the borders of Mysia, and often to the north-west they saw the blue waters of the Sea of Marmora, where Constantinople is now. There were many rivers to cross that flowed with strange windings from the highlands to the sea; but as it was a populous part of the country, and well known to traders and merchants, there were good paved roads, and strong bridges where the rivers were too deep to ride through. And as they rode by the way, or sat by the red embers of the wood fire, with the stars over them, Paul talked with his youthful companion.

“Do not rebuke an old man, but speak to him as a father, and the young men as brothers, the elderly women as mothers, and the young women as sisters. Give honour to widows; and if they have children, bid them be dutiful, for that is well-pleasing to God. And if a man does not provide for his own family, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.

“Elders who rule well deserve double honour, especially if they also teach. It is written, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And Jesus said, The labourer is worthy of his hire. Do not listen to blame against elders, unless from two or three witnesses. If they do ill, reprove them before the congregation, that the others may be in fear. You must observe these things without preference and without favour. Do not hastily make any man an office-bearer; and keep yourself pure. Some men’s sins are plain and seen, others are hidden, and not known till after. So also there are good deeds that are seen, and good deeds unseen; but they will not always be hid.

“Bid Christian slaves count their unbelieving masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and the gospel be not miscalled by them. And slaves who have believing masters must not despise them, because they are brother Christians, but serve them faithfully, because they are believers and beloved. These things teach and advise.”

But not even in Mysia were they to teach the gospel, for Paul wished to press on westward to the great city of Troy, at

the edge of the Ægean Sea. Soon they approached the plains of Troy, famous as the scene of the astonishing battles described in Homer's poems, of which Paul would know, for they had been written five hundred years before. On one hand a range of dark granite hills rose in slope above slope towards the glittering crest of Mount Ida, with clefts flushed with the red and gold of heavy foliage, and sparkling with streams; on the other hand were plains stretching away for twenty miles in pastoral hill and hollow, towards the beautiful shore of the Dardanelles. They were now riding over the battle-ground of the poems which we still read in our school books, where the ancient city of Illium stood, said to have been besieged for ten years by the Greeks, and all for beautiful Helen. But the poet also says that beings came down from the skies and mingled in the fights, and could not be wounded; and we begin to think that perhaps he did not intend his poems to be regarded as history. Whatever did happen, it was a thousand years before Paul and Silas rode across the plains, and Homer's city was no longer there, but only a rising ground beside the river Scamander, with ruins heaped upon ruins, not far from the blue Hellespont.

Under their feet the ground was white with shells in the rock and the rich soil, and looking down the beautiful valley stretching before them, they saw far off, and seemingly upon the edge of the sea, the walls of Troy, with sunshine upon its stately buildings of grey granite quarried from Mount Ida, lighting up white towers and pinnacles of brass, and the blue Ægean and the purple islands beyond.

During the long ride of over three hundred miles, over the highest and wildest parts of Central Asia, Paul had pressed on, preaching and resting nowhere, firmly believing that he was guided forward by the hand of God for some great purpose. In that mood he rode past Mysia to Troy, and he could ride no farther. And there he met one who would do much for him and for the world—Luke, the beloved physician, who would write the story of his life in the Acts of the Apostles.

Once more he was in a large seaport, with soldiers and people of many nations in the streets; for it was a Roman colony, with outer and inner harbours divided by a granite wall, having a narrow opening for ships to pass through, and granite posts on the quays to fasten ropes to. Some of these pillars are there still, but the mouth of the harbour is filled with sand, and ships cannot now go in. But the city was then a mile across, with square towers along the walls for soldiers to defend them, and a chariot racecourse, a theatre for public games, sculptured temples,

and hot baths, to which water was brought, by a long stone water-way, from the famous springs and fountains of Mount Ida.

The view from the seats of the theatre behind the city was very beautiful, with purple islands on the blue water, and, afar off, the mist-clad mountains. When the sun rose over Mount Ida, Paul saw the rosy island of Tenedos, with little islands round it, and, as the dawn spread, the isle of Imbros and the peak of the isle of Samothrace beyond. And at evening, when the sea was flooded with crimson, over Tenedos he saw the deep-red isle of Lemnos, with a distant cone of gold shining in the sun's eye, the peak of Mount Athos, on the Macedonian coast, eighty miles across. These visions of crimson islands, like stepping-stones to the golden mountains of another land, drew his thoughts out and over the waves to the world beyond. From yonder blue coast-line came the conquering hosts, with eagles on their prows, that spread law and paved roads over Asia, the place of his birth. Might he not cross to them with the glad tidings of the gospel of peace? Looking through these cloud-like isles, in the pathway of the sun, he saw visions and dreamt dreams, for thitherward lay Rome, the capital of the world.

How he met Luke, the beloved physician, we do not know. He may have seen him about his health, or amongst the few Christians of the city, for Luke was already a Christian. On the day that Paul drew him to his side, he won his best friend. It is thought that he came from Philippi, in Macedonia, the land towards which Paul's eyes were daily turned; and as they looked together out upon the sea from the harbour, and talked of the countries beyond the opal isles, Luke told him many things.

Paul does not seem to have preached in Troy at this time. But while he was waiting for guidance, he dreamt that a man from Macedonia stood beside his bed, with hands outstretched, begging him to come over the sea and help them. In the morning he told Silas, and Timothy, and Luke, and they all believed the dream meant that God wished him to go over and teach in Macedonia. Luke would be their guide; and they decided to go to Philippi, near the coast, the chief city of one of the divisions of Macedonia.

Rose Leaves and a Cone of Gold.

TROY: AGED 50-60.

ALL that Paul and his three friends required to take them over the hundred miles of sea towards Philippi was a favouring

south wind, for in the two busy harbours of Troy there were plenty coasting-boats. With dipping oars they passed slowly out of the harbour and clear of the land, and then the peaked sail was shaken out to the full, and the boat began to bend and hiss at great speed through the clear blue water, for they were flying before the wind. Travellers say that in the Ægean Sea the water is of the loveliest, deepest blue of any part of the world, and that at sunrise and sunset the colours of the islands are more like the hues of gems than of solid earth and rock.

Starting in the early morning, they passed between the little island of Tenedos and the rocky mainland, and soon they were fighting with the treacherous current that sweeps out of the narrow opening of the Dardanelles—that little strip of blue that divides Asia from Europe. The hilly island of Imbros lay before them, and over it rose the blue peak of Mount Saece, on the more distant island of Samothrace, serving as a beacon to guide sailors, who knew the peak from a great distance. As they sailed past Imbros, Samothrace rose out of the water like a purple mountain, and the boat was turned straight for it. All day the sea glanced and rippled, and at evening, when the sun beamed low over Mount Athos, shining like a pillar of gold to the west, the water danced round them like a tract of tumbled rose leaves. And when the white moon sparkled on the waves, they were anchored for the night in the shelter of Samothrace.

Under the shadow of the cloud-capped island, where the images of the Cabiri were worshipped in deep mystery by the devotees of the purple ribbon, they slept, wrapped in their traveling cloaks, until the morning. When the pale shimmerings of dawn appeared upon the sea, the anchor was taken up, the sail shaken out, and the boat's head set for the island of Thasos, with its gold-veined rocks so much coveted by foreigners; but they had forty miles of open sea to traverse before they sailed into the narrow channel between that island and the coast of Macedonia. A wide bay opened, and at the end of it they ran their little boat up to a jutting-out piece of land with stone wharfs on each side; for they were in Neapolis, the port of Philippi, with a temple to Diana on the highest part, and a paved Roman road leading up into the mountains. There Paul and his companions paid off the boatman, and stepped out into a new country. Donkeys were easily got at that port, and, some riding, some walking, they started without delay for Philippi, twelve miles distant.

The Pangean Hills rose above the wide bay, and the road at first went up through a steep gorge. From the ridge of the pass

they had a view backwards of a sunny sea, islands floating in heat haze, and the mountains of Ida behind Troy. Going down the other side of the pass, there opened out on their left the far-stretching yellow plain of Philippi, bounded by a beautiful range of hills and a marshy lake choked with reeds and canes, the plain itself scored with glittering streams of water. In the autumn, ninety years before, by the banks of those ribbons of silver in the grass, Octavian and Antony fought a great battle with Brutus and Cassius, in which they wrested the Roman Empire from them, and drove them to their death—a strange, far-distant place for four Roman generals to settle the fate of Rome, with Roman soldiers hacking each other with short swords.

Over the plain to the right, on the hillside, was the white city itself, called after Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great. After the battle, Octavian made it a Roman colony, and peopled it with Antony's soldiers, to keep them quiet; so that it was a soldiers' city, and the chief of one of the divisions into which the Romans split up the kingdom of Macedonia when they conquered it. Streets and houses crowded up the slope from the plain to the top of the hill, which was crowned by a huge dark castle. Stone walls of great thickness went all round, to protect the city from attack, for in those days rich people did not consider themselves safe unless they slept within a city's walls. The great plain stretching out below towards the south was one of the finest in the world, for it was amongst hills, and yet the numerous streams and marshes kept the trees green. The deep glens were famous for the beauty of their roses, but they were also famous for something else which conquerors liked much better—gold mines, that had been fought over as men never fight for roses, however sweet and lovely.

Paul and his friends rode down the paved road to the side of the river Zygactes, and along the margin of the marshy lake, where black buffaloes bellowed among the long canes, and white geese rose in flocks from the patches of clear water. Keeping to the foot of the hills on the right hand, the road brought them to a low archway in the walls, surmounted by a strong square tower; and they were at the eastern gate of the city, where they would be closely examined before being allowed to pass inside.

Lydia the Purple=Seller.

PHILIPPI : AGED 50—60.

RIDING through the streets of Philippi in the hot autumn weather, they were in a city of great importance; for one of the great roads of the Roman Empire, the Egnatian Road, passed through it, paved all the way, that soldiers might ride in their rattling chariots across Macedonia to Asia. Above them was the old city, climbing up the hill to the gloomy castle on the top, with knobs of dark rock here and there cut into the shapes of Greek idols. There, too, on the hillside, were the seats of the open-air theatre, and the white pillars of the temple of Silvanus.

But the strong arms of the wall were also thrown round the new town, straggling down into the plain, with its wide market-place, and shops of the merchants, and the Forum, where Paul would one day speak to the people. They could see all this as they stood on the broad Roman road—the track of armies—that divided the high city from the low, before turning into a street leading to the lower town, where they were to live.

They did not find many Jews, for it was not a trading but a military city, ruled in true Roman fashion by two magistrates, called prætors, who sat in the open air, on raised marble seats, and dealt out even-handed Roman law, which was not always justice, with men standing behind them with an axe sticking out of a bunch of birch-rods, ready to thrash a back or chop off a head, as the judge might order.

In his own strong way, Paul felt that he must not preach in Asia, and he passed towns and villages in silence; but now his lips were unsealed, and he wished to begin at the synagogue. His countrymen said there was none, but that they met for prayer in a quiet spot by the river Gangas, in the green vale of Drama, a little out of the west gate of the city. When Sabbath morning came, he and Silas, Timothy, and Luke went out to seek the place; and instead of finding a crowd of Jews sitting upon the grass with bowed heads, they found women only. There they had a strange meeting, among the willows and the rose bushes, in the quiet of that hollow between the hills. Paul spoke to them about the Prophet of Nazareth, who was crucified so young, over whom the women of Jerusalem wept, as they saw Him in their narrow streets staggering under the weight of His cross; He who was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and who died that He might draw all men unto Him; He who blessed the

children of the women of the Peræa, taking them in His arms, and calling them the little ones of His kingdom, and who bade the husbands of these mothers treat their wives no more as slaves. And the women of Philippi listened as they had never listened before, while he told them of the chaste worship of the living God and the higher life in Jesus.

Paul had indeed travelled far to hold this small meeting of women with embroidered tunics of red and blue. He who in Lystra held crowds listening, until they thought he was Mercury from the skies, sat talking quietly with Silas by his side—who had seen Jesus—and the youth Timothy. There were few to hear, and only one at first believed Paul's glorious message. Lydia was there, clad in purple, of Thyatira, a town in Asia, about eighty miles beyond Troy, famous for its dyed cloths, which she made a business of selling to the people of Philippi, and although she was not a Jewess she worshipped God; and Paul's words entered her kindly heart, and found an answer.

The meeting dispersed, and the women went home, giving no sign; but after some days Lydia asked to be baptized, with all her children, as a mark that they were Christians; and being well off, she urged Paul and his three friends to stay in her house as long as they were in the city. And so the first Christian that Paul won in Europe was a woman. A woman's hand was the first held out to that glorious gospel of Jesus that would raise woman-kind from slavery to freedom, and surround their children with the beauty and holiness of God's kingdom.

And each Sunday they went out to the Jews' place of prayer by the river's bank, and spoke to all who came out to hear; and before many weeks had gone it became known in the city that teachers of strange new things had come, and that they spoke to the people under the trees by the river.

In a Leafy Vale.

PHILIPPI: AGED 50—60.

PAUL remained in Philippi until the rains began to pour down day after day, and the silver streams overflowed, and the great plain became a flooded lake; then in one night the hills were white with snow, and it was time for people to crowd into walled cities, and think no more of travelling. Still every Sabbath Day they went to the Jewish praying-place outside the

city; but very few became Christians, and two women—Euodias and Syntyche, who afterwards helped much in the city—Clement, Epaphras, Syzygus, and a few others, are all the names we have. What did he say to these Jews in a foreign city, too few to have a synagogue, and women who turned their hearts to Jesus, as they sat in the early morning under the flickering trees, by the glancing river, listening to the Jew in the brown cloak, whose eyes glowed as he spoke? Here are a few words from the letter which he afterwards wrote to them:—

“To you it is given not only to believe in Jesus, but to suffer for Him, as I have suffered. If there is any comfort in Jesus, any consolation of love, any companionship of His Spirit, any tender mercy and compassion, make my joy full by being like me, having the same love to each other, agreeing together, and being of one mind.

“Do nothing through faction or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each count the other better than himself, not looking to your own welfare only, but also to the good of others. Have the same mind in you which was in Jesus the Christ. He was like God, yet He did not seek to be equal with God, but came down as a man and a slave, humbling Himself to the death on the cross. And so God raised Him up, giving Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every one should kneel in heaven and earth, and every tongue say that Jesus the Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

“Any goodness in me is not there by keeping the Jewish law, but through faith in Jesus, and is the righteousness that is of God by faith. Through faith I know Him, and the power of His rising again, and the feeling for His sufferings and death, if by any way I may reach the rising from the dead. I have not yet reached this high perfection; but, like a runner, I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which Jesus laid hold on me. Brothers, I do not count that I have yet laid hold on this; but one thing I do, like a runner, forgetting all that is behind, and stretching out to what is before, I press forward towards the end of the race, and the prize which is the upward call of God in Jesus the Christ. Let us all who would be perfect be thus minded; and if you should ever think otherwise, God will reveal the right to you. Continue to live by the true light, which has brought you so far.

“Rejoice in Jesus always. Rejoice, and let your moderation be known to all. The Lord is near. Be not anxious; but in all things with prayer and thanks let your wishes be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Him. Finally, brothers,

whatever things are true and honourable, just and pure, lovely and well spoken of; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things; and whatever you have learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, that do: and the God of peace will be with you."

There were not many by that river's bank who believed in Jesus as he did, but his countrymen were willing to listen to a rabbi of Jerusalem, and Silas, his companion; and although they shook their heads and murmured their dissent from Jesus being the Christ, they bowed them reverently as they listened to the orator's exhortations to live the higher life in reliance upon the living God, for they had never heard a nobler speaker.

But Paul did not speak by the river-side only. In the bazaars and markets of the city, where the people gathered together to buy and sell and gossip, he spoke to them about the living God, and Jesus His Son, and bade them give up the worship of idols of wood and stone. And many smiled as they heard these travelling Jews calling their worship kneeling to trees and stones, and disliked them for being Jews, and for asking them to give up the customs of their fathers, to which they had been so long used. But although they were disliked, they went about speaking openly to the people, and to the Jews at their praying-place by the river.

Scourged with Birch-Rods.

PHILIPPI: AGED 50-60.

THERE was a slave girl in the city who was thought very wonderful, because she could make her voice sound as if some one else were speaking. She said she could tell secrets by the aid of mystical signs and words; and the men to whom she belonged got money from the people who came to see her. She hated her masters and her work, and had heard Paul and Silas speaking, and liked them, and used to watch for them as they passed by, going out with their friends by the west gate of the city towards the meeting-place by the river. She followed them, with jingling brass rings on arms and ankles, calling to the people as she went, "These men are the slaves of the Most High God, who tell you the way to be saved!" shouting again and again, until the people wondered that this strange girl, with dark hair and dreamy eyes, should speak thus of the Jew in the brown cloak and his taller companion. Her masters were annoyed, but she did not care;

and day after day, for many days, she followed them down the wintry street, calling the same thing. Perhaps she wished the people to go with Paul out to the river and listen to his preaching; but he did not like it, and her behaviour troubled him greatly. Turning round on her as she followed them one morning shouting her strange cry, he said, as if speaking to something within her, "I tell you, in the name of Jesus the Christ, come out of the girl." She stood still, astonished, and turning away, left them. After that there came a change. She called no more after them when she saw them in the street, and refused to do any more wonders. The change was a good one, and pleased Paul and Silas, but it did not please her masters.

When they found that their slave girl would do nothing, and their hope of making money was gone, they became very angry, and blaming Paul, threatened loudly to punish him. Getting friends to help, and watching for Paul and Silas, they surrounded them, and laying hold of their cloaks, dragged them along the street, not without buffets and kicks, into the market square, shouting loudly as if they had caught two thieves, until they gathered a large crowd. The chief men of the market said they should be taken before the city judges for teaching unlawfully and causing a riot.

The two Roman magistrates were sitting as usual on a raised pavement in the open air, with a yellow awning over them to keep off the sun. Behind stood the two sergeants with rods and axe, and they were ready to hear all grievances, and say what should be done at once to keep order, although not really trying the persons. The men of the market, still dragging Paul and Silas by their cloaks, brought them before the magistrates, who sat aloft in purple-bordered cloaks looking gravely down on the noisy, dirty people, with naked arms and dusky faces, who shouted loudly,—

"These men are Jews! They are troubling our city greatly by teaching the people customs which it is against the law for us to listen to or do, for we are all Romans here."

The Emperor Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome, which caused them to be suspected, and often hated, in Roman cities; and it was always dangerous for a crowd to cry, "A Jew! a Jew!" Looking at Paul and Silas, the people could see from their black hair, ruddy complexions, and marked features that they were plainly Jews who were being accused by these leading citizens. The angry screams and loud threats quickly drew more people to the spot, until there was a riot indeed of shrieking men calling upon the magistrates to punish the Jews, they knew not what for.

The judges saw the striped kerchiefs and woollen cloaks, and recognized them as Jews, and springing to their feet, with uplifted hands they seized their own tunics and tore them before the people, as a sign of great anger, and turning to their sergeants, in a loud voice they ordered them to beat Paul and Silas with rods—a thing which was common with slaves and with men who were not Roman citizens. They did not dream that these travelling Jews might be citizens of Rome, and if Paul and Silas shouted that they were, their voices were drowned in the yells of the mob, who were delighted that they were to be thrashed.

It was not a trial, only a passing order, given to please the people and stop a riot; and the magistrates thought that a scourging here or there did not matter with two strange Jews, who might never be in their city again. Paul and Silas were at once taken over to the public whipping-place in the middle of the market square, where they were stripped to the waist before having their hands tied to the post. If they protested that they were Romans, they were not believed. The sergeants tucked up their tunics, and the people jeered as they stood round and saw the Jews' naked backs scored with fierce strokes of thick birch-rods until the blood ran down, the magistrates, from a distance, seeing what was done.

An Earthquake.

PHILIPPI: AGED 50–60.

A ROMAN flogging was the common punishment for rogues, but it was none the less terrible, for the rods sometimes cut into the bone, and generally left the poor wretch insensible on the ground.

The mob was pleased. The travelling Jews had been flogged, and flinging their cloaks over their bruised and bleeding backs, Paul and Silas were taken to the common jail, which was often a cave in the rock, or a cavern under the ground; for in these days prisoners were treated as we would not treat brutes. Their dungeon would be a low-roofed place with thick walls, having a small door of wood fastened to stone pillars. There were no windows, but there was an inner hole, a smaller dungeon, shut off by another door—a low, disgusting place, more fit for swine than human beings, with foul straw to lie on, foul air to breathe, and heat unbearable—where men were put for special safety. Into the

black hole of this inner den Paul and Silas were thrust, and their feet fastened into wooden stocks fixed to the wall, to prevent them from rising and forcing open the crazy doors. There they were to be kept until the magistrates should say what was to be done with them.

In that vile place of black darkness Paul would realize the horror and the torture which, when a member of the Sanhedrim, he had meted out to the poor, trembling Nazarene men and women who were flogged and imprisoned until they would curse the holy name of Jesus. He was drinking of their cup of bitterness.

The jailer left them sick and ill, and the coarse wooden doors were shut and barred. The night of pain and torture for the bleeding prisoners moved slowly on, amid choking heat, in the loathsome den. Sitting in the stocks, racked with pain, they could not sleep. Perhaps death would come on the morrow, and they sought comfort in the psalms which they had learned to sing as little children—the comfort of many a prisoner since then. In the blackness they sang Jewish psalms, and the other prisoners in the dark heard and listened, not knowing what they were; and so the slow hours passed. The stars came out over the hills, with here and there a window light; the people went to their beds, the moonlit streets were empty, and the city slept; but there was no sleep for the prisoners stifling in the darkness.

Suddenly the brooding stillness was broken by a rumbling sound. The earth heaved and rocked; walls trembled; doors were shaken, and fell away from their pillars; the prisoners' stocks were loosened from the walls; the very foundations of the prison were moved. The jailer awoke in bed. It was an earthquake! If his prisoners should escape, he would be terribly punished. He ran from his house to find the outer prison door lying on the ground. They were gone! With a cry he drew his sword, and would have killed himself. Looking from the back of the dungeon, Paul could see his figure and glittering sword in the moonlight, and hear his words.

"Do not stab yourself. We are all here." The jailer stared into the dark hole, calling loudly for a light. Lights were brought, and, lantern in hand, he went in trembling to seek them; and his joy was so great that he knelt down on the muddy floor and besought Paul and Silas to come out. His sudden terror and great relief moved him deeply, and Paul spoke. Perhaps he told him that they were Romans, and the messengers of the living God, for the jailer exclaimed, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He had heard of their teaching. "Believe on Jesus the Christ, and you will be saved, you and your children," was

the solemn answer; then he told him what the great words meant. Taking them from the jail up to his house, where his wife and children were, he washed the blood from their wounded backs, and put on oil. Paul told them of the glorious gospel of Jesus; and in answer to his solemn question all in the house said that they wished to be Christians, and before it was morning they were baptized one by one, after the manner of the Nazarenes. They gave the suffering men food and drink to comfort them, and a place to rest till the morning, rejoicing greatly that they were able to do so.

A Very Humble Apology.

PHILIPPI: AGED 50—60.

THEIR wounds were such that they would not sleep much in the jailer's house. When the cold light of a winter morning dawned over the dark castle on the hill, and the lake below rippled with silver, messengers from the magistrates were knocking at the jailer's door, and, to his surprise, he received an order to set the two Jews free. Perhaps they had heard that the prisoners whom they flogged so suddenly were no common men, but Jews of education and position from Jerusalem, bearing Roman names. Luke and Timothy were not idle while their friends were in prison. The magistrates were anxious that they should be let out very early in the morning, and get away from the city and their enemies, and so give them no more trouble.

The jailer rejoiced, and hastened with the message. "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Come out, and go in peace." But Paul was not minded to let them cover up their outrage. He and Silas were indignant at being flogged like thieves. The magistrates had outraged the laws of Rome, and must express their sorrow. Paul was now the judge, and they the criminals. The messengers were brought and told that their masters had broken one of the highest laws of Rome in flogging Romans without first trying them.

"Tell your masters," he said, "that we are Romans, and that they have beaten us in the public market-place without making any inquiry, and have put us into a dungeon without trial or finding us guilty of anything. And now they wish to get us out privately, so that nothing may be heard of the outrage which they have done. No indeed! We shall not go out thus." And to the amazement of the men he added, "Tell your masters

to come themselves and bring us out." Paul had not lived in Tarsus as a free Roman citizen without knowing his rights. Nowhere in the whole of the Roman Empire could he be punished without free and open trial by a Roman judge, with the right to appeal to the court in Rome if he wished. He also knew what could be done to any judge, Roman or foreign, who broke that law.

The messengers hastened back to their masters with the message; and they had good reason to be afraid, for the determination of a Jew was well known. They had learned since yesterday that the two strangers were free Roman citizens, and that in flogging them they had committed a great crime, for which Paul and Silas could get them heavily punished, and they lost no time in hastening through the streets to the jailer's house to see them. It was their turn now to tremble as they stood before the two Romans whose backs had been cut and bruised by their orders. With grey eyes fixed upon them, Paul listened to the very humble apologies of the magistrates, who sat so proudly yesterday in their robes and chairs, now cringing and begging him to go away into freedom, and say not a word of what they had done. They had better reason now to tear their robes in grief.

With their own hands they brought them out to the street, asking them as a favour not to remain, but to leave the city at once. But Paul would give no promise, and with Silas by his side, their limbs stiff, their brown cloaks torn and ragged, but free Romans now, they went away through the streets to Lydia's house, where they joined their friends, who were grieved to see their pitiful state after their cruel ill-usage.

It would be days, perhaps weeks, before they were fit to travel; and many came to see them, for Lydia's house had become the meeting-place of the Christians. What did Paul say to these men and women who listened to him there? Luke has not recorded it. He was now fifty, his black hair was sprinkled with grey, and he felt older than any who listened to him—so old that they seemed children, as they sat on their bright mats before him, with eyes fixed on his face. This is from one of the letters which he afterwards wrote to them:—

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you to will and do His good pleasure. Do everything without grumbling or disputing: that you may harm no one and be without blame, children of God, without fault, in a crooked and perverse age, among whom you are seen as lights in the world. Hold forth the word of life, that I may have good cause to glory in the day of Jesus, that I have neither run my race in vain, nor worked in vain.

“Be imitators together of me, and take note of them who live aright, for you have us as an example. For there are many who do not so live, of whom I have often told you, and tell you again weeping, that they are the enemies of Jesus and His cross. Their end is ruin, for they worship eating and drinking, and take delight in shameful things, setting their minds only on the base things of this world. But we are citizens of heaven, who wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus the Christ, who will change our earthly bodies into bodies of glory, by that power through which He is able to do all things. Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, stand fast in the Lord Jesus.”

On these grey days of winter the little gathering of hooded women and cloaked men in the purple-seller's house listened to the words of the great teacher, dropped like seeds into their hearts, to flower and bear fruit in their lives.

At length Paul and Silas were well enough to travel, and they were to ride out along the paved way to the city of Thessalonica, where there were Jews and a synagogue. But Luke and Timothy were to remain for a time. Bidding farewell, they rode quietly out by the west gate along the Roman highway, that would pass through many towns and villages before it brought them to the town whither they were going. When they embraced Luke and Timothy, they were parting from the young man for only a few days; but Luke they would not see for years, and then he would be a travelling teacher like themselves.

A Roman Road and a Marble Arch.

PHILIPPI: AGED 50-60.

WINTER by the sea was a different thing from winter among the highlands of Asia. There the mountains were dazzling ice peaks, and the roads through the passes blocked with snow. But around Philippi the winter consisted of rains and hail, with cold winds, flooded rivers, and thunderstorms, when lightning played through the darkened air, and thunder rolled among the hills, with sun-bursts and days of shining.

Thessalonica was a hundred miles off, but the road was the best in Macedonia, paved with blocks of marble by those wonderful roadmakers the Romans; for the great Egnatian Way was kept in good repair, marked all along with milestones that told the distance from the heart of the world. And as Paul rode

slowly past these stone records, he thought of Rome, and that one day he would stand where all roads meet, in the midst of that great city. They rode by a valley close to the sea, and inland until they could no longer see the blue water flashing among the islands. By the end of the first day they had passed one lake, and seen another, with the river Strymon flowing out of it; and at an opening in the hills they came to Amphipolis of the Nine Ways, so called because of the many roads into it, a city larger than Philippi.

There Paul and Silas would seek the shelter of the house for travellers, where they would have to cook their own food, and sleep on the ground, wrapped in thick cloaks, with their feet to the fire. Travellers rose early, and after a breakfast, in which buffalo milk from their leather bottle and tough scones from the satchel would be the main part, they would saddle and ride on again, Paul wrapping his brown cloak about him as he met the cold wind. The paved road turned again to the sea, and they saw the blue waves coursing before the wind, and far away the white peak of Mount Athos, which they had seen gleaming golden from the walls of Troy. By the end of the day they lost sight of tossing waves and purple isles, and were riding through the mountains on their way to the town of Apollonia, where they would spend another night in the comfortless place for passing travellers.

Next day they looked down upon the plain of Axios, and the Gulf of Thessalonica, called after his sister by Alexander the Great, so that two of Paul's letters in our Bible bear her name. The city is a thriving one still, and the harbour is the favourite for English ships in that part of the world.

As they rode through the hollow in the hills, they looked down upon the blue gulf, and towards the shores of Greece and the snow-clad Mount Olympus, the most famous among mountains. The Greek poets loved to think that a group of imaginary beings dwelt there, among pure snows and pearly clouds, ruled over by King Jove; and they made up beautiful stories, poems, and childish tales about them, which those who made them did not believe, but many who read them did. And men named their idols after them.

Approaching the city from the east side, Paul saw it, like Antioch and Philippi, rising in street after street up to the castle on the top of the small hill, with five miles of strong white-washed walls and square white towers that gave it a very bright appearance. The great Egnatian Way passed through the low arch in the eastern wall, to form the principal street, and pass out through the western wall. Built over it, in the midst of the city,

was a heavy triumphal arch of white marble blocks ; and high up may be seen carved—for it stands there still—five bulls' heads bearing garlands, with stone horses and stone Romans in long cloaks. Its purpose was to remind all who passed under it that Octavius and Antony had won the battle of Philippi ; and as Paul rode through in his brown cloak he would read the Latin proclamation cut deep in the marble.

But the battle of Philippi brought something better to Thessalonica than a marble arch to make the street narrow. It had sided with the victorious generals, and they made it a free Roman city, to manage its own affairs without interference from the Roman governor of the province of Macedonia. There were no Roman soldiers in the castle, no eagle standards seen in the streets, and the people chose their own magistrates, who could punish whom they liked, and even put criminals to death.

Cut upon this marble arch, along with the robed figures of the Romans, can still be seen the names of seven magistrates, which Paul and Silas would often read as they passed through ; and of the seven, it is thought that Sopater, Gaius, and Secundus became Paul's friends.

In a Dim Synagogue.

THESSALONICA : AGED 50—60.

THESSALONICA was not like Philippi, a city of old Roman soldiers, but a trading city of merchants and sailors, shopkeepers and workmen ; so that there were hundreds of Jews living in streets of their own in one part of the city, and they had a large synagogue. Paul may have brought a letter of introduction, for he went to one called Jason, who asked them to live with him.

Spinning and weaving were common in the place, and as Paul intended to remain some time, he started weaving and tentmaking, for he wished to be a burden on no one. Their money had a man's head on one side and a winged woman on the other, and it must have been scarce in the town, for Paul found it so hard to keep himself that he and Silas had to work both night and day. And we can picture them sitting in the market-place, or going among the ships in the harbour, trying to sell the thick haircloth which they had woven, by the light of a smoky oil lamp, through many weary hours of the cold winter night.

Sabbath after Sabbath he went to the synagogue to proclaim

the glad tidings to his countrymen that Jesus was the Christ. At first they listened in silence, then they asked questions. The rabbis said the Messiah was to be a King who would reign in Jerusalem for ever. How could He be a carpenter of Nazareth and be crucified? And Paul answered them from his complete knowledge of the Bible. "It is right that the Christ should die and rise again from the dead. And this Jesus of whom I tell you is indeed the Christ." Rising Sabbath after Sabbath, he proclaimed the same glad message. His countrymen came in crowds, and the large, dimly-lit synagogue was filled with dark faces and flashing eyes of earnest men, as they sat listening to the wonderful oratory and the glorious message of their strange countryman. We do not know what he said, but this is what he afterwards wrote :—

"I speak the truth in Jesus, I do not lie, for my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and constant pain in my heart for my countrymen. I could wish that I were banished from Jesus for the sake of my kinsmen the Jews, whom God took as His people, and to whom the glorious promises were given, and the law and manner of serving God. These are the fathers of the race, and Jesus is descended from them, who is over all, God blessed for ever. It is not as if the promises of God had come to nothing. They are not all God's people who are descended from Abraham, for their children are not all children of God. Shall I say that there is unrighteousness with Him? God forbid. He said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will, and compassion on whom I will. So that the mercy of God is everything; for He has mercy on whom He will, and He hardens whom He will."

But the leaders of the synagogue disputed what Paul said, and told the people that he was a teacher of false doctrine, who wished to draw them away from the old faith, so that not many Jews believed. As in other places, so there came the day when Paul and Silas rose one after another in the crowded and excited synagogue, saying that they had brought the glad tidings first to them, but since they rejected the Christ, they would turn to the foreigners of the city—an announcement which filled the leading Jews with deep indignation, for they thought it a most wicked thing to do. And again they left the narrow walls of a synagogue to preach to the world outside in the streets.

To the people of Thessalonica Paul spoke with boldness, despite opposition and frequent conflicts, urging them to give up worshipping Greek idols, and going to their temples to take part in feasting, drinking, and wickedness, and to cease offering wine and

fruits and animals on their altars. He bade them serve the living God, and Jesus His Son, who died for men, and live the higher life of goodness and self-denial, so different from their present one. We have not got the words of his address to the people, but this is part of what he wrote to them :—

“You know that our coming among you has not been in vain. Having suffered and been shamefully treated, as you know, at Philippi, we came boldly in the strength of God to proclaim His gospel to you amid much conflict. Our teaching is not full of cunning, errors, and impurity; but being teachers approved and taught of God, we speak, not to please men, but to please God, who knows our hearts. At no time have we been found using flattering words to you, as a cloak for greed, as you know, and as God knows. Neither have we sought glory from you, or others, or any one, although we might have claimed honour as apostles of Jesus. But we have been gentle among you, as a nurse with her own children; and being affectionate over you, we are ready to give you, not the gospel of God only, but our own lives: for you have become very dear to us. You remember our toil and labour; how we work both night and day, that we may not be a burden to any of you, but always preaching the gospel of God. You are witnesses, as God also is, how holily and without blame we behave towards you who believe; and that we treat every one of you as a father treats his children, testifying, advising, and encouraging you to live lives worthy of God, by whose voice you are called into His kingdom of glory.”

Paul showed them, by a daily example of gentleness, and courage, and steady, humble industry, how they should live the higher life in Jesus. For the people were inclined to follow the ways of their priests, and, when they became Christians, to give up steady work and go about preaching and talking, expecting others to feed and clothe them. And so he would take no help from them, and said that a man who did not work should not eat.

Pink Hoods and Embroidered Cloaks.

THESSALONICA: AGED 50—60.

THE people liked him. He was a tradesman, who worked that he might teach. They were dyers, potters, saddlers, masons, carpenters, boat-builders, shopkeepers, sailors—some free, many slaves. He spoke straight to them, telling them what to do in their daily lives, and pointing their eyes to the living God,

but he never knew when he would be rudely interrupted and contradicted. There were also educated people there : for Cicero, the greatest of Roman orators, when he had to leave Rome, chose this city for his place of banishment ; and although that was about two hundred years ago, his fame was still fresh among them. These educated people had little faith in idols or idol-worship, and only followed the fashion of the day, smiling at the tales about the inhabitants of cloudy Mount Olympus which the common people believed. And they too liked the travelling Jew in the brown cloak, with his graceful gestures and glowing eyes, and listened to the finished sentences, which told them he was a scholar. They had never heard anything to equal his picture of the higher life of temperance and holiness shown in Jesus, and of faith in a living God.

And as he spoke in the wintry sunshine of the market-place, women in hood and cloak of purple and dark blue, of black and deep crimson, stopped as they passed, and listened for a little to snatches of the story of the Holy One over whom the women of Jerusalem wept, and whom Silas saw. Their garments were embroidered with silk, and their shoes laced with gold, for these hooded women were the wives and daughters of rich men of the city. And so it came that many of the foreigners who used to go and listen in the synagogues, and a number of the chief women of the city, openly became Christians, and came to their meeting-place to hear Paul and Silas speaking. In Macedonia the people called themselves Greeks, and the women enjoyed a freedom in religion and in daily life which was not known in Asia or Palestine. Women were the most faithful of the followers of Jesus while He lived, and so we find them quick to believe wherever they hear His gospel preached. And little wonder, for none suffered more from the brutal orgies of idolatry, and to none did Jesus bring tidings of greater gladness or nobler freedom. And of what did Paul speak to those ladies clad in perfumed raiment, tinted of the rose and the skies, and to those tradesmen, artisans, and slaves from the dye-tub and tan-yard ?

You can see them gathered in a large room with a small door, and slits high up for windows, sitting close packed on the floor, and standing round the walls. It is night, and a small, smoky lamp, hanging by a chain from the roof, throws a ruddy light on the face of Paul and his younger companion. Ladies sit near, with their hoods thrown back ; the men's heads are covered and uncovered. Some gaze with gladness at the speaker, some at their own clasped hands, with tears ; and breathing is hushed, for they believe he speaks the very words of God.

“I beseech and advise you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that, as you have learned from us how you ought to live to please God as you are now living, excel in it more and more. For you know our charge which we give you through the Lord Jesus. It is the will of God that you should be made pure; therefore avoid all unfaithfulness, and live honourable lives, not giving way to wicked passions, as idolaters do who know not God. Let no one wrong his brother in this, for the Lord will avenge these things, as we have plainly told you. God’s voice calls us to live clean and pure lives; and whoever turns away from that teaching rejects not man but God, who will give His Holy Spirit to you.

“About love towards each other, you need no instruction from me: for you are taught of God to love one another, and you do it toward all the Christians of Macedonia. But I counsel you to have more love for each other, and study to be quiet, and to work at your business with your hands, that you may live honestly toward them who are not Christians, and want for nothing, as I have already told you. I would not have you to be ignorant about them who have fallen asleep in death, or to sorrow for them like unbelievers who have no hope. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so they who are in Jesus will God bring with Him.”

Listening to words like these, we need not wonder that they regarded whatever he said as a message from God. He warned them, too, that they would be persecuted by their fellow-townsmen when they learned that they had turned against their cherished idols and temples, and would no more follow the wicked customs in which they had been brought up. With deep voices the men answered that they were not afraid of flogging or imprisonment; and the women trembled, and wondered if they would be touched.

Thus Paul taught, and thus they listened; and after he was done, he went among them, speaking words of comfort and encouragement. And we may be sure that none of the men and women ever forgot the tones of his voice, and the words he said, on the night when he persuaded them for the first time, and for the sake of Jesus, to turn their backs upon their idols and their faces to the living God.

Holding the Door.

THESSALONICA : AGED 50—60.

THE wintry months, with snow-drifts upon the hills, floods in the rivers, and storms among the islands, were spent by Paul and Silas in the seaport town at the head of the blue gulf. He had his own reasons for declining help from the people of the town, but one day he joyfully received a gift from Philippi. The messenger was Epaphras, and he brought a present from his friends, of whom Lydia would be one, who had heard of his toil and hard work. He received their gifts so gladly that, later on, they sent him more. The things would not be of much value—dried fruits, parched corn, oil, wine, clothing, and a little money—but their kindness touched his heart. In the letter which he afterwards wrote he thanked them very warmly.

Spring was at hand. The snows were vanishing from the hills, the wild-flowers invading the valleys, and black branches budding to the sun in rods and fans of green. Boats were being launched into the harbour, and prepared for summer trade; and large ships were arriving from distant ports—the first signal for these great peaked sails to move about the gulf again, and that the storms were past. The travellers had been more successful here with the gospel than in any other place. But success brought danger. The synagogue Jews despised and ignored them after they left the synagogue, but their success amongst the townspeople made them angry. And when they saw them becoming Christians, and believing on the living God and Jesus the Christ, they were deeply hurt, and called Paul and Silas false teachers, who should be put out of the city. And they got up a plot.

Going to some of the lowest men of the city—idle fellows who, if rewarded, were ready for mischief—they said that they wished to have a riot about the two preaching Jews, and get them punished. In the market-place they told the people what they knew about Paul, and that he and Silas had been flogged and imprisoned in Philippi before coming to them, and that they were deceivers, who were there for a bad purpose. The people listened, and the low fellows shouted until they had gathered an excited crowd; and then they proposed that they should take these two Jews before the magistrates.

With threats of hatred against the strangers, they led the crowd out of the market-place, shouting and yelling through the sunny streets, to Jason's house. But Jason heard, and his door

was shut. They beat on it with their sticks, and called upon him to give up the two strange Jews; but Jason and his friends were silent within, holding the door, and the noise and uproar were great. The door was broken, and the rabble rushed in and searched the house in every part; but the Jews were gone. They had escaped. But the leaders were not so to be defeated. Seizing Jason and the other Christians in the house, they dragged them through the streets in the midst of a yelling crowd to the market-place, where the magistrates had their open judgment-seat, and accused them there of sheltering criminals. The ruffians had been taught by their Jewish paymasters to say that Paul and Silas were plotting treason against the Roman emperor.

By the Roman law, a man might be put to death for treason, and many things were covered by that little word, so that it was the most serious thing that any one could be accused of in all the Roman Empire. The first duty of the magistrate was to write down the accusation and the reply, and fix a day for the trial. Standing in front of the raised pavement, with naked arm extended towards Jason and his friends, the ringleader exclaimed in a loud voice, so that all the rabble might hear,—

“These strange Jews, who have been turning everything upside down everywhere, have come here also, and Jason has taken them into his house. They, and he, and all who go with them are doing what is against the laws of Rome; for they say there is another king than Cæsar, called Jesus, and that is treason.”

When the crowd heard this, they grew more excited, and loud shouts of anger went up on all sides; and the magistrates were troubled, for the accusation was too serious to be put aside. So they wrote down the accusation and the names of the accusers and the accused, and did a thing which is done in English courts to this day, for we have learned much of our law from the Romans of Paul's time: they ordered Jason and his friends to give bail, in pledges of money or property, that they would appear on the day of trial. Jason was well-to-do, and gave the pledges for himself and his friends, and they were allowed to go home in peace.

The synagogue Jews had succeeded in part of their plot, but they were vexed that they had not got Paul and Silas. Having got Jason and the others into the hands of the magistrates, they thought they would soon have them also. But Jason, who held the door, was determined they should not. He and his friends would face their trial alone, and keep Paul and Silas clear. And that very night the Christians got them out of the city gate—no doubt disguised, so as not to be known; and after seeing

them on a part of their way, they returned to face their punishment. And when the day of trial came they were not let off, because the two Jews had left the city, but were heavily fined for having kept them in their houses. That did not make them change their minds, for they openly kept to the new religion; and their example was so noble that the Christians of Thessalonica became one of the strongest congregations formed by Paul.

Friendly Synagogue Jews.

BEREA : AGED 50—60.

WRAPPED in his brown cloak, Paul and his companion hastened along the Egnatian Way, leaving Thessalonica behind them, from which they had escaped, with the moonlight shining upon its whitewashed walls. They passed out of the city on the west under the arch of Augustus, which is standing there still; but they did not keep upon the busy Roman road towards Pella, fifty miles distant. After riding for some time, with the sea breaking in white ridges on their left, they turned into a road that struck inland across the plain. And when the faint grey light of dawn trembled upon the sea, and a band of orange spread over the hills behind the city, they were drawing near to a large river with thickly-wooded banks. At that time of the year, at the hour of the dawn, the leaves, the grasses, and the flower-cups are frosted with living dewdrops, clustered on each scented cup and balmy leaf, to cool the world and fade before the sun; and then the woods echo with bird-songs, that die as the day advances.

The road passed for miles through the shade of deep woods with open glades, and at night they would be glad to sleep in a village shelter, safe from wolves and robbers. That road is now peaceful enough, and you can go in a railway train, in less than an hour, over what took them two days' riding, before they climbed the path of loose stones running with water, up to the town of Berea, on the hillside, the end of their journey. Though not large, it was a walled town, with a wide view of plain and forest, crossed by two wide rivers, with hills beyond, but no sea. Green trees shaded the narrow streets, and down them ran streams of water, led in from the river, close at hand. They probably had letters of introduction, for they at once found friends, and were welcomed by some of their own fellow-countrymen.

There were a good many Jews in Berea, and some were men of learning, and they had a synagogue. As was their custom, Paul and Silas went thither on the first Sabbath, and spoke to their countrymen, telling them of Jesus, and proving from the Bible that He was indeed the Christ of whom the prophets wrote. And Paul was much pleased with the way they listened to him. Taking out the brown rolls of Scripture from the box behind the blue curtain and the ever-burning lamp, they turned to the passages, and followed them with their finger, and talked with him in a friendly way over the wonderful news he brought. He argued of faith in Jesus and the new gospel; and this is part of what he afterwards wrote:—

“We know that what is said in the Jewish law is spoken to Jews who are bound under the law. But no man, by keeping the law, can make himself just before God: for through it comes the knowledge of sin. But righteousness which is of God has been made known apart from this law, spoken of in the Bible; the righteousness of God, to all men who believe through faith in Jesus the Christ. There is no distinction among men: for all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God; but may be saved by His grace, through the redeeming power that is in Jesus the Christ. Him God sent, to save us by His life and death. How, then, can a man glory in his own good deeds? Such glorying is shut out, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith. For we declare that a man is saved by faith in Jesus, apart altogether from his keeping of the Jewish law. Is God to be the God of Jews only? is He not also the God of foreigners? Yes, of foreigners also; for there is but one God, and by faith He saves both Jews and strangers. Do we then make the Jewish law of no effect through this faith? God forbid: for we establish it.”

After patient listening and searching of the Bible, a good many of the Jews believed that Jesus was the Christ, and joined the Christians; but others preferred the old religion, as they had learned it from the rabbis. Paul also preached to the people of the city, calling upon them to give up their idols, and turn to the living God and His Son, and live the higher life. Here, as at Thessalonica, women of good families, hearing of the wonderful teaching, came, and standing on the outskirts of the crowd, cloaked to hide their fine clothing, with faces half hid, listened to the Jew in the brown cloak, telling of the Galilean who died for them upon the bitter cross, and calling upon them to renounce the shrines of idols, their temples, and all their horrid surroundings, and make temples of their homes, in which to pray and serve the living God. And these women went away with hearts raised and minds

chastened, resolved to join the Christians. What did they hear him saying, as they stood in the shade of a green tree, so far off that they could only catch his words by holding their breath and keeping their companions silent?

“Seek to be like God, as beloved children, loving one another, even as Jesus loved you, and gave Himself for you, an offering and a sacrifice, an incense of a sweet smell to God. See that unfaithfulness, and impurity, and greed are not even named among you, as becomes Christians; nor bad talking and foolish jesting, which are not becoming: but rather let there be giving of thanks. For this you must know as a certainty, that no unfaithful or impure person, or covetous one, who worships an idol, can have any share in the kingdom of God and of Jesus. Let no person deceive you with empty words: for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon disobedient men.”

The ladies of Berea might well listen to the two strangers who stood at the street corners and in the market, calling upon the people to turn away from the degrading practices of idol-worship, and live lives of temperance and self-denial; for many of them had seen their sons, brothers, and husbands taken from their arms and ruined by these temple customs, in which good women had no part.

A number of the men of the town also joined the Christians, and Paul's success did not fill the synagogue Jews with envy and hatred, for they were more noble than the Jews of Thessalonica. If the people would not give up their idols, and worship God after the manner of their synagogue, they were not sorry to see Paul and Silas getting them to do so through believing on Jesus as the Christ, and so they remained friends.

Cloudy Mount Olympus.

DIUM: AGED 50-60.

IT was summer, with great heat in the narrow streets of the town, and merchants with their camels were busy along all the roads, carrying their goods from place to place, and taking news also. And Paul remained there, for the number of the Christians was increasing every day. Jews were the peddlers wherever they lived, going from village to village, and town to town, and door to door, sometimes with a basket of wares on their arm, sometimes with an ass laden with all kinds of small things in

panniers ; so that it is easy to see how the Jews of Thessalonica got to know of the friendship between Paul and the Jews of Berea, and of his great success. Men who could pay low ruffians in their own city to get up a riot against him could pursue him.

Like the Jews of Iconium two years ago, they rode over to Berea, and scolded their countrymen for allowing Paul to teach, telling them how they had got him driven out of Thessalonica ; and they went into the market-place, and roused the people with loud speeches against him. These two strangers, they said, were turning the whole world upside down, putting up Jesus as King instead of the Roman emperor. They told how he was put out of other towns, and had come to trouble them next with his false teaching. The people listened to these Jews whom they knew, with their fierce accusation against the two quiet men, and they were stirred up by their exciting harangues.

It was growing dangerous to remain, and Paul's friends thought it best that he should leave before there was any rioting, and he was ready to go. Jason and his friends of Thessalonica had been severely punished on his account, and he did not wish any one in Berea to suffer, and his work was done. He had formed a congregation of Christians who could take care of themselves, and Silas and Timothy, who had joined him again, could safely remain behind.

The men of Berea said they would bring him in safety to the seaside, where he could get a boat to take him whither he wished ; and bidding farewell to his friends, he rode out of the town. Once more he was flying from the bitter hatred of his own countrymen—hated because he preached that foreigners could worship God, and be saved through faith in Jesus. His persecutions twenty years ago were being visited upon his head, for, wherever he went, his chief enemies were his own countrymen and former friends.

Dium, to which they were going, was two days' ride, on the shore of the gulf opposite to Thessalonica. Mount Olympus, with patches of light trees, belts of green pine, and rocks shining in the sun, was close behind. On its broad, table-like head was the fabled floor of Homer's star-lit chamber of the Greek idols, carpeted with dazzling snow, curtained with luminous clouds—those clouds of fire that knew not the sweep of an angel's wing, snows that felt not the print of rosy feet, whatever priests might say or poets sing.

Riding down the glens from the distant hills to the strip of plain by the sea, again Paul heard the beat and murmur of waves upon the shore, and smelt the savour of the sea, as he waited for

a boat to carry him hence. He had crossed Macedonia: whither would he turn? He looked among the boats in the harbour at the mouth of the small river, where he could get a passage to many places. He wished to go back to Thessalonica, but dared not venture yet. There was a boat going to Athens, and he decided to go thither; and some of his friends said they would go too, for they thought he would soon return. Athens was two hundred and fifty miles away, and it would take more than a week to go; but it was outside Macedonia, in the province of Achaia, and he would be safe. He would not part from the men who had come down with him from the hills without a word of strengthening and encouragement.

“In later days grievous times will come. Men will be lovers of self and of money, boasters, fierce, quarrelsome, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, without affection, slanderers, traitors, without self-control, proud, headstrong, haters of good, and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; keeping up a form of Christianity, but denying the spirit of it. From men like these turn away; for they creep into houses, and take women captive, and are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. These men of corrupt mind resist the truth, and have no faith in Jesus. They shall go no further: for their folly shall be seen of all men. But you have followed my teaching, conduct, and purpose, my faith, long-suffering, patience, and love in persecutions, like what I endured at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra: and God has delivered me out of them all. They who would live godly in Jesus the Christ must bear persecutions; but bad men and impostors shall grow worse and worse, deceiving others, and being deceived themselves. But stand you in the things which you have learned and been made sure of, knowing from whom you have learned them.”

Soon he was again in a ship with companions, but not Silas or Timothy; sailing away from the province in which he was called to teach; going to Athens, not to teach, but to shelter for a time, and return to Macedonia again. And as they sailed into the blue gulf, the huge shape of Mount Olympus came out above the other hills; but it had no mystic spell or poetic charm for the Jew in the brown cloak and striped kerchief, who looked calmly at it from the shadow of the broad yellow sail. Homer's tales about the lives of the Greek idols among the white clouds were much more than old wives' fables to him: they were false, idolatrous, and wicked, weaving the glittering robe of romance and loveliness round untruths, to the deceiving of the people. Having lived among the scholars and the colleges of Tarsus, he would know of Homer and the Greek tales; and having been

trained in Jerusalem, where to make a statue of a man was to dishonour God, he hated all idols, and blamed all who worshipped or praised them. And so, whatever the captain might say about Jove or Neptune helping their voyage, it was with no feelings of awe or superstition that Paul turned his eyes away from the mountain of fleecy clouds to the blue waves dancing round them.

The Flash of Minerva's Helmet.

DIUM : AGED 50-60.

PAUL was at home in a boat, for he belonged to a seaport, and the whistling wind and rising waves filled him with no alarm, but with the buoyant spirits of one accustomed to the sea. With a fair wind from the north, making the huge sail creak and strain upon the mast, and the waves race behind them, the voyage to Athens would not be a long one. In summer the heat on the deck of the unshaded vessel would be intense, as the fierce sun beat on them out of a pale-blue sky. Sailing down the Gulf of Thessalonica, they were close to the western shore, with mountains along the sea-coast—cloudy Olympus, Ossa, Pelion, all famous in Greek poetry. To the eastward, as they passed out of the gulf, they saw again over the tossing waves the purple peak of Mount Athos, which seemed as if it could never be hidden.

The captains of those boats with the white eye on the bow were always superstitious, and did not care to sail at night; so that they would run in and anchor in a bay, and then spreading their mats on the deck, sleep, wrapped in their travelling cloaks, with the wind blowing round them, and the sound of lapping waves to rock them to rest.

On the second day they would be among the Thessalian islands; and passing in between the long island of Negropont and the shore of Thessaly, they were in sheltered water, with beautiful scenery on each side, and no apparent way out. In front were the hills about the pass of Thermopylæ, called the Hot Gates, between a hill and a morass, and the most famous battlefield in all Greece; for at that place, five hundred years ago, three hundred Greeks kept back the whole Persian army. If the captain was a Greek, Paul would not fail to hear of it; for they never tired of speaking of that great fight, of which their historian Herodotus wrote the story in a book that has come down to us. At the end of this narrow strait there is a small opening,

disclosing a beautiful inland sea stretching for fifty miles along the picturesque shores of Attica, the province of Athens. Mountains belted with green woods were on each side, and the white walls of villages and towns on the shore showed that the country was full of people; for they were sailing into the heart of Greece, the most refined nation in the world.

At the end of this smiling sea there was another opening, with highlands on each side, through which they sailed into another inland sea, with islands scattered over it; and soon they were passing the field of Marathon, high up among the mountains of the mainland, where, hundreds of years before, the men of Athens came out to fight the invading Persians, in a battle of which the Greeks speak to this day. The sea was now open towards the golden south, studded with the fruitful islands of the Cyclades, of every shape and size, tint and hue, from the rich brown of the nearer isles to the purple and gleaming pearl of those that like clouds dotted the hazy, dazzling tract of blue. But not in silence did Paul gaze from day to day upon those ever-changing scenes of sunshine. At his loom or in the boat he had a message, and we can picture his companions listening to words like these:—

“This treasure we have as in jars of clay, that the exceeding greatness of the power of God may be seen to be of Him, and not of us. Crushed on every side, yet not broken; perplexed, but not in despair; pursued, but not overtaken; struck down, but not destroyed; we do always bear about in our bodies the marks of the death of Jesus, that His life may be shown forth in us. For we who live are always being exposed to death for His sake, that the life of Jesus may be shown forth in us. Thus while death works in us, it is life to you. But we have the same spirit of faith that is written of in the Psalms: I believed, and therefore I spoke. We also believe, and so we also speak; knowing that God, who raised up Jesus, will raise us up with Him, and present us with you. For all these things are for your sakes, that grace being multiplied through so many, may cause thanks to abound to the glory of God.

“And we do not faint; for although our bodies fail, our spirit is renewed day by day. These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work more and more for our everlasting glory. And so we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are passing away, but the things which are not seen are for evermore.”

When the captain saw high upon the hill the white temple of Minerva, he knew it was Cape Sunium, and that it was time to

steer round the high headland ; for they had reached the south end of Attica, and then the little wooden figure on the bow of the boat was pointing into the beautiful gulf of Athens. Before them were the hills of the far-famed island of Ægina ; behind it, Salamis, bare and rocky ; and beyond, the Morean mountains. But Athens, the pearl of cities, was still hidden among purple hills to the right ; and over Ægina, with its sunny cliffs in the sparkling water, were the blue hills about the great city of Corinth, not thirty miles distant.

Standing on the raised peak of the boat, Paul and his companions would strain their eyes for the first sight of the greatest city of Greece ; and a cry from the steersman would tell them that he had caught the flash of the sun upon the gold helmet of Minerva, on the top of the Acropolis. Yonder white cliffs laid bare were the world-renowned marble quarries of Pentelicus, with the purple background of the Citherean hills, and among yonder dark glens roamed the famous striped bees and blue butterflies, sipping nectar from the flowers of Hymettus. Five miles up among the hills, rising abruptly from the plain, shone the white Acropolis of Athens, with the city round it, the square outline of its marble buildings plainly visible to the eyes of Paul and his companions as they sailed in towards the shore.

No more tossed on the waves, the boat swept swiftly into the bay, past parks and villas of rich citizens, who loved the sea-breezes. They could not see the city on the shore until the boat's head was turned quickly round towards an entrance so narrow that it could be closed with a thick chain stretched between the towers on the ends of the breakwater ; and then they were within the great harbour of Piræus, the seaport of Athens, and their voyage was almost at an end.

Bronze Statues and White Temples.

PIRÆUS: AGED 50-60.

THEY saw the white town of the Piræus, with temples and theatres, stores and warehouses, reflected in the bay ; for it was built out on a rocky point, with harbours upon each side, into which flowed the rivers Cephissus and Ilissus, that kept all the country watered and fruitful from Athens to the sea. The grain stores were the most important buildings of the port, for into them were poured shiploads of wheat, corn, flour, oil, dried fish,

wine, nuts, preserved fruits, and other kinds of food for the great city beyond.

The yellow sail was looped up to the tapering yard, and the boat was slowly rowed alongside the quay, and fastened with ropes to the stone poles, where hundreds of people in dresses of all colours, with hats of straw and felt on their heads, were standing in the sunshine watching the arrival of another strange boat in the harbour, already crowded with ships of all kinds, and laughing as they talked about the weather-beaten passengers who came ashore. The city wall extended out to the horns of the bay, so that when the chain was drawn across, they were safe from attack by land or sea. Although beautiful Athens was far up among the hills, the people of that great city were so anxious to keep the road open to the sea that they had huge walls twenty yards high on each side of it, called the "Long Walls," and broad enough for a chariot to ride along the top, with towers at short distances. And all the way from Athens to the sea the road was lined with houses like a long Greek village, although the people could not see over the huge walls.

When Paul and his friends walked up that paved way, the walls were in ruins, for their conquerors broke them down two hundred years before, and country people built houses with the stones, until only the foundations remained. They might well wish to preserve their city, for it was then, as it is still, the most beautiful city in the world, with the finest buildings and loveliest statues that men have ever made. Five hundred years before Paul was born, Athens was great; but it was conquered and plundered by the Romans, and now belonged to them.

As he and his Berean friends neared the city, their eyes rested upon the rocky hill of the Acropolis, rising, like Stirling Castle, in the midst, with marble cliffs of stained yellow, whitish grey, and dull red, strengthened with white walls, the top covered in every part with temple buildings. The largest was the Parthenon, the finest ever built, with open front to the rising sun, and high beside it stood the bronze figure of Minerva, the work of Phidias, greatest of sculptors, the flash of whose gold-tipped crest could be seen by sailors thirty miles at sea. There, too, was the pillared temple of Athena, holding no snowy statue carved by Phidias, but only a little ugly figure of olive-wood covered with lies. For a thousand years the people were taught that this little black doll fell down from the skies, and so they kept a lamp with fragrant oil burning night and day before it. And as Paul looked up to these white temples, and that woman's figure clothed in shining armour, with spear held aloft, idolatry seemed to overspread the city like a cloud.

Like Edinburgh, it was a city of heights and hollows, and its finest temples were upon hills. Irregular streets wound through the valleys, lined with public buildings and houses, shaded with green sycamore trees and the darker cypress. In the squares and gardens, altars, shrines, and statues of men and women—some that had lived, many that had never drawn breath—were sculptured in marble of snowy white, faint rose, deep red veined with gold, and in agate and porphyry, or in metals of dull bronze, gleaming brass, and burnished gold; and so numerous were they that people used to joke and say it was easier to find a statue than a man in Athens.

Paul had been in many cities of soldiers, commerce, learning, idolatry, but none like Athens; for it was a city of art, literature, statues, architecture, painting, books, free thought, free discussion, and almost free religion—a city of light, but not of the highest. As he walked, in his brown cloak and sandals, through the archway of the Piræus gate, he was in the longest street, in the bottom of a rocky valley between hills thick with houses. A pillared colonnade shaded the footpath, and all the way along were shops and stalls against the walls and statues, and green trees next the roadway. Passing up and down in the sunshine were gentlemen on horseback, followed by black attendants; asses and mules laden with sacks; porters carrying bundles and wheeling handbarrows; jewelled ladies carried in shaded litters by gaudily-dressed household slaves. Dogs ran to and fro, picking up what they could find, scaring the bright-hued sparrows into the trees, while flocks of grey and brown doves wheeled into the air, to settle on the hot temple roofs.

Greek women in flowing robes of white or purple, rose-red or pale-blue, embroidered in rich colours at neck and hem, and drawn through a silken girdle to keep them from the ground, walked with red-slippered feet on the shaded footway, their light hair coiled close, and fastened with gold pins. Men with close-cut hair, wearing tunic and cloak of deeper hue, walked beside them, with slaves behind. The poorer people had no white clothing or fine colours, only short coarse tunics of blue and brown, with arms and legs bare, but smiling, cheerful, and perhaps happy; many of them were going to the market-place, a little farther on, at the bronze statue of Mercury, where streets met. There, amid the noise of many voices, and the shuffling of feet over the stones, he saw the townspeople going out and in among the wooden booths, and the yellow tent-shades where the shopkeepers were showing their wares. Among them were the voices of girls, holding out bunches of white and golden lilies, crimson roses,

sweet violets, and ivy sprays, trying to get the people to buy them to make their homes fresh and beautiful. There were Jews in plenty, easily known from the fair Greeks by their long black hair, dark eyes, and deep ruddy cheeks—countrymen of his own, who were always found where buying and selling was going on. And Paul made himself known to them, and was taken to the part of the city where they dwelt, and there he found a lodging near the synagogue.

Having brought him safely to Athens, his Berean friends, in their kilts and jackets, left him to return home; and he gave them an urgent message to Silas and Timothy, that they were to join him in Athens without delay. What this message meant we do not know, for he was eager to get back to Thessalonica and Philippi. Perhaps the great city filled his mind with the idea that with their help he could plant a congregation of Christians in the heart of Athens, the mother of Greece.

Alone in Athens.

ATHENS : AGED 50—60.

FOR three weeks of golden autumn Paul was alone in beautiful Athens, and he was not happy. How could he be, in that city of temples, altars, and statues, however lovely? He cared for men, not stones. These temples were of idols, and should be scattered in the dust. These altars for offerings by the wayside should be broken down. These statues were images dishonouring to God, and should be hewn in pieces, ground to powder, burned with fire!

On the first Sabbath he went as usual with his countrymen to the dim synagogue with the star-like lamp and purple curtain to preach the new gospel first to them. And while they listened—the men on mats on the floor, the women behind the screen—he told them of Jesus the promised Christ in the Bible, and repeated passages of the Bible, and argued. We do not know what he said, but this is what he afterwards wrote:—

“You will say to me, Why does God find fault? for who can resist His will? But who art you, O man, to reply against the justice of God? Shall the thing made say to the maker, Why did you make me so? Has not the potter a right over the clay, from the same piece to make a fine dish and a common one? He has called His people, not from the Jews only, but also from foreigners,

Hosea said, I will call them mine who were not my people; and call her beloved who was not loved. And they who were told they were not my people shall be called sons of the living God. And Isaiah said, If the Jews were as many as the sands of the sea, a part only shall be saved. For God will carry out His work, and finish it. And so foreigners, who did not seek righteousness by keeping the Jewish law, have found righteousness by faith in Jesus; and Jews, striving after righteousness according to their law, have failed to reach it. And why? Because they sought it not through Jesus, but through their law, stumbling at Jesus the Christ, as over a stone. Isaiah wrote of Him, Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling, a rock of offence; but whoever believes on Him shall not be put to shame."

While we do not read that these Jews of Athens disputed with him, or were rude, neither do we read that he was able to win any of them to his side. This was discouraging; but every day with Paul was a thing to be accounted for, and he gave up speaking in the synagogue, and turned to the people of the city. All the educated men believed in one philosophy or another, and their teachers had greater influence than the priests, for they encouraged them to think, and talk, and argue—three good things—and often to live higher lives; and the people liked to hear about new kinds of religion and philosophy, and to talk about them in their houses and shops, their streets, markets, and meeting-places.

When we remember that, long before Paul came to Athens, Socrates used to go to the market, at the foot of the Acropolis rock, and teach the people by talking with them; that Plato taught all free who cared to come; that Demosthenes spoke in the open air, in the people's meeting-place on the Pnyx hill; and that Æschylus had his plays performed in the theatre of Dionysius, before thousands of people, on marble seats, under the yellow awnings, we can understand that the people of Athens were refined, clever, and educated beyond any that Paul had yet met.

With his brown cloak hanging loose from his shoulders, showing the grey tunic within, with leather sandals and stout oak stick, his bronzed face shaded by the striped kerchief, that hid his black hair and kept the sun out of his piercing eyes, all who saw him knew he was a Jew as he walked through the streets and markets. The flower-girls, with broad hats decked with bright ribbons, smiled as they held out a flower from their basket of roses. The strong, black slaves, who shouted and cleared the way for their scented and jewelled masters, frowned

as they thrust him off the footpath. And nurses caught their little fair-haired children and turned them away, lest the Jew should harm them with his glance.

These things mattered not to the lonely man. He did not notice them. But his grey eyes glowed as he looked around him, not at the people—for he loved them—but at idolatry everywhere. In the market-places, edging the street footpaths, in retired squares shaded with trees, in gardens bright with flowers, were altars, groves, shrines! Upon the public buildings, and on house walls, wherever his eye turned, were single figures and groups of men and beasts in stone. The city was full of idols.

His heart melted with pity when women held rosy children up to an idol on the street, or laid their household gifts upon the altars by the wayside. He was taught when a boy to hate a graven image, but since then he had learned to pity those who bowed the knee to them, and not to the living God. If his arm were mighty enough, he would sweep those images from their rocks into the sea, and leave Athens purified and, like Jerusalem, without a statue of man or woman. But he had learned since boyhood that idols were to be broken down and rolled in the dust, not by the hammers of strangers, but by the hands that reared them, through the light of the living God poured in upon their darkened minds.

And so he spoke in the markets, where the people crowded among the booths and stalls. We are not told what he said, but this is from one of his letters to the men of Corinth:—

“If I could speak in all the languages of men or angels, and have not love, I am but a sounding gong, or a tinkling cymbal. If I know all mysteries and knowledge, and have faith that could move mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. If I give all that I have to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love boasts not, is not proud, does not behave unseemly, does not seek its own, is not made angry, takes no notice of injuries, takes no joy in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Prophecies and knowledge shall pass away, and language shall cease; but love never fails. We know in part, and foretell in part; but when the whole comes, the parts are done away. When I was a child, I spoke, and felt, and thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. Now we see as in a mirror darkly; but then we shall see face to face: I know only in part now; but then I shall know the whole, even as I am known.

There remain faith, hope, and love, these three; and the greatest of them is love.”

Paul was a scholar and a student, proud of having been born in a city of famous colleges. Zenon, the philosopher and founder of the Greek Stoics, had lived in Tarsus. And while Paul despised the learning of foreigners, he would take a scholar's interest in seeing the places where the vain philosophy of the Greeks had been taught for centuries.

A little way outside the city walls, where the Ilissus flowed past the foot of Mount Hymettus, its banks green with plane trees, was the grove of the Lyceum, where Aristotle and his disciples once walked and taught their scholars. Upon the other side of the city, where the Cephissus flowed through woods of silver-grey olives and green bay trees, and nightingales sang as night dropped her purple mantle over the hills, was the Academy, where Plato used to teach. And yonder was the luxurious garden where the Epicureans used to meet daily and talk about the joys of life. These men did not preach; all was conversation and talk. If Paul looked towards these places, familiar to all scholars who knew the Greek language, Greek worship, and Greek ways, he would not go thither, for he was not curious to inquire closely what had been said that so interested mankind. It was enough that they did not worship God.

Day after day, week after week, as he went through the city, he would see, in the street of the Mercuries, a square marble pillar before every house door, with a figure of the flying boy upon it, and with mottoes carved in Greek, and would read words like these, for he read as he went—“Presented by Hippicus. Go on, and think no evil.” Or this—“Presented by Hippicus. Never betray a friend.” He read many more, cut on the blocks to please the men who had put them up, for the street was lined with them from end to end. In Tripod Street he saw each side lined with beautiful tables or bowls, of different designs, supported on three legs, some of bronze, others of coloured stones, the prizes won by young men in the public games, and presented to that street, down which people went to look at them and read the names of the winners.

The Sun-dial of Andronicus.

ATHENS: AGED 50-60.

ON a hill to the north of the Acropolis was the magnificent temple of Theseus, with its thirty gigantic pillars, some of

which are standing still—no longer white and dazzling, as Paul saw them, but yellow with age. And not far from it is the strange clock tower, called the Temple of the Winds, that gave the time and the wind to Athens, having a small bronze man turning round on the top, with a switch in his hand, to show the way of the wind, and a large sun-dial, to tell the time from the sun. Inside there was a water-clock that dropped little drops of water night and day—another way of telling the hours. And Paul would see the time on that sun-dial, as Plato saw it before him, and as you may see it to-day.

If he tried to count them, he would find temples to Victory, Minerva, Diana, War, and many more, with shrines and altars to Fame, Pity, Modesty, Venus, the Earth. As he walked, he read the names and inscriptions on them; and the writing on one of the altars sank deep into his heart, and gave him hope, as you will afterwards hear. He would not think of counting the statues in the streets and on the buildings, for there were over three thousand of them. The strangest of them all to him would be the statue of the Jew Hyrcanus, in the full dress of a Jewish high priest; while not far away was the statue of the Jewish princess Bernice, before whom he would one day stand pleading for liberty.

As he walked under the great ornamental archway that still marks the entrance to the market-place, and went round the wide space, he saw pillared porticoes set apart for the millers, fish-dealers, tailors, confectioners, dish-sellers, cheesemongers, fruit merchants, ladies' dressmakers, and even booksellers, and the place where slaves were sold to the highest bidder. There, too, were more altars and statues; and as he read the names of Solon the lawyer, Conon the sailor, Demosthenes the orator, and many others, and looked at their figures in white marble and dull bronze, standing amid the green trees, he would feel that the memories of great men were around him, although an altar to twelve idols occupied the central place. If he followed the crowd streaming eastward upon a holiday, he would see the racecourse, with rows of marble seats packed with ten thousand shouting people, in tunics of every shade and hue, but oftenest of undyed yellow, waving handkerchiefs and ribbons to the charioteers driving three horses, with thundering feet and flying wheels, that threw up the sand, as they cracked their long whips and galloped round the course. Or he would see the huge circle of the open theatre, crowded with men and women in blue and yellow—the gentlemen with gold rings on their hands, the ladies with pearls in their hair—listening in the cool of early morning to the clear

voices of graceful youths who recited passages of Greek poetry, amid sighs and tears and bursts of laughter.

In their temples and their circuses he saw the religion and the amusements of the people, and as he passed the Cave of the Furies he saw their superstition; for in a chasm in the rocky hill opposite to the Areopagus—little better than a dark hole with a bubbling spring—it was believed the Furies dwelt, and no one might go near the spot, on pain of death. But across the city there was something sweeter and truer; for lying low between Olympia (where the gladiators fought) and the river Ilissus there was a little well of clear water, the very purest in Athens, with the pretty name of Callirhoe, which has come down to us. In very early days it was said that brides used to enjoy bathing there in the hot sunshine, which is perhaps true; but there is no doubt that in later years, its sweet waters, when conducted through the city in nine thick pipes, gladdened many a home. In the open theatre on yonder hill of Pnyx, Demosthenes, Pericles, and Solon used to address the people of the city, in great and silent meetings. Would he ever speak there?

While he waited on from week to week, his ruddy-cheeked friend Timothy and Silas arrived at the seaport, and came up to the city to find him. Their news was not cheering. Timothy had come from Thessalonica, where the synagogue Jews were persecuting the Christians for their religion. Silas was from Berea, and their message was that Paul must not yet return to Macedonia. Luke was still at Philippi. They would go back to their work in Thessalonica and Philippi, and he must wait in Athens until they returned for him. And so they left the city and sailed away, the bearers of an urgent message to the Thessalonians; and again Paul was left alone.

Speaking in the Painted Porch.

ATHENS: AGED 50—60.

IN his wanderings through the streets of the city of white marble and blue skies, Paul found that the market in the hollow at the foot of the rocky Acropolis was the place to which men came who wished to teach the people. By the sides of the market were shady porches of pillars, where merchants who bought and sold cargoes of Cyprus wine and Egyptian corn walked to and fro. And there the wise men of the town also walked with flowing

robes, talking with each other, and sometimes to the people, like the rabbis in the porches of the Jerusalem temple—only they talked of very different things. Paul listened, and when an opportunity came he spoke. Now these philosophers of Athens were fond of quiet and orderly discussions in public, and while some really wished to reach the truth, others loved with cleverness to make their opponent seem foolish, and set the people laughing.

They would not be displeased when Paul joined their discussions, for they did not doubt that they could soon silence him. But this strange Jew, in brown cloak and travel-worn sandals, showed himself a subtle and skilful debater, who would not be silenced; for he returned day after day to their debating place, and spoke of things of which they had never heard. The men whom he encountered were chiefly of two sets—Stoics and Epicureans. For three hundred and fifty years the Stoics had talked and taught in the painted porch at the market-place, saying that there was a God, who made the world, and cared for it, and that men should live lives of self-denial, and some would reach a life to come. The Epicureans had met and taught for almost as many years, in their beautiful garden by the river, saying that God cared nothing for men, and pleasure was the only thing worth living for, and there was no life hereafter.

Paul had never met such clever debaters, and we can imagine with what energy he would show the weakness and wickedness of their philosophy. When he told them, with impassioned words and glowing eyes, that there was only one true and living God, and that the highest life for men to live was in the steps of Jesus of Nazareth, crucified at Jerusalem by Pilate, the Roman governor, twenty years ago, and who rose again from the dead to be with God, they shook their heads and smiled.

He was not able to convince these wise men of Athens that the ideal of the higher life shown in Jesus of Nazareth was higher, or that His sayings were better, than Epicurus, or Zeno, or Aristotle, or Plato; but he could do something else. Turning from the philosophers among the shaded pillars to the people in the sunny market selling their fruit in baskets and red jars, he spoke to them of the living, unseen God, and called on them to turn away from idols of wood and stone, and bow the knee to Him, and become followers of His Son Jesus the Nazarene, and live the higher life.

Although he spoke day after day, we are not told what he said; but this is what he wrote to the men of Ephesus:—

“I bow the knee in prayer to God, the Father of every nation

in heaven and on earth, that He would grant you of His rich glory, that you may be strengthened in your hearts by the power of His Spirit; that the Spirit of Jesus may dwell in you through faith in Him; so that, being rooted and grounded in love, you may be strong to know with all the Christians something of the length and breadth, the height and depth, of the love of Jesus, which passes knowledge, and be filled with the fullness of God. And to Him that is able to do far beyond what we can ask or think, by His power working in us, be the glory in Jesus the Christ, through all ages."

The people paused as they moved to and fro, and listened to the burning oratory of the strange Jew in the brown cloak; but they did not believe him. His story was too strange for them, and they were quite happy as they were.

"What is this babbler trying to say?" asked one Stoic of another.

"He seems to be talking of strange gods," replied his friend the Epicurean.

And they moved off, with their cloaks of amber yellow and tunics of blue, to tell their companions about the earnestness with which Paul was talking to the people. Was he seeking to be a new teacher? There used to be strict laws against any one speaking publicly against the temples, or being a public teacher, until he had got leave from the great city council called the Areopagus. Socrates and others had been stopped by this council until they were examined as to what they were teaching. They were the fathers of the city, who met in the sunshine, upon a mount of red rock called Mars' Hill, where they sat in a wide circle of stone seats.

On Mars' Red Hill.

ATHENS: AGED 50-60.

WHETHER it was to have him punished or put to silence, or merely out of curiosity to know more fully what new religion he was telling the people, it came about that Paul had to attend a meeting of the Areopagus.

They met in the early morning; and the sun that rose in a golden haze over Mount Hymettus, shining through the white pillars of the Parthenon, and burning on the helmet of Minerva, shone also on Paul's brown robe down in the hollow of the

market-place. He was causing no crowds or tumults; he had not stirred the city; but his words had been noted. The elderly men, in their tunics of purple and white, and blue and yellow, who were going leisurely up the sixteen steps to the flat top of Mars' Hill, were not gathering there on account of him. It was only their usual meeting, with the usual crowds of idle people sitting on the rocks about them.

Morning broadened over the city as Paul stood speaking in the market. Seeing him there again, some of the philosophers in the porches thought it was time the council knew exactly what he was teaching so earnestly; and they plucked him by the cloak, and told him that he must come up yonder, pointing with a wave of the hand to the men against the blue sky on the top of the crag. Paul turned and went with them, his eyes bent on the ground in thought. He had spoken suddenly on many occasions, but never to such an audience. He was in no danger of his life or of imprisonment. But a great door had suddenly opened. It was that which caused him thought. How should he get them to listen? How could he keep the truth from glancing off their polished minds? Among these cool unbelievers, with his hot Jewish heart and lips on fire, he was like an unarmed man among gladiators.

They knew and cared nothing about the God of the Jews and Jesus the Christ, and were curious only to hear opinions on religion and life, and talk over them, with no intention whatever of believing one word. He need not repeat passages from the Bible, for they did not know it. If he quoted from books, it must be from Greek or Roman authors. He need not try to stir their feelings or appeal to their emotions, for they professed to have none in such matters. They wanted facts only. He must not speak against their temples, their altars, or their idols, although he hated them; and he must speak calmly and after their own manner, although his heart was on fire, or they would not listen.

When he reached the top of the rock steps, and looked from the brow of the red cliff, he could see the masts of ships in the harbour, and the queen of cities lay like a landscape about him, with rivers of people in the valleys, and dazzling temples on the heights. The hum of human voices came up to him from the market—the voices of men, women, and children moving among blind idols of stone and bronze.

A few steps brought him to the octagonal meeting-place of the council—some of them in the prime of life, others old, with white beards, and all wearing robes of pure white, with a broad band of purple or blue or red at the hem, and embroidery at the neck,

their close-cut hair uncovered. Seated behind on the hot rocks, and standing on level places, were the idle townspeople who had come to listen. Yonder square stone has for hundreds of years been the prisoner's seat; the other is for the accuser. But Paul would not sit there. His was not a trial, but an inquiry.

Paul stood watching and waiting till his turn came, and then the chairman addressed him in these polite words, as if asking a favour,—

“Will you tell us what is this new teaching which you are speaking to the people? For we hear that you are saying strange things, and wish to know what they mean.”

Paul went forward into the open space in the midst of the council—a strange figure in his Jewish tunic and sandals and striped kerchief bound round his brows with a soft cord, as he stood there with men of learning sitting round, and a throng of curious people behind them. Yonder shone the most beautiful temple in the world. On every hill there was a temple. The streets below were lined with idols. Green trees cast their shadows over countless altars. On no spot on earth were there more altars crowded together. His grey eyes rested on the calm face of the chairman, as with hand upraised, in his old manner, to obtain silence, he slowly began a calm and carefully-argued speech, different from anything he had ever made before, and well fitted to make the people listen,—

“Ye men of Athens, in all things I see that you are religious. For as I passed along your streets, looking at the things you worship, I came to an altar with these words written on it—To the Unknown God. And thus, without knowing the unknown God, you worship Him. It is about this unknown God that I speak to the people.”

It was not without purpose that he had gone from street to street, reading the many inscriptions in Greek that were carved upon their altars and statues, seeking for something in their worship approaching to his own. And he had found it. For there were several altars at which the people placed their gifts, and murmured prayers to a God unknown and unseen, the great and living God over all, of whom Socrates and other Greek philosophers had dimly spoken. Starting with this common belief, he passed on to other things on which they were also agreed.

Some Other Time.

ATHENS : AGED 50—60.

IN the early morning sunshine, Paul continued to speak to the circle of white-robed men, the crowd of citizens, and beyond them to the world,—

“Seeing that God made the world and everything in it, and is God of the whole heavens and earth, He does not live in temples made by men, nor is He to be served with sacrifices and offerings from men’s hands. He does not need such things, seeing that He himself gives life and breath to men, and all that we have. He made of one nature all men and nations to live in the world. He fixed their times and seasons, and where they should dwell, and that they should seek God, if perhaps they might feel after Him and find Him. God is not far from any one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Some of your own Greek poets have said so in these words—For we are His children.”

What Paul said would bring to some of their minds this passage in Aratus’s poem called “Phænomena,” which was popular everywhere,—

“From Jove we came. And who would touch the string
And not give praise to heaven’s eternal King?
He moves the market and the crowded way,
The throbbing ocean and the shining bay;
If danger threatens, or if pain be nigh,
We are His children, and to Him we fly.”

Others of his listeners would remember this passage from a “Hymn to Jupiter,” by the Greek poet Cleanthes, a leader of Stoics, who had himself spoken before the Areopagus,—

“Thou first great Cause, whose word is nature’s law,
Before Thy throne we bend, in fear and awe;
We are Thy children, and to us is given,
To us alone, to lift a voice to Heaven.”

It pleased these scholars to hear him referring to the lofty sentiments of their own poets who wrote three hundred years before, and they listened the more attentively as Paul proceeded,—

“Seeing, then, that we are all children of God, we ought not to think of Him as like a figure shaped out of silver, or gold, or marble by the art and skill of man. In past ages God excused

the ignorance of men, but now He commands them everywhere to repent and cease from such things."

He wished to show them that the Spirit of God was in man, and could not be put into blocks of marble or figures of bronze, and that to set up such things as God was darkness and ignorance. Thus far his argument appeared reasonable. But he passed on to say things which they would not admit or believe,—

"God has fixed a day when He will judge all men justly, by the Man whom He has appointed, of which God has given proof to every one, in that He raised Him from the dead."

Sounds of laughter among the people made him pause. They were laughing because he had spoken of a dead man becoming alive again. But he was not angry. He had often been laughed at for the same thing; and he kept silent, for the philosophers were talking together. Some mocked, saying that this stranger was talking nonsense, and they would listen no longer. Others thought he was very clever, and there might be a great deal in what he said. One thing was clear—he was not calling their temples and idols names; indeed, he had seemed to praise: but it would be no use asking him to go on that day, for some would listen no more. And the chairman bade him stand aside with these words—"We will hear you about this some other time." With a polite wave of the hand Paul was dismissed from the ring. Stopped with laughter, silenced with a smile, dismissed with a wave of the hand, he went out from among these men, so wise, so great, so superior, that not one of their names has come down to us, while his stands as a pillar in the world. With bowed head he went down the sixteen steps from the seat of philosophy to the people of the market, having failed to keep their attention—dismissed as one whose teaching was too foolish to be discussed up there.

The Ship Road.

CORINTH: AGED 50-60.

YES, there was one whose name has come down to us, redeemed from the darkness of that sunlit hill, because he followed the despised Jew. Dionysius, an Areopagite of position and learning, or he would not have been a member of the council, was so impressed with what he heard that he inquired more fully of Paul, and became a Christian, and was his friend as long as he remained in Athens. Damaris—a woman—and a few others also believed, but these were all in Athens.

He did not remain long in the city after this. Perhaps the laughter of Mars' Hill found an echo in the market-place, and they who used to listen would listen no longer. He may even have got a hint to leave the city. They could not see that there was anything amiss in kneeling before a beautiful figure, or in burning incense upon an altar with a name cut in Greek upon it, and they would not have them spoken against. Everything beautiful and good, they said, deserved to be worshipped, and many things that were neither beautiful nor good.

It was his intention to wait until Timothy and Silas returned, but somehow he could not do it now. He had spread out his hands to the queen of cities, whose sons were the most graceful and daughters the loveliest that the world has seen; and he was rejected, not with outrage, stones, and treachery, but with politeness and indifference. It was not among philosophers that he would find the men whose minds would kindle at his torch and spread the fire of Christianity.

How long he would have remained in Athens if the Areopagites had listened to his teaching may be gathered from this, that he stayed a year and a half in the next city. His stay in the queen of cities is to be measured not by months but weeks, and yet it is one of the few cities he was not driven out of. Bidding farewell to Dionysius and the friends he had made, he left the city of white temples, and walked down the paved road between the long walls, towards Piræus and the sea. He was going in haste, before Timothy and Silas returned, and he left a message for them to follow him to Corinth, forty miles off, across the blue gulf of Athens. The castle of Corinth could be seen from the walls of Athens, and there was constant traffic going on between the two cities, so that he had no difficulty in finding a small open boat in the harbour that would take him to the nearest port.

Wrapped in his brown cloak, and taking his bundles and his precious books, he had no fear of pursuit, as the boat, bending under the high sail, passed out between the dark stone towers at the harbour mouth, and Minerva's glittering spear, on the heights of Athens, grew dim in the hot distance. He had not succeeded with these cold, polished, polite philosophers, although he spoke to them of their own poets, and did not name the name of Jesus. Henceforth he would leave poetry and philosophy to others, and speak of Jesus only.

The boat, driven along by the broad sail, hissed through the blue waves, past the large island of Salamis, heading into the golden west, with nothing but white crests and blue hollows between him and the little islands at the bay of Cenchrea. In

five hours' time he had sailed through them, and could make out the white temples of Diana, Venus, and Æsculapius, in their green groves, outside the town of Cenchrea; and soon they were at the quay, where the statue of Neptune stood, holding aloft a fish and a spear.

Like Philippi, Corinth was six miles inland; and this was the seaport, with a wide harbour and long stone quays crowded with boats, that were being laden and unladen by gangs of slaves, for this was the end of a voyage. All day long the men toiled in the sunshine, for whole cargoes were taken out of ships there and carried upon horses, asses, and camels for nine miles across a narrow neck of land to the sea on the other side, where they were put into fresh ships at the harbour of Lechæum, to go to far-distant countries. There is now a canal there for the ships to pass through, but at another part of the bay Paul saw small vessels being dragged out of the water by hundreds of slaves, to be rolled upon rollers along the "ship road," in one day, and launched into the sea on the other side. This was to avoid going round the cape of the Morea, for Greek wits said that a man should make his will before venturing round that stormy headland.

Although it was only six miles to Corinth, with what he had to carry Paul would find it a hard journey. It was a beautiful road, at first through a valley with soft slopes of brown and yellow, rising into woods of pine, and lighter olive, carob, and broom. In the heat of the day the shepherds sat in the mouth of the rock caves where they lived, the sheep lying in the shadow of the trees and shrubs. He was not lonely on the way. There were strings of laden animals and their shouting drivers coming and going, and two-wheeled bullock wagons that creaked unceasingly on their wooden axles; for that road from sea to sea, with the great city midway, was one of the busiest in the world—so busy that shortly after Paul's visit the Roman emperor Nero ordered the canal to be cut across the neck of land, but it was not finished until long afterwards.

The Bridge of the Seas.

CORINTH: AGED 50-60.

THE afternoon sun threw a great shadow across his path, and far out into the plain, from a hill like the rock of Gibraltar, on which the castle of Corinth was built. It rose so high out of

the level country, and had such precipices, that it took a man an hour to go up the only path to the top, which was built round with a crown of walls, with space enough within for a little town, a huge temple of Venus, and barracks for four hundred soldiers and fifty fierce dogs.

Four miles from this castle on the rock was the great city, built upon rising ground. It was older than Athens, with more ancient but not such beautiful temples; and kings and conquerors had fought over it many times, for they called it the eye of Greece. The city which Paul saw spreading out upon the plain, with sunshine on its white temples and brass spires, was not the old one. The first city rose into great magnificence, and was taken and retaken by conquerors until two hundred years before Paul came, when it was destroyed and scattered in ruins, leaving only a great temple standing to tell where it had stood.

The suns of a hundred years shone upon the ruins of ancient Corinth, until the Roman emperor, Julius Cæsar, the invader of Britain, ordered it to be rebuilt again, about a hundred years before Paul came. Roman soldiers were sent to live there, so that the pennies of Corinth, with which Paul paid for his food, had the head of Julius Cæsar on one side and a winged horse on the other. But the great city which Paul saw has now vanished also, and some of the huge pillars of the same ancient temple are all that is left standing to tell of the past; and it is not likely that they will ever see another Corinth spreading round their feet. From the top of that castle on the rock, whose shadow had crossed his path, the traveller could see two blue gulfs pressing close to the green neck of land called the Bridge of the Seas. On one side was the Sea of Corinth, with ranges of purple mountains growing ever wider apart; on the other was the Sea of Athens, studded with vapoury isles of opal hue; and on a clear day he could see the white temples of the Acropolis. In front was the rich, undulating plain of Corinth, yellow with corn-fields, silver with olive gardens, golden with vines, green with the foliage of lemon, citron, and cypress trees; while afar off, the mountains of Parnassus, Delphi, and Helicon rose into the blue.

There were five miles of walls round the city, and as Paul approached the low Cenchrea gateway, he saw the grove of dark cypress trees, mingled with marble statues and brick tombs, which marked the spot where they buried their dead. The road from the sea led into the chief market in the midst of the city, where they made their bargains before the large bronze statue of the beautiful Venus—the Maid of Cyprus, as she was called by sailors. There the merchandise coming from the Eastern world

was exchanged for the merchandise of the West; and as they all paid toll on their goods to the great city, Corinth was very rich. There, too, was an equally large figure of Neptune, standing upon a hideous fish, out of whose mouth gushed a stream of clear water, for man and beast, doing more good to the people than many statues.

In the streets and in the market were Greek merchants, and red-capped sailors from all countries; slaves of black and brown, who were the porters, carriers, drivers, and workmen of every kind, for freemen did not care to work with their hands. And Paul had no difficulty in finding his own countrymen among the crowds of buyers and sellers, for there were Jews by hundreds there.

Drunken Sailors and Idols' Temples.

CORINTH : AGED 50-60.

A TRAVELLING Jew was always welcomed by his countrymen in a strange city; so that when Paul went into the Jews' streets, it had only to become known that he was a rabbi of the temple for house doors to be opened freely to him. On the Sabbath he went as usual to the dim synagogue, and took his seat among the elders, near the purple curtain. When the time came for speaking, he went to the reader's desk and spoke to the men with bowed heads and tasselled shawls who were sitting on mats on the floor. He did not speak to them of idols, and altars, and Greek poets. That he left behind him on Mars' red hill. He spoke of Jesus; and his listeners were astonished to hear him say that the Christ had come, and was crucified at Jerusalem twenty years before, and rose from the dead to sit at God's right hand. They questioned him, and he repeated the passages from the Bible which he knew so well; and they wondered yet more, and resolved to search the Bible for themselves. We do not know what he said in these addresses, but this is part of the letter he afterwards wrote to the men of Corinth:—

“If I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory in: for I do it of necessity; and woe is me if I do not preach. If I were to do this of mine own will only, I should have a certain reward; but I have a charge given me by God, and my reward is that when I preach the gospel I should make it free, not using my right to be maintained by others. Though free from all men, I am the slave of all, that I may win the more for Jesus. To Jews I speak as a

Jew, that I may win them. To men who have come under the Jewish law to obey it, I speak as under it, though not under it, that I may win them. To those who are not under the law, I speak as not under it, though under law to God and the Christ, that I may win them. I meet men of weak will on their own ground, that I may win them. I argue all things with all men, that by all means I may save some, doing all for the sake of the gospel. You know that when young men run in a racecourse, they all run, but only one gains the prize; and so must you run and win. And you know that all who contend in these public games live temperately in everything. They do these things to win a perishing wreath of green leaves; but our crown will not perish. I run therefore with determination; I fight not like one who beats the air: I train my body and make it obedient, lest by any means, having encouraged others, I myself should be rejected."

There he met Aquila and Priscilla, husband and wife, who made themselves known to him, saying that they were Jewish Christians from Rome; and this gave him great joy. They were tentmakers, and when they heard that he was of the same trade, they asked him to come and live and work with them. Aquila belonged to the province of Pontus, about a hundred miles beyond Tarsus, and he and his wife fled from Rome when the Emperor Claudius ordered all the Jews to leave the city, on pain of death. A Christian from Rome, the mistress of the world! Paul listened with the deepest interest to all they could tell him about the Christians there, and their knowledge of the new gospel. They found much to talk about as they sat in their small house, spinning, weaving, cutting, and sewing the hard haircloth together with coarse needle and string, and earning so little money among them that they had sometimes to work all night, by the light of a small oil lamp, to make enough to keep them.

He went to the market-place to sell his haircloth, where the bronze fountain of Neptune stood, and men and women of all trades and countries were moving to and fro, selling wool, dyed yarn of all shades, porcelain dishes, willow baskets, shoes and sandals; smiths selling bronze, iron, and brass work, and foreign sailors with bright-plumaged birds in small cages, and shells and red coral in baskets. The brass of the city was the finest in the world—so fine that the beautiful gate of the temple of Jerusalem was made of it. But the market was often rough and riotous, because of the crowds of sailors who came up from the seaports to enjoy themselves in the city; and Paul was grieved to hear their foul language and see their drunkenness.

It was a city of idolatry, with many temples, to which the people were drawn by the feasting, drinking, and rioting encouraged there. The greatest was the temple of Venus, the woman idol, served by a thousand slave women, who were made to take part in the revels and wickedness. Corinth was indeed the worst city that Paul had yet visited—so bad that, among the Romans, to be called a Corinthian meant to be very wicked indeed.

Paul mixed with these throngs of trading citizens and pleasure-seeking strangers during the week, and on the Jewish Sabbaths—for the city had none—he continued to go to the synagogue, and speak to his own countrymen about Jesus the Christ. As usual, they would not believe him, and asked searching questions, and argued. But Greeks also were there who worshipped as foreigners at the back of the dim synagogue, and they listened in wonder. Luke was not present to tell us what he said, but this is what Paul wrote to the Jews of Rome:—

“Being saved by faith in Jesus, we have peace with God through Him: for by faith in Him we have an entrance into the grace by which we stand, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we rejoice also in our trials: knowing that suffering brings patience; and patience, proving; and proving brings hope that will not be put to shame; for the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through His Holy Spirit given to us. While we were still weak, in due time the Christ died for wicked men. Hardly for a good man will another die: perhaps one might even dare to die for him. But God’s love towards us is so great that, while we were yet sinners, Jesus died for us; and much more now, being made just by His death, shall we be saved through Him from the wrath of God. If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of Jesus His Son, much more shall we be saved by His life. And we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus the Christ, by whom we have been reconciled to Him.”

Shaking out his Garments.

CORINTH: AGED 50—60.

WHILE Paul was hard at work, weaving and tentmaking during the week, and speaking in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and perhaps on Thursdays also, two friends joined him. Silas and Timothy arrived from Thessalonica and Philippi, and they brought another present, with kind messages that touched him

deeply. Their arrival cheered him more than anything since his flight from Macedonia, especially when he was told that the congregations were prospering, and were longing to see him again.

He heard that Jason and the other Christians of Thessalonica had been very harshly treated, but had borne it so well that their conduct was the talk of all the Christians in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia. But he also heard that some were not behaving well—giving way to greed and worse things, and not obeying those set over them. Others were disturbed about what he had said of the resurrection of the dead, and Christ's coming soon to the world, and wanted to know if they only who were alive would see Jesus, and not they who were dead. Some expected Jesus so soon that they would not work. And Paul saw that these errors must be corrected.

With Silas and Timothy to help him, he turned with fresh vigour to his countrymen in the synagogue; but the more he urged, the harder their faces became against the new religion. And when he told them that if they would not receive the gospel the foreigners in the city would, they called him names, and Jesus also. At length the day came when the dispute was doubly bitter in the hot, dark synagogue, and Paul in anger seized his loose tunic with both hands, and shook it at the men sitting on the floor, as if shaking the dust of the place into their faces before leaving them, exclaiming, "Your blood be on your own heads. I am clean. Henceforth I go to the men of the city." His gesture of shaking his clothes at them, like pouring the dust out of his shoe on the road at Pisidian Antioch, was one of contempt, that greatly enraged his countrymen; and he and his companions left the synagogue amid yells of anger and loud threats.

But they did not leave that meeting alone, for some of the Jews had become Christians, and Justus, a leader, was among them; and when they got out into the sunshine of the street, he invited them all to come into his house next door, and it became the meeting-place of the Christians. All who wished to join in their worship, whether Jews or foreigners, were welcomed there; and in time a good many people came, and some joined the Christians, amongst them Crispus, the chief man in the synagogue, and all his family. But their meetings were not large, for one room could hold them all. Paul tells us how he spoke to these Christians in his letter to them:—

"Know you not that you are each a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man should destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy.

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in the world, let him think himself a fool, that he may become wise towards God. For the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. Job said, He taketh the wise in their cunning. And in the Psalms it is written, God knows the reasoning of the wise, that it is foolish. Therefore let no one glory in man’s wisdom. For all things are yours; whether of things present or things to come, all are yours; and you are the Christ’s, and He is God’s. We are the ministers of the Christ, and keepers of the mysteries of God. A keeper must be faithful; but with me it is a very small matter whether I am judged by you, or by any man. I know of nothing against myself: but that does not justify me. God is my judge. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until God comes, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make known the thoughts of the heart. Then shall each man have his praise of God.”

Like all men of strong will and nervous temperament, Paul was often in low spirits; and when he thought of the wickedness and idolatry of the great city, and the enmity of his own countrymen, he was down-hearted. The new gospel was not running like fire along the ground. One room was large enough for them all. But strength came in a way that was usual with him, and that has put fresh courage into the hearts of many good men since his day. As he lay asleep in the night, he dreamt that Jesus said to him, “Be not afraid; but speak, and be not silent. For I am with you, and no man shall set on you, to harm you. For I have many people in this city.”

He believed the dream was from God; and when he told it to Silas and Timothy, they were glad; and he turned with new energy to his work of speaking to the people, and did not leave the city. But the Christian meeting-place next door to their synagogue was a constant annoyance to the Jews, who naturally thought that they were seeking to draw away their people; and when they met Paul upon the street, they threatened what they would do to him if he did not cease speaking, or leave the city. But he had had his dream, and was not afraid, and held on his course, determined to succeed in Corinth.

No doubt his countrymen complained to the Roman governor of the city, but he did not interfere, and seems even to have favoured the Christians; for although Paul and his friends preached openly in the streets and markets, it was not until a new governor came that the Jews got him to listen to their complaints.

Taking Supper Together.

CORINTH: AGED 50—60.

WHEN Crispus joined them, Paul baptized him with water, after the manner of the Christians, as a solemn sign of membership; and he baptized Gaius also. And as each Jew or foreigner joined, and professed his belief in God and in Jesus, he was baptized by some of the others. They were principally of the poorest class of the city—tradesmen, slaves, and others even of a worse type; for Paul welcomed all who were willing to turn from idols and serve the living God, and live lives worthy of the change.

The congregation tried to carry out the idea of their being all of one family, and took certain meals together, and encouraged each other to keep away from the feasts and the temples of idols, and to avoid drunkenness, and other things which were thought nothing of among their old friends. The breaking of bread, as Jesus broke it, was a most solemn act, especially at supper-time—a meal which He took daily with His disciples. And at supper these Christians ate simple fare and drank of mingled wine and water, sharing their food with each other, and helping and loving each other, in a childlike and primitive way. But it was not long satisfactory, and led to trouble. Paul and Silas and Timothy took these meals with them, and Paul told them how they should keep the Lord's Supper, and repeated it in his letter to them. In it he explained the saying of Jesus to the people in Capernaum synagogue, that they must drink His blood and eat His flesh, meaning that they must believe His words, which would be like meat and drink to them. This is what Paul wrote:—

“I speak to you as wise men who can judge what I say. Fly from the worship of idols. The cup of wine over which we ask the blessing of God, is it not a communion of the blood of Jesus? And the bread which we break, is it not a communion of His body, seeing that the Christians, who are many, are as one bread and one body: for we all eat of the one loaf?”

“The Jewish priests, who eat of the meat that is offered on the temple altar, have communion with the altar. I do not say that food which has been put before an idol is anything, or that the idol itself is anything. For the things which unbelievers offer to their idols, they offer to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have communion with demons. You cannot both drink of the wine cup of the Lord's Supper, and the wine cup of the feasts

of idols. You cannot both sit down at the supper of Christians, and go to the feasts in the temples of idols. Are we stronger than God, that we should tempt Him to anger?"

Autumn passed, and still Paul and his two companions stayed at Corinth. The purple grapes were plucked from the vines; the dark-green olives, the ruddy apples, the golden dates were gathered in orchard and garden; the leaves of russet and crimson in the woods flew in showers through the air, to be blown into heaps, by the gusts of coming winter. But winter there did not mean severe cold. Sudden storms of thunder, lightning, and hail; days of deluging rain that made it impossible for people to travel; weeks of soft snow, from a dull-grey sky, followed by white clouds, gaps of blue, and hours of warm sunshine, formed their kind of winter; with dark nights, when fires were heaped upon the stone floor, and men lay close to them on their mats and couches.

Living with Aquila, the weaver, Paul worked hard at his trade; and as he talked with Timothy and Silas during the long nights about their travels, and what was going on at Thessalonica while he was in Athens, he resolved, as he did not know when he would be able to visit them, to write the Thessalonians a letter. It was nothing new for letters to be written by Jewish rabbis to distant synagogues, but this is the first letter of Paul's that has come down to us. It is the oldest part of the New Testament—older than the Acts of the Apostles. When Paul wrote it, the four Gospels were only in the notes and memoranda of those who wished to remember the sayings of Jesus, and it was not until at least ten years after that the first life of Jesus was written. But these notes of the sayings of Jesus would be copied by the Christians everywhere, and the apostles at Jerusalem also wrote letters, some of which have come down to us. So that Paul was doing nothing strange or new in writing this letter; but what he wrote was both strange and new. Sometimes he wrote with long arguments and strange illustrations—so like a rabbi that it is doubtful if the foreigners would understand these parts; but they were always accompanied by luminous passages. Peter, the simple-minded fisherman, said of these wonderful letters,—

“Our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of matters in which there are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteady twist to their own destruction.”

His idea of writing inspired letters to be read in meetings of Christians, which began with a short one, developed into much longer ones, which he instructed to be taken round to a number of places; and while some are direct letters to correct the glaring

faults of certain men, others are more general in their terms. Twelve have come down to us, and three that he speaks of are lost.

I have already given portions of this first letter to the Thessalonians, and you can read the whole of it in the Bible. Here you will only find references, intended to help you to understand it better and read it more clearly. A feature of it is Paul's expectation of the early appearance of Jesus on the earth, in fulfilment of the Jewish idea of the Messiah—a hope which changed as years passed.

His First Letter.

CORINTH : AGED 50-60.

IF we could have seen them being written, we should understand Paul's letters better. But we can picture him as a man growing old, but still strong, sitting on a low couch in a very small room, his dark features and keen, grey eyes lit up by a small oil lamp that stands near the youthful Timothy, who, with a long scroll of papyrus paper before him, slowly marks down in black Greek letters, with a reed pen, what Paul says, dipping it from time to time into a small bottle of liquid soot fastened at his girdle. His letter is like an address. Now he speaks in tones of hot rebuke, now in the warmth of love and friendship, now in rapt vision, and again in absent-minded thought that wanders far away from the little dark room, and the slow-moving pen, and the rattle and thump of Aquila's weaving. Hour by hour, night after night, Silas would sit gravely listening, sometimes discussing parts with the rabbi skilled in composition and learned in the Scriptures and Traditions, sometimes talking with Timothy about what they heard and saw of the persecutions after Paul left them in Macedonia.

The letter is from Paul, Silas, and Timothy, and it is to be read to all the Christians at Thessalonica.

He began with praising them for the way they welcomed the gospel when he preached it to them a year ago, and had remained faithful under persecutions, so that they were an example to surrounding countries into which the sound of the gospel had gone forth from them. They had turned away from idols to the living God, and were waiting for the coming of Jesus from heaven.

He reminded them that after he was flogged at Philippi they welcomed him, and that he preached the gospel to them amid

much disturbance. His speaking was not to please men, but God ; and he did not flatter them to win their praise, nor to live at their expense, as he might have done as a travelling apostle. He worked night and day at weaving and tentmaking to keep himself, and was like a father among them, so that when he spoke they listened as to a message from God.

Their persecutions from friends were like those of the Jews of Judea, who killed Jesus, and drove Paul himself out, forbidding him to preach to foreigners. Though absent from his eyes they were present in his heart, and he longed to come and see them, but could not. On hearing in Athens of their suffering, he sent Timothy back to help them, and remained in that city alone. And he was comforted when Timothy came to Corinth and told him that they were standing firm in the faith, and he prayed for them night and day.

He urged them to live temperate and pure lives, not filled with passion and lust like those who go to the revels and orgies in the temples of idols. They were also to live quietly, attending to their business, and working with their hands, and be honest with them that were not Christians, and be independent.

When in Thessalonica, he told them that Jesus might come at any time ; and Timothy said that this had caused them much concern. Some had stopped working because the end was so near, others went about stirring up the rest to be ready, others wondered what would happen to the dead, while others thought more about the living ; and all were eager to know the day, and the time of day, when Jesus would come down from the skies in a cloud of fire, and surrounded by angels. Would it be in the dark night or in broad daylight ? They asked many questions by the youthful Timothy. And Paul bade him write that they were not to be like idolaters, without hope of a life beyond the grave.

Paul at this time expected Jesus to return to the earth before he himself was dead ; and he told these men of Thessalonica something of the strange belief which all Jews held, whether Christian or not, that the Christ would come down from the skies with a shout, the voices of archangels, and the sound of God's trumpet, and that all believers would rise to meet Him. But wherever he told the Christians of this remnant of his rabbinical training, it had the effect of creating great unrest amongst them, and as years passed it seemed to drop out of his mind.

To their question as to the exact time he was less definite, saying that the day would come like a thief in the night, with sudden destruction upon the enemies of Jesus ; and that they must watch and be sober, and not drunken ; and that as Jesus

died for them, whether asleep or awake they would live with Him. They were all to obey the office-bearers of the congregation, and live peaceably together, and bear with each other.

“See that no one returns evil for evil one to another, but ever that which is good. Rejoice, pray, give thanks; for that is the will of God, through Jesus. Encourage the spirit of goodness, despise not preachers, prove everything, hold fast what is good, and abstain from all appearance of evil. And may the God of peace make you wholly pure, and keep you without blame until the coming of our Lord Jesus the Christ. He is faithful who calls you to Him, and will do it.”

The letter would be read aloud by Timothy, and altered wherever Paul wished; and he would write out a careful copy on a long yellow roll, which Paul would read before he certified and signed it. Then it would be carefully and tightly rolled up and sealed, with an outer cover of waterproof haircloth, which Paul and Aquila made, and given to some friend who was sailing to Thessalonica, with instructions into whose hands it was to be given.

A Wreath of Green Leaves.

CORINTH: AGED 50—60.

PAUL stayed on in Corinth, and in no other city did he meet with such success or remain so long. He wrote his first letter there, and there he saw the great Isthmian games, which took place every two years, turning the city wild with excitement and revelry for weeks.

These games were not without interest to him, for they were the second greatest in the world, the Olympic games at Athens alone being greater. They were held in early summer, when the plains were dry, the trees green, and the seas calm, and people came from far countries. They got their Isthmian name because they took place upon the Isthmus of Corinth, the narrow neck of land with the waves of two seas rippling on each side.

The city was filled with young men and their trainers, who came from every town in Greece to try for the prizes; and for weeks before the games began, the seaports of Cenchrea and Lechæum were crowded with ships bringing strangers, and some bringing lions and tigers from Africa, bears, wolves, and fierce dogs from Asia, and splendid race-horses from Syria, to make

sport for the people. The roads up from the sea were thronged with common people walking, and gentlemen riding, officers driving their chariots, and women being carried in rich litters by their slaves, all going to the city, where the crowds increased by hundreds every day.

Then the streets were thronged with gay youths in bright clothing, some dissolute and many drunken, playing upon pipes, tambourines, and small harps, and shouting songs. Jugglers, fortune-tellers, and buffoons showed off their tricks, and bawled coarse jokes to the people round them. Slave dancing-girls, in thin waving dresses of red and blue, rattled their castanets and tinkled their small bells, as they danced for their masters on the hot pavements of square and market. White-robed priests of Venus passed by, beating their loud gong, and calling to the crowds to come to their feasts and other iniquities in the temple on the top of the rock.

The Isthmian games were leaping, running, quoiting, spear-throwing, wrestling, boxing, singing, recitation; and to these were added wild-beast fights and chariot races. The prizes were not money or cups of silver and gold, but a wreath for the head, of green pine leaves, cut with a knife of gold, from the woods of Neptune's temple. This seems to us a trifling prize, and yet young men trained for years; and if a youth won a wreath, the city and state to which he belonged put up a statue to him, and said he was one of the greatest of men. The secret was, that the rulers of the people valued strength and agility of body above everything else, for it made good soldiers.

The games were held eight miles from the city, where the isthmus was narrowest, near the great wall. And Paul saw the crowds streaming at dawn towards the spot—some going early in slow white procession to the sacrifices and the feast in the temple of the brazen Neptune; some hastening to secure good seats on the wooden benches; some dressed in coarse tunics of red, and blue, and yellow, driving laden donkeys, on their way to put up their tents and booths on the ground, and sell what they could at the fair. They were all going towards the enclosure at the white temple amid green groves surrounded by walls; and soon the avenue of trees, lined with statues of all who had won in the games, would be crowded like the street of a city.

The course for the runners was less than a quarter of a mile, and was surrounded with rising seats for thirty thousand people. Women were not allowed to be present, but it is said that slave women were sometimes made to run races before these yelling men. The ground was strewn with fine yellow sand, and there

under the clear blue sky, their heads shaded from the sun by different-coloured awnings, these thousands, in tunics of every hue, watched the finest racers in the world; but it is not likely that Paul went. At the sound of a trumpet the racers came out and stood in line, and when the white napkin dropped they started off, speeding like arrows between the rows of yelling people, turning the post at the farther end, and flying back to touch the cord. And the winner would be crowned with the simple wreath of green leaves by the judge of the games, before all the people, and feasted in the temple of the brazen Neptune at the end of the five days. There, too, the people witnessed the grace and skill with which the youths poised and threw the bronze-headed spear, or heaved the round quoits of heavy brass. And Paul knew that each youth had to be examined by a committee, who would not allow him to compete in the games unless he was a pure Greek, and in the best of training.

On another day, the crowds in the amphitheatre heard the herald blowing his brassy trumpet, proclaiming the name and city of each man as he stepped forward, dropping his light cloak, his only covering, and greeted their favourites with loud shouts, making bets on which would win, for betting was one of the great attractions of the games. There, with well-oiled bodies, they leaped with the agility of graceful animals; and again, clasping each other with knotted arms, they wrestled and twisted like bulls together, or fought, boxing with blows that were meant to injure, if not to kill. But when they bound leather bands on their hands, studded with nails, with which they struck each other on their naked and bleeding bodies, it was in cruel earnest.

And upon another day, men stood forth armed in the glaring sunshine, short sword in hand and round shield on arm, to fight wild beasts that were let loose from cages upon them, and all to make sport with their lives for the thousands seated in safety on the high stone benches, ready to yell "coward" if a man flinched before the spring of a tiger, and to laugh, shout, weep, curse, and lay bets as the fights went on.

In the hippodrome, upon another day, vast crowds thronged the seats, and at the sound of a trumpet the three-horse chariots came sweeping in to the barrier, each driver wearing his colours of red or blue or green, that the people might know him and lay their wagers. At a signal given, the barrier fell with a clatter; and amid fiercely-cracking whips and yelling drivers, the horses sprang forward with the light two-wheeled chariots of crimson and blue, in which men stood holding the reins and whirling whips, while the horses' feet beat the sand into the air, as they galloped

round the vast ring—some to strike the wall and be upset ; some to lock wheels together ; while some battled with rearing, unmanageable steeds ; and one only to win the prize, amid the frantic yells of the people.

In Corinth so much was thought of the Isthmian games that their copper coins in daily use had the word "Isthmia" upon them, surrounded with a wreath of leaves tied with a ribbon ; and a young Roman emperor thought it an honour to have his name on one of them as a prize-winner, although he never won a prize.

Paul's thoughts turned away from these young men striving and fighting for a wreath of fading green leaves to what the Christians were striving for, and he wished that these idolaters might be got to fight with equal eagerness for the prize of the higher life in Jesus.

"Work not, eat not."

CORINTH : AGED 50-60.

WE can understand with what eagerness the letter from Paul and his two companions was unrolled by the man to whom it was directed at Thessalonica, and read to a crowded meeting of the Christians, and with what awe they would hear that the day of Jesus was coming as a thief in the night. Portions would be read at every meeting afterwards, although it was not in chapters and verses as it is now ; and it would be talked about, and copies made and sent to other meetings, although there were parts which they would not understand. And while it set at rest some of their difficulties, it raised their expectations of Jesus appearing soon to a pitch of feverish excitement.

After some months Paul heard by a messenger from Thessalonica how the letter had been received, and of its effect upon the Christians ; and he talked with Silas and Timothy, and determined that they required another. In this second letter a good deal of what is in the first is repeated, even to the very words ; and that is natural, as he would have a copy of the first letter beside him when writing the second. Going over it carefully, he would read the passages that had roused the excitement and fears of those who heard it, and would settle the explanations that were required, repeating the advices which had not been sufficiently heeded. Timothy would again write to Paul's dictation.

He began by repeating his former message of cheering and encouragement, telling them that he praised them in other congre-

gations for their patience and steadfastness under persecutions. As to the coming of Jesus, they are not to be shaken in their minds, nor troubled by men's words, or by false letters pretending to be from him, saying that the coming of Jesus was very near; for it would not be for years. Then his words become very obscure, and are thought to refer to the monstrous Roman emperor, whose image was set up to be worshipped in hundreds of temples; and he repeats an idea which he had learned as a rabbi, that the Christ when He came would slay His enemies with flame coming out of His mouth—a thing very unlike Jesus. They are to recall what he said about this when he was in Thessalonica, and stand fast, holding to what he taught them in his speeches and by letter.

Christians who are disorderly are to be avoided; and they who had ceased to work and taken to talking, because they expected Jesus so soon, are to imitate the behaviour of Paul and Silas when they lived among them, working night and day rather than eat bread for nothing. They are to remember the wise Jewish proverb of which he told them when preaching, “If he will not work, neither shall he eat.” Christians who are idle gossips and busybodies are commanded to go quietly back to their work and earn their own bread.

“Be not weary of well-doing: but if any one does not obey our words in this letter, take note of him, and avoid him, that he may be ashamed; yet treat him not as an enemy, but speak to him as a brother. And may the God of peace give you peace at all times, and in all ways, and be with you all.”

The letter would be read, corrected, and copied out, as before, by the careful hand of the youthful Timothy, and read over to Paul. Taking the reed pen in his hand, he stooped over the long roll, and wrote; and when he handed the pen back, this is what Timothy read, written at the end in thick, black Greek letters:—

“The greeting of me, Paul, with mine own hand, which is the proof of my letter, so I write. The favour of our Lord Jesus the Christ be with you all.”

Again this letter was sealed, carefully tied up, and delivered to a Christian going to distant Thessalonica, to be read at the gatherings there. They were to go on with their daily work, for Jesus would not return for years.

I have only given the narrative part of these letters here. The teaching you will find at other places, and you can read the whole in your Bible. They dealt sharply with errors into which these ignorant, untrained, recent idol-worshippers were falling, and are not all of equal value to us now. It is not unusual for English people to read these letters as if they were all

written to and for them ; but you will try to remember the kind of persons to whom they were written, and why they were written, and sift the passing business from the permanent teaching in them. There is nothing in them yet of that struggle with false Christians from Jerusalem, who, unknown to him, were even now attacking him in other cities, and which takes up so much of his later letters, for these slanderers had not yet reached Thessalonica.

A sweet note of closeness to Jesus pervades them, of gentleness, brotherly love, and above all of peace. God is the God of peace, Jesus the Lord of peace, who will give His followers peace ; and they are to have His patience, and go about their daily business. These useless, endless discussions among Christians about points of doctrine and ceremonial, and who are the proper teachers and the true believers, had not touched them ; but soon these ecclesiastic bugle-notes would be heard which have sounded ever since in the world, and the gospel of Christianity according to Paul would be crossed by the dark and sinister lines of Christianity according to Pharisees, who hated him, and did not love Jesus.

Sweet Gallio.

CORINTH : AGED 50-60.

PAUL and his friends were so well pleased with their work in Corinth that they stayed for another winter teaching in the city. The snows swept over the hills, the winds lashed the two seas, thunderstorms crashed among the mountains, rain and hail whipped the sodden plain, as the weeks crept by, until days of gleaming sunshine melted the snows from the shoulders of the mountains, and clothed the plains with fresh spring grass, strewn with wild-flowers of crimson and yellow, of blue and dazzling white, scattered like stars on the ground. They had been a year and a half in the gay city of sailors, and traders, jugglers, tricksters, drunkards, dancers, fortune-tellers. In his daily teaching Paul spoke to the strange men and women who became Christians in terms of the most plain and searching kind, and this is from one of his letters to them :—

“All things are right for me, but all things are not desirable ; for I will not be brought under the power of anything. Meat is for man, and man for meat : but both shall perish. You are to do good and not evil, seeing that you are joined to Jesus, and are

one in spirit with Him. For your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, and which you have from God. You are not your own, but have been bought with a price · therefore glorify God.

“If any Christian has an unbelieving wife, and she is willing to dwell with him, or a wife an unbelieving husband content to dwell with her, let them not leave each other : for God’s voice has called you in peace. How do you know, O wife, whether you shall not save your husband? or you, O husband, whether you shall not save your wife? As God’s voice has called each man, so let him live. And this I say in all congregations. Is any man called to be a Christian who is not circumcised? let him not be circumcised. Any one who is circumcised need not be undone ; for circumcision and uncircumcision matter nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is everything.

“Let every man remain at the work at which he was when we called him to be a Christian. Were you called when a slave, care not ; but if you can become free, do so. A slave called to be a Christian becomes free in Jesus ; and freemen become His slaves. Jesus has freed you from evil ; become not its slaves again. Let any man who has been called of God remain as he is.”

About this time the friendly Roman governor was changed, and Gallio, a famous man, came in his place. He was the elder brother of Seneca, the great Roman statesman, whose Latin books have come down to us, and who mentions that his brother caught a fever in Greece, and had to take a voyage, sailing from Cenchrea to Egypt for his health. Gallio was a man of learning and good sense, and of such a gentle disposition that in Rome the poets and philosophers with whom he associated called him “Sweet Gallio.”

Seneca, a scholar so learned that the emperor Claudius made him private tutor to his son Nero, was very fond of his brother, and when he got the appointment of governor of Achaia, extending for one hundred miles round Corinth, he playfully calls him “My Lord Gallio” in his letters, and says of him, in fanciful praise, that whoever loved Gallio to the uttermost loved him too little.

Paul’s constant and fearless speaking in the city caused the Jews of the synagogue to determine to have him stopped. They heard—for Paul made no secret of it—how he was driven out of Philippi and Thessalonica, and thought that the coming of the new governor would be a good time to try the same in Corinth.

And one day as Gallio sat in his chair of white ivory on the pavement of black and white tiles, with the cool wind blowing

through the arches, open to all who wished Roman justice, there was a noise of shouting in the streets, and a crowd came thronging round the raised pavement, and he saw they were nearly all Jews, bringing a Jew to judgment. Paul had been seized and dragged through the streets to the magistrate. Gallio knew about him, for he was informed of all that was going on in the city, and no one could speak as Paul did to the people without the governor knowing. The old governor, too, may have told him about Paul and his companions before he left, for Gallio was favourable to him from the very first.

He saw the Jews, with their black eyes, bearded faces, long hair, and coloured turbans, and knew that Paul had enraged them by leaving their synagogue and starting a meeting-place next door, where he spoke to the people about their God and one called Jesus. Looking towards them, he asked the usual questions—the name of the prisoner, and the names of his accusers, and what was their complaint. Sosthenes had succeeded Crispus the Christian as chief of the synagogue, and spoke for all who were there, as he pointed to Paul—“This man is persuading men to worship God, contrary to the law.” He wished the judge to think it was the Roman law they were all so eager about, but Gallio knew better. Under the Roman law Paul and the Jews were free to worship after their own manner, and to dispute over religious questions as much as they pleased, as long as they did not fight or disturb the city.

Paul was ready to answer his accuser, and looked to the judge for the usual sign to speak; but Gallio held up his hand to be silent, and looking at Sosthenes, he said quietly,—

“You Jews, if this were a matter of crime, or of a wrong against the Roman law, it would be reasonable that I should hear your case. But you and he are disputing about words and names, of your own religious law, and you must settle it among yourselves. I am not going to be a judge of such things.”

With a wave of his hand he bade the Jews go away and not trouble him. But they would not go, and remained shouting and protesting, insisting and appealing, and by this time a crowd of idle townspeople had gathered, attracted by the noise. Another sign from Gallio, and with the handles of their wooden pikes his soldiers were pushing, punching, and driving the Jews in a huddled, yelling mass out into the street. Seeing how they were treated by the Roman guards, some of the common people, who hated all unshaven Jews, laid hold of Sosthenes, their leader, before he was quite clear of the place, and gave him a beating. Paul had taught in their streets and markets for two winters, and

some knowledge that he was in favour with the governor may have lent vigour to their blows.

Gallio had a glimpse of the people through the marble pillars, and had a good idea what was happening; but he cared nothing about it, and went on with the next business. Why was he so friendly to this Jew of Tarsus, who was a stranger to him? Perhaps he had heard him speaking openly to the people as he drove through the street, and thought as he passed how much better the Corinthians would be if they would do as this Jew in the brown cloak bade them. We should like to know if he ever spoke to Paul about his teaching, and whether he was again Paul's friend eight years afterwards in Rome, when Paul was in a Roman prison, and he in a Roman palace—both, alas, to fall under the displeasure of Nero.

One result of this attack of his countrymen was that Paul was under Roman protection as long as he remained in Corinth; and the kindness of Gallio stimulated his growing desire to preach the gospel in Rome, and gave him confidence in the fairness of a Roman judge.

White Sails and Blue Seas.

CORINTH: AGED 50—60.

AGAIN the two seas were dotted with the white and red sails, for the storms were over, and the time had come for people to take their passage who wished to travel by sea, and Paul's restless mind was stirring him up to go elsewhere. Besides the common people of the town who joined the Christians in large numbers, we have the names of Crispus, the chief of the synagogue; Erastus, the treasurer of the city; Zenas, a Jewish lawyer; Quartus, Achaicus, Fortunatus, Chloe and her family, and Gaius, in whose house he lived upon his next visit. He started a congregation at Cenchrea, of which Phœbe was a member, a woman of such power that afterwards he sent her as the bearer of his long letter to the Christians of Rome. He also visited the other seaport of Lechæum, on the Gulf of Corinth, a place so important that, like Athens, the road of one and a half miles was lined with huge stone walls, so that Corinth should never be cut off from provisions and soldiers from the sea.

Next door to the synagogue, with the vine and leaves carved over the door, the Christians met and worshipped—some with praying shawl and blue fringes, after the manner of Jews; others

with uncovered heads of close-cut hair—the men sitting on one side, the women and children on the other. There they listened to parts of the Bible, and responded to the prayers with uplifted hands. On Sabbath evenings they had a special supper together, when they called to mind the death and rising of Jesus; and they liked to call them love-feasts, a name which suggests their old idol festivals. Paul helped them to appoint office-bearers, and some were even recognized as teachers. Still they delighted to listen to him, sitting on their coloured mats of straw or carpet on the floor of the largest room of Crispus's house, or in the open courtyard, or tree-shaded garden. He had carefully instructed them about the difficult matter of their love-feasts, and this is what he afterwards wrote them:—

“When you come together to eat, you are made worse and not better for it. I hear that when you meet in the congregation, there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it: for there will always be such things, that they who are in the right may be shown forth. When you meet at your common meals, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper. For you eat not all together, but one before another: and one who has brought little is hungry, and another is drunken. Have you not houses to eat and drink in? or do you despise the congregation of God, and wish to make the poor feel ashamed, who can bring no food or wine? I do not praise you in this.

“I was guided by the Spirit of Jesus when I told you how to keep His supper. On the night on which He was betrayed by Judas, He took the bread, and, after giving thanks to God, broke it, saying, This is My body, which is broken for you: this do in memory of Me. In the same way, after the supper was done, He took the wine cup, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do, as often as you drink, in memory of Me. Now as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you make known the death of Jesus until He comes. Whoever does so in an improper way is guilty of an offence against Jesus. Let every man examine himself before eating of the bread and drinking of the cup: for you will eat and drink judgment to yourselves if you do not make a difference between this and a common meal. Through this cause many of you are sick and weakly, and not a few are dead. Therefore, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait one for another. And if any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your meeting be not for your punishment. The rest I will put in order later.”

He was about to leave Corinth, after eighteen months of going in and out among them, from house to house and place to place;

so that the figure of the Jew in the brown cloak, with the striped kerchief and grey eyes, was familiar everywhere, as the man who brought a new religion to the great city. There would be a crowded farewell meeting, and we can picture them listening to words like these, not knowing when they would hear Paul's voice again :—

“Consider what has taken place among you, that not many wise men of the city, not many in power, not many high-born people have become Christians: but the teaching which seemed foolish to the learned, weak to the powerful, and base to the high-born, is triumphing under the power of God. No one can say that it is his learning, or power, or rank that has done it, but the power of God through Jesus. No man can take the praise to himself; it must be given to God.

“Brothers, when I came to you, I did not preach the mystery of God with oratory, and fine words, and philosophy. For I resolved not to know anything among you but Jesus, the crucified Christ. I was with you in weakness, and trembling, and fear. And when I spoke, it was not with persuasive words of philosophy, but in the power of God's Spirit: so that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

“Again I make known to you the gospel which I preached, and which you received; in which you stand, and by which you are saved; in the words in which I preached it, if you hold it fast, and have not believed in vain. First of all, I preached to you what I received from others: how that Jesus died for our sins, being the Christ of the Bible; that He was buried, and was raised on the third day, as the Bible foretold; that He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve apostles; then to about five hundred of His followers at one time, of whom the greater number are still alive, but some are dead; then to James His brother, then to all the apostles, and last of all to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, and do not deserve to be called one, because I persecuted the people of God. But by God's favour I am what I am. And His favour was not given to me in vain; for I have worked harder than them all: and yet not I, but the power of God which was with me. And now, whether through others or through me, this is what has been preached to you, and this is what you have believed.”

Where would he go next? Surely back to Thessalonica and Philippi, or to Antioch. But Paul often changed his plans, and now he felt that he should go away to distant Jerusalem to attend the Passover festival. We are not told why, but perhaps the Pharisee Christians had something to do with it.

All the Christians who could go so far would accompany Paul in the brown cloak, and his two companions, as they rode down the white road by the shadow of the castle rock and the pine woods to Cenchrea by the seaside. Almost two years had gone by since he came up that way, a lonely and dispirited man, from Athens. Now he was leaving, having established a congregation of men who would worship the living God and strive after the higher life in Jesus—a new light in the midst of the dark city.

Aquila the Weaver.

CENCHREA : AGED 50—60.

AQUILA the weaver and his wife, with whom Paul had lived, were leaving Corinth with him. We are not told what Silas and Timothy did. Of Silas, who had toiled and suffered at Paul's side, we do not hear again, excepting as Peter's companion; while Timothy is not mentioned for some time. He had now been absent from Lystra for three years, and it is likely that he went home before meeting Paul again at Antioch.

At Cenchrea Paul and his two friends found a ship, probably going with Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem; but it was to call first at Ephesus, and they agreed to go in it. And we are told that before sailing, either Paul or Aquila had his hair cut close, because of a promise, called by the Jews a vow, made some time before. With his knowledge of the folly of such things, it is not likely that Paul was the one. While they waited for a favourable wind, there would be a farewell meeting with the Christians of Cenchrea, at which Paul would speak. This is from one of his letters to the men of Corinth:—

“Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Christ, the Father of mercy, and God of all comfort; who comforts us in our affliction, that we may be able in the same way to comfort others who are afflicted. As we suffer for the Christ, so are we comforted through Him. If we are afflicted, it is for you; if we are comforted, it is that you may patiently bear the same suffering that we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, knowing that as you share the suffering, so also do you share the comfort.

“We would not like you to be ignorant of the affliction which came upon us in Asia, when we were distressed exceedingly, almost beyond power to bear, so that we despaired even of life. We seemed to have the sentence of death within us, so that we

should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raised Jesus from the dead, and delivered us out of so great a death, and will yet deliver. For we have set our hope in God that He will deliver us, and you help us with your prayers.

“Having a good conscience before God, we glory in this, that in holiness and sincerity, not in man’s wisdom, but by the grace of God, we behave ourselves in the world, and toward you. For we say nothing else to you than what you acknowledge, and I hope will acknowledge to the end, that you glory in us, as we do in you, in this the day of our Lord Jesus.”

Embracing their friends with tears, the travellers went on board, and soon the white sail was bulging from the mast, as the ship with the white eye on the bow plunged and surged through the blue water, and the people on the stone quay faded from their sight. They were sailing down the Gulf of Athens, across which he had come not two years before; and as he passed the island of Salamis, he could see the hills about the queen of cities, and the white buildings of the Acropolis, and catch the flash of the sunlight on the polished helmet of Minerva. By the end of the day they would be at Cape Sunium, where Diana’s white temple was the lighthouse for sailors. The course from that point to the Bay of Ephesus was well known, for in summer there was a constant traffic between the great cities; and Paul saw the setting sun purpling the mountains on the mainland of Greece, and steeping the water with hues of rose and crimson, caught from the burning sky. And again he would sleep in a heaving boat, with the stars throbbing over him.

The voyage would take about a week, sailing on the sea track from Corinth, the capital of Achaia, to Ephesus, the still greater capital of Asia. Among the beautiful islands of the Cyclades they would find shelter and an anchorage every night, for pilgrims were never in a hurry, and captains dreaded sailing at night; and as soon as the yellow dawn came streaming through the islands, they would be glad to rise from their hard couches, for then the huge sail was pulled up to the mast and the anchor taken in.

Paul was accustomed to the sea, and would enjoy the rest and the quiet companionship of his two friends, with hot days of sunshine and steady breezes. When they passed the long islands of Andros and Tinos, there was nothing between them and Ephesus but the open sea with its white-crested waves. They would have to spend a night heaving and tossing under the creaking sail before they came to the large island of Samos, ten miles from Ephesus, and by that time they had crossed from Greece to Asia. Soon they were sailing cautiously among the sandbanks at the

mouth of the slow river Caystrus, to see the great city of Ephesus on a plain surrounded with hills, some tipped with snow against the blue sky.

The ship passed up the river and canal, and between the towers at the entrance of a huge harbour cut out of the land, inside of which a forest of masts rocked to and fro, clad with the white and brown folds of furled sails, for the ship was to remain at Ephesus for some time. Paul and his friends landed, and sought their countrymen in the city. When the Sabbath came they went as usual to the synagogue, easily known by the vine and grapes over the door, and there he spoke to his countrymen of the life and death and rising of Jesus, and that He was the promised Christ of the Bible, and that the gospel was for all people and not for Jews only. This is what he afterwards wrote to the Jews of Rome :—

“What advantage has a Jew over a foreigner? or what is the good of circumcision? Much every way. First of all, to the Jews were entrusted the writings inspired of God. Although some of our people were without faith, that shall not turn away the faithfulness of God. Let God be found true, though every man were a liar. If our wickedness shows forth the righteousness of God, what then shall we say? Is God unrighteous for punishing evil? Speaking as a man, I say, God forbid. Or how shall He judge the world? But if the truth of God is shown forth by a man’s lie, why is the man judged as a sinner? Why not do evil, that good may come? as our enemies slanderously report that we say. But that is justly condemned. What then? are we Jews in a worse position than strangers? No; for both Jews and strangers are alike under sin: for in our Bible it is written, There is no man wholly righteous, no, not one; there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. The paths of peace they have not known, and there is no fear of God before their eyes.”

As usual, the leaders of the synagogue asked many questions about the strange news he brought, and they discussed his answers in a friendly way. When the end of the service came, they asked him to come back and tell them more about the new gospel; and he told them he could not, as he had to go on with the ship to be in time for the Passover, but that he would return again. Aquila and his wife, however, were going to remain and work in Ephesus.

And so Paul kissed his companions and bade them farewell, for he was going on alone amid a crowd of pilgrims. The ship was hauled out of the harbour and rowed down the canal and the winding river to the sea, and then the sail was hoisted, with the

steersman standing high at the stern, shouting, and straining at his steering oar, as he turned the ship's head towards the narrow channel between Samos and the land, with John's blue isle of Patmos thirty miles in front of them. And thus the second part of the voyage was begun, which was to end at Cæsarea in Palestine.

False Christians at Work.

EPHESUS : AGED 50-60.

THE wind seems to have favoured the ship crowded with Jewish pilgrims going to the Passover. The distance from Ephesus to Cæsarea is over six hundred miles, so that they could not go in less than fourteen days, and might be much longer. Although they were sailing along the coast of Asia, they were never far from islands, and as one faded in the crimson and purple of evening behind them, the dawn revealed another lying like a small blue cloud in the sea, so that for the first week they never lacked a shelter for the night. Before the week was over they had left Rhodes behind, the last and largest of the beautiful islands of the Ægean, and were heading into the wide Mediterranean, with no islands in sight. They had now to sail by night and day, with blue billows swelling round them; and for a small boat with only one sail, no compass, an oar to steer with, and filled with pilgrims, it was a serious thing to venture far from the land.

Did Paul speak to his fellow-countrymen during those long, monotonous days at sea? We know he did on his voyage to Rome. If he spoke to them of Jesus as the Christ, they would listen, for even in a synagogue they listened. If he spoke to the Greek sailors about the living God, to whom they should pray rather than to bronze images of Neptune in the seaport, or to the little image fixed on the bow of the boat, they would listen, and his countrymen would admire. The boat swung to and fro over the billows as the great sail filled and slackened with the wind, and the sun beat down from a cloudless sky upon them as they sat crowded together, listening to the strange Jew. This is from one of his letters, referring to a favourite saying of Jesus:—

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he who loves his neighbour keeps every law. All these commandments, Thou shalt not be unfaithful, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and all the other commandments, are

contained in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. A man who loves his neighbour will do him no hurt: love, therefore, is the keeping of all the commandments. It is high time for you to wake out of sleep, knowing that salvation is near. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: cast off your cloaks of darkness, and put on the clothing of light. Live honestly in the daylight; not in revelling and drunkenness, in sleeping and carelessness, in quarrelling and jealousy. Be clothed with the Lord Jesus the Christ, and give up your old sinful life." Thus he held up to these rough men the higher life in Jesus the Christ.

There were no longer ranges of snow-tipped mountains, wooded glens, and purple islands in sight; but soon the hills of Cyprus rose out of the sea, the home of Barnabas, who was perhaps there as they sailed by. Did Barnabas go with Luke to see the Roman governor Paulus in yonder town of Paphos, with its white walls, flat-roofed houses, and glittering spires, past which they were sailing? The beautiful mountains of Cyprus lost their ragged shapes of crag and cliff in the soft hues of distance, as the mountains of Palestine rose in front of them. There were no islands, no sandbanks to avoid as the ship sailed right in from the sea, between the stone towers of the great harbour of Cæsarea, which Paul knew so well.

He did not remain in the town, but went up at once with the pilgrims for Jerusalem by the soldiers' paved road. They who had been so crowded in the ship were now a joyous band, singing the Passover psalms as they climbed into the green hills of Samaria, for they were going to a joyous festival in the only true temple in the world. All others were to them the temples of idols, but theirs was the very house of God. On the last day they rested, and sacks and bundles were turned out, and travel-stained garments changed for their brightest and best clothes, as with fresh songs they started again, to end with shouting and waving of green branches when the beloved city of their dreams came into view. Did Paul sing and wave a green branch, as when a boy? It is not likely. Since last his eyes rested on these spikes of gold, he had seen the Parthenon, the temples of Corinth and Ephesus, and a hundred others, large and small; and he had told the philosophers of Athens,—

"God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He served by men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing that He gives us life, and breath, and all things."

He had not been in Jerusalem for three years. When he was last there, the wintry snows were lying white on the hills of Lebanon and Carmel, and the brook Kedron was a brimming

torrent. He came then to complain of Jews who had travelled from Jerusalem to Antioch to spoil his work among the people of that city, and he left with a letter that was to put an end to all such troubles. What brought him in such haste to Jerusalem at this time we do not know, but he at once sought the apostles, and James, the chief elder, who would be in the temple all day at that Passover time. Nor do we know what passed between them. We hear nothing of his attending a meeting to tell them of his wonderful success, nothing of his remaining for the Passover festival, nothing of his offering the sacrifices always connected with a vow. He greeted the apostles, and learned something which caused him to leave at once. He seems to have had a very colourless reception, and there is little doubt that what he heard was that the Pharisee Christians were out again against him, this time visiting all the congregations he had formed in foreign places, and telling them that his teaching was false, and that foreigners could not be Christians without receiving the mark of a Jew and keeping the Jewish religious law. The smouldering fire had burst into flame again.

What he saw at this time in Jerusalem satisfied him that the free gospel of Jesus must not in any way be bound by the Jewish religious law, and that those who had gone out to say otherwise must be pursued and routed. They had torn up the compact contained in James's letter, and had declared war against him and all foreign Christians. It was a life-and-death struggle, and they had a year's start of him.

Once more in haste, and with a troubled heart, he turned his back on Jerusalem, the city of his youthful dreams, which looked so different, now that he had seen it from far lands. He was going back to Antioch, the city of Christians who followed his teaching. The false Christians had gone thither first, to pull down, if they could, what he, Barnabas, Silas, and Peter had built up.

He was in haste to get back ; and as he was familiar with the voyage, we need not doubt that he was soon down in Cæsarea again, looking with impatience on the tossing sea beyond the breakwater, and waiting for a ship and a fair wind to carry him in a week to Seleucia. It was the time of year when shipping was busy, and he would not have to wait long until a ship sailed in that was going northwards. And again, in a swaying, tossing vessel with a white eye on the bow, he was coasting along the shores of Palestine, past the smoking towns of Tyre and Sidon, and the Syrian coast, with snow-capped Hermon in view, until they sailed through the waves breaking over the sandbanks at the wide mouth of the Orontes, and into the harbour of Seleucia. **A**

day's ride up through green, wooded ravines, and he arrived in his brown cloak, leading his ass over the bridge of spans, and along the street of Antioch, with its shaded pavements and marble pillars.

Christianity Free or Fettered?

ANTIOCH : AGED 50—60.

ONCE more he was in the city where Christians were freer, stronger, and richer than anywhere else. Three years ago he left with Silas to visit the congregations in Syria and Asia, but he had gone far beyond that, and was back alone. The Christians would gather in their meeting-place to hear the account of his travels. We read it now with deep interest, but what would it be to have heard it from his glowing lips for the first time, as these people heard? He had much to tell of towns visited, mountains climbed, seas crossed, dangers from robbers, Jews, rioters, and wild beasts; for he was shipwrecked and in danger of his life more often than we have any account of. But that was as nothing to the news of Troy, Athens, Ephesus visited, and congregations formed in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Cenchrea. They heard of Aquila and Priscilla the weavers, Timothy of Lystra, Crispus of Corinth, Dionysius of Athens, Lydia of Philippi, Phœbe of Cenchrea, Jason of Thessalonica, Luke the physician, Gallio the Roman, and many more. And they rejoiced greatly that the glorious gospel had been spread so far by one who went out from them.

But they too had cheering news. Their congregation was growing great, and sending out messengers to other parts, after his example. They also had news of the false Christians from Jerusalem, who had visited them and passed on, to spoil the distant congregations which he had formed. But it was not until he met some one from Galatia—probably Timothy—that he learned the full mischief they were doing in blackening him and his gospel with lies, and of the great danger that was threatening all his work. The purpose of these false Jews was to turn his converts back into idolaters, if they would not become Jewish Christians. What Jesus said of the Pharisees was true of them also—"They would go over sea and land to get one convert, and would make him twice as bad as themselves."

The meanness and fanatical malevolence of these men in tracking Paul over mountain, valley, and sea, in order to blast

the work and blacken the name of the man who first brought the light of God into these lands, is the darkest page of the early Christian chronicle; and when we find him taking vigorous action and using violent language, we must remember what they were doing. He and Silas had gone round the Galatian congregations, loyally reading James's letter of compromise, little thinking that they were being followed by their opponents, who were outraging the compact. How soon, alas, were the blades of Christians turned, in the name of Jesus, against each other, under the titles of Circumcision and Uncircumcision! And do we not see it still in the great Catholic and Protestant camps?

These were the false and extreme men, but there were good men also among the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem who favoured circumcision and obedience to the law, of whom were Mark and Justus. Paul, Silas, Peter, and Barnabas were against them, and James took a middle course. Paul was reaching out into freedom and light; they were striving to keep up the Jewish barriers against the world outside. Disputes of a like kind have been renewed from time to time as the light of Christianity streamed over the world—men seeking, with rules, ceremonies, standards, and tests, to make fences that ever must go down.

Paul talked with his friends at Antioch, and saw that vigorous action would have to be taken to defend true Christianity from the attacks of these false men. They had broken up the half-hearted compromise of James, and he would draw back to the position which he, Peter, and Barnabas advocated at Jerusalem three years ago, and he had taught—that no one required to be circumcised or bound to keep the Jewish religious law in order to be a Christian.

What were these false Jews saying to the Galatian Christians about Paul and his work? That he told lies when he said they did not need to be circumcised, for he had circumcised Timothy himself. That Christianity was a Jewish religion, and no foreigner could join unless he promised to keep their religious laws. That in the letter Paul had read to them from James, he agreed to the Jewish law about not eating flesh that was strangled, or food with blood in it, or meat that had been put before idols. Jesus was circumcised, and was a son of the law. Who was this man Paul? When the apostles were defending Christianity, he was a Jewish rabbi, who went from place to place persecuting Christians, and making them curse the name of Jesus. The apostles who lived with Jesus were the only apostles. Paul was not an apostle, for he had never heard or seen Jesus. All that he learned of Christianity was got from them at Jerusalem. He was not sent

out by the apostles, and had no power or right to teach what they did not approve of. He was a man of very common appearance, too, and a poor speaker, who did not deserve to be listened to.

Half truths and half lies are an awkward tangle, and it was a web of this kind that these spider Pharisees wove wherever they went. They also lived with Paul's converts, and at their expense, while they taught them Jewish Christianity; and coming with a show of authority from Jerusalem, they made a great impression. They may even have thought they were doing a great work in saving men from Paul's kind of Christianity, as they strove in his absence to turn his congregations into Jewish synagogues.

Paul was grieved beyond words at the deception these men had played upon him. He had fought them in Jerusalem and Antioch, and he would have to follow and fight them still. The future of Christianity depended upon it, and there was no use going with complaints to Jerusalem. He must be free if he was to set Christianity free.

"O Foolish Galatians!"

ANTIOCH: AGED 50-60.

THESE Pharisee Christians who were attacking Paul were not like Peter, good men to be argued with. They were bad men, to be followed, their teaching exposed, their conduct attacked; for they wished to put Jesus in the background, and the Jewish law in front. But with Paul, Jesus was everything, and men must know that the one was Christianity, the other Judaism. He settled that with himself twenty years ago—Jesus or the Jewish law, freedom or fetters—and there was no middle course. Henceforth he would look at it as a foreigner, a Greek, a Roman, or a Briton, to whom the Jewish laws and customs were unknown.

Twenty years ago was the turning-point in his life. Now had come the turning-point of Christianity. Was it to be Jewish, or was it to be universal? With mind clear, illuminated from on high, he wrote down his thoughts, and the Christianity which we follow in England to-day is Christ as seen and explained by Paul in his priceless letter to the Galatian Christians. He did not know how long it might be before he could visit them, and so he wrote a proclamation to be read in their congregations, to prepare them for his coming.

You will only get here the business outline of this great letter, leaving over portions for the occasions when he spoke to the Christians of Galatia face to face. The whole letter you will read in your Bible. At first he does not argue, but uses strong words—vehement, sarcastic, tender; then he pleads in something of his old rabbinic style of discussion. The attack was upon him alone, and he joins no one in his defence. His enemies said everywhere that he was not an apostle—that is, not one sent out to preach—and the first sentence contains his answer,—

“Paul, an apostle (not one made by men, nor through men, but through Jesus the Christ, and God the Father), and all the Christians with me at Antioch, join in wishing the grace and peace of God to be upon all the Christians of Galatia.”

He is astonished that they should have so soon turned away after other teaching; for the gospel which he taught them was not his own, but the gospel of Jesus the Christ. He tells them the story of how he came to be a teacher of Christianity, and of the discussions which he had with Peter and the other apostles about circumcision and the law, in which it was agreed that they were unnecessary. They were foolish Galatians for leaving the spiritual teaching about Jesus which he taught them for the lifeless, legal teaching of these Pharisee Christians. Faith in Jesus was Christianity, not obedience to Jewish laws. Having been made free by Jesus, why should they wish to entangle themselves in the bondage of the Jewish law? They were running well in the Christian race: why should they turn aside now?

The letter is like a spoken address, and was dictated probably to his young friend Timothy, sitting under the shade of broad-leaved vines, trained over the flat house roof, so as to make a retired bower of the coolest; for it was early summer, and the little grapes were hanging in green bunches. The letter was written, corrected, and copied, and Paul took the reed pen to sign; but his friends saw that he was taking a long time, and when he finished, this was what he had written, in large black letters:—

“See with what large letters I write to you with mine own hand. They who wish to make a show would compel you to be circumcised, that they and you may not be persecuted for Jesus’ sake. But they are hypocrites: for although they are circumcised, they do not keep the Jewish law; but they wish to have you circumcised, that they may boast of having won you over. Far be it from me to glory in anything but Jesus. Through His Spirit all worldly glory is as dead to me, and I to it. Being circumcised or not being circumcised matters nothing; but a life

made new by the Spirit of Jesus is everything. May peace and mercy be upon as many as are guided by this rule, for they are the true people of God. After this let no man trouble me with these questions: for like a slave I bear about on my body the marks I have received for Jesus' sake. Brothers, may the grace of Jesus be with you."

And thus once for all he wrote down the position of Christianity towards Judaism. They were not the same thing grown larger. Jewish Christianity said that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah, and all who believed it must receive the mark, and obey the Jewish religious law. And so they sought to weld Jesus and the Christians into the great body of the Jewish Church, keeping up the system of laws, rules, and traditions as the chief thing, and welcoming Jesus as One who obeyed and supported them. But Paul said, "No; He denounced your rules, and you crucified Him. There is another and a better way than obedience to the Jewish law: the way of faith in Jesus, and following Him." It was system against Saviour, theory against example, dead rules against a living life. The rules of men must stand aside, that the living example of God may prevail. In making this clear, Paul diverted the stream, turning it into ever-broadening channels.

Breaking the First Thread.

ANTIOCH: AGED 50-60.

A MESSENGER carried the letter to the Christians of Galatia, to read it in every congregation; and it would create a good deal of alarm, especially when he said that Paul was also coming. But Paul was going first to Ephesus, as promised, where they had received him so well; and this time his journey would be by land, as he had so many places to visit in following up the track of the false Christians. It was now early summer, and the dusty roads were busy with travellers, merchants, soldiers going from place to place, and bands of chained slaves also. The fields were still green, although the blossoms of cream and crimson had faded from tree and bush, but by the streams in the shaded clefts of the rocks the marigolds tossed their golden discs and the narcissus spread white wings.

After staying a little longer at Antioch, Paul felt that the season for travelling was passing, and that he must leave them. We may be certain that the Christians were sorry to lose him

so soon, for he was going on a journey of more than five hundred miles to the capital of Asia, over mountains, valleys, and rivers, by lonely and dangerous roads. And we may be sure that they had a farewell meeting in the night to pray for him and his companions, and it is probable that Timothy went with him. They did not know, these men of Antioch, that they would never hear Paul's voice again; for the Jew in the brown cloak would not return. What did he say, as he faced that crowd of men and women, not sitting with bowed heads, as in a synagogue, but with eyes fixed on his face? He would speak to them just as he wrote. This is from one of his letters, in which he speaks of the saying of Jesus at Capernaum, that nothing which a man eats can make him good or bad, for that was denied by the false Jews:—

“Receive men into the congregation who are weak in faith, but not to dispute with them. For one man has faith to eat every kind of food: another, who is weak, will eat herbs only. But let them not despise each other because of that: for God has received them both. Who are you, to judge another man? To his own God he shall stand or fall. One man thinks one day better than another, and another man thinks all days are alike. Every man should be satisfied of this in his own mind; for whoever keeps one day, does it for the sake of God. The man who eats any kind of food, and the man who does not, both do it for the sake of God, giving Him thanks. We cannot live or die for ourselves alone, but unto God: for whether we live or die, we are His. Jesus died, and lived again, that He might be the Lord of the dead and the living. Why do you judge your brother Christian, and why do you despise him? We shall stand to be judged of God, and each of us will have to give an account of himself.

“Therefore let us no more judge each other; but rather be careful that no one puts a snare in his neighbour's way, or a thing to fall over. I know, and am satisfied in Jesus, that no food is unclean: but if any man thinks it is, to him it becomes unclean. If you grieve your neighbour by eating certain meat, you are not treating him lovingly. Do not injure, with eating thy meat, one for whom Jesus died. Let not your good life be spoken against: for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking; but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit of God. He that serves Jesus in such things will be pleasing to God, and liked of men.

“Follow after the things which make for peace, and by which we may do good to one another; and do not overthrow the work of God for the sake of meat. All food is clean; but it is not right to give offence to another by our eating. It is neither good

to eat flesh, drink wine, nor do anything which causes your neighbour to do wrong. Your faith is a thing between yourself and God. Happy is he who does not feel any blame in himself; but he who has doubts is to be blamed if he eats, because he thinks he is doing wrong. Whatever is not of faith is of evil."

With laying on of hands, these men of Antioch would pray for a blessing upon Paul and his companions; and then the meeting would break up, many accompanying them a part of their way at daybreak. They were rich, and would see them mounted on good asses, and well provided with cloaks and strong sandals, and with changes of clothing in a sack, and wine and oil in skins, and some dried corn, flour, and fruit. Their rolls of books, too, would be wrapped in a haircloth cover; nor would they be without a tent, perhaps of Paul's own making, and ropes and tent-sticks to put it up. So that their asses would be well laden as they rode out by the north gate of the city, surrounded by a company of Christians, with garments of red and yellow and bright blue, some weeping, and all seeking to embrace the travellers before they turned away. Well may they look after the brave figure in the brown cloak until he goes round a turn of the road, for they will never see him again. As he disappears, a thread breaks in his web of life.

Over the Black Mountains.

ANTIOCH: AGED 50-60.

WALKING by his ass's head, the rope in his hand, his grey eyes shaded by a striped kerchief of black and yellow, Paul looks over the yellow plain of Antioch to the blue hills beyond. He is going for the third time through the Cilician gates to Derbe, and we have now reached that pathetic point in his life, as it is in the life of all of us, when scenes are being visited and farewells taken for the last time. He had laboured long in Syria, Galatia, and Asia, raising up many who would carry on the work, and he was about to pass through them once more, and root out the tares that his enemies had sown in his fields of wheat; but he was looking towards things beyond. Rome, the capital of the world, was drawing him, and visions of Rome were before his eyes.

At dawn he had come out through the low archway of the city gate, amid a crush of camels, horses, asses, mules, all laden for a journey, with their drivers shouting round them, for their road

was along the great Roman highway through the country. He knew it well, for it was only three years since he and Silas went together on the same journey to visit the congregations. Over the narrow Orontes bridge, along by the blue lake, and on through Syria they rode, and up into the wild gorges that led to the Syrian gates, the only pass in the Amanus Mountains, and down the gorges again on the other side, the Taurus Mountains behind Tarsus kindling into flame each evening as the sun went down. Crossing the plains of Cilicia, through familiar towns, and clattering over stone bridges which he had so often crossed as a boy, in about a week's time they were riding into Tarsus.

There they would rest, for there were friends of his boyhood still glad to see the grey-haired traveller whose love for Jesus kept him moving in ever-widening circles. Here again were the familiar streets, houses, gardens, sparkling river fed by the melting snows among the mist-shrouded mountains, the synagogue where he first worshipped, the school where he learned to read, the house where he was born. Again he would go to the dark little synagogue, where, as an earnest boy, he stood to have the phylacteries bound on his arm by the old rabbi, who no longer sat before the purple curtain, for other men were there. What he said to them would be the thoughts of his letters in different words:—

“For we know that if the temple of our body be dissolved, we have another from God, a house not made with hands, enduring in the heavens. We long to be clothed of God with the raiment of heaven, if so be that we shall be found worthy. For indeed we groan under burdens, wishing that our mortal bodies might be changed into life everlasting. And God prepares us for this change by giving us of His Spirit. Be of good courage, knowing that, while we are here, we are absent from Him, and we would rather leave this life and be at home with Him. But we must make it our aim, wherever we are, to please Him. For all that we do must be made known before the judgment seat of the Christ; that each may receive the reward for the things done in this life, according to what we have done, whether good or bad.”

Again he bade farewell to his friends in the city of which he was proud; and as he rode up the familiar way by the river, over which the bare feet of the boy had so often sped, another thread breaks of his life-web, for he will never be there again. They were then riding towards the wild path into the mountains up which he had often toiled, leading his father's laden asses, and he looked back for the last time upon the winding river and white-walled town. Henceforth his feet will touch far-distant roads, and

tread the streets of strange cities, but never the streets of Tarsus. His heart is strong, for he does not know it, as he turns and rides on.

Stumbling, slipping, struggling up the narrow path above the roaring torrent, through the dark pass of the dread Cilician gates, that marked the boundary between the provinces of Cilicia and Cappadocia, they toiled in midsummer heat so great that they would have to rest for hours at mid-day. Again they followed the dusty caravan road down to the plains, and over the boundary line of the kingdom of Antiochus, and into the province of Galatia; and a few hours' riding would bring them to Derbe, where they had many friends. It was just three years since Silas and he read James's letter to them, and only a few months ago they had heard Paul's letter, and now had come the man himself. The false Jews were not there, for we hear of no discussion or disputing, and the Christians would be glad to see Paul, in his brown cloak, who had come so far to set their minds at rest.

" I am Astonished ! "

DERBE : AGED 50—60.

THE men of Derbe had always been friendly, and Paul would have no difficulty in showing them that the false Christians from Jerusalem had not told the truth, and that what he taught them was the true gospel of Jesus. He would explain to them more fully what he said in his letter, of which the following is a part. We can picture the gathering of men and women in bright foreign clothing—for very few of them would be Jews—as they sat listening to the Jew, who spoke with head covered, glowing eyes, and deep, earnest voice, defending himself and his teaching from the attacks and falsehoods of his own countrymen :—

"I am astonished that you should have so quickly turned away from what I taught you in the name of Jesus, turning to a thing which is not a gospel. The men who trouble you are not wishing to do you good, but only to spoil the true gospel of Jesus. If I, or we, or an angel from heaven, were to tell you anything different from what we have already taught you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again, If any man should preach to you any other gospel than that which you have received from us, let him be accursed. Do I try to please men,

or God? If I tried to please men, I should not be a true servant of Jesus.

“I tell you, brothers, that the gospel I preached to you was not a gospel of men. For I did not receive it from men, nor was I taught by men: it was made known to me by Jesus the Christ. You have been told about my past life, when I believed in the Jews’ religion; how that beyond all bounds I persecuted the followers of Jesus, and made havoc among them; and that I advanced in that religion ahead of many of my countrymen of my own age, for I was much more zealous for the traditions of the rabbis. But when it pleased God to make known His Son in me, and that I should preach Jesus among foreign nations, I did not confer with men: I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and afterwards returned to Damascus.

“Three years after that I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and stayed with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles, excepting James, the Lord’s brother. Then I went to the provinces of Syria and Cilicia; and my face was still unknown among the Christians of Judea. All that they knew about me was, that the man who once persecuted them was now preaching the gospel of which he had once made havoc. And they praised God because of me.

“Fourteen years afterwards I went again to Jerusalem, guided by God, and taking Barnabas and Titus with me. And I privately laid before the chief Christians of repute the gospel which I was preaching among foreigners, lest by any means I should be teaching, or had taught, in vain. But there were false Christians there, who had been secretly brought into the congregation at Jerusalem, coming secretly to spy out the liberty which we have in Jesus the Christ, that they might bring us back into the bondage of the Jewish law; and they urged that all foreigners should be circumcised. But we would not give way to them, nor be ruled by them, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel which we taught you might continue. And not even Titus the Greek, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised.

“But from those who were reputed to be something in Jerusalem—whatever they were, it matters not to me, for God accepts no man’s person—from them, I say, nothing was imparted to me. But, on the contrary, when they saw that God had entrusted me with the gospel of uncircumcision amongst foreigners, just as Peter was entrusted with the gospel of circumcision amongst the Jews, and when they saw the grace that was given to me, James, Peter, and John, who are the acknowledged pillars of the congregation,

gave to Barnabas and myself the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go and preach to foreigners, and they to Jews. Only they asked that we should remember the poor among them in Jerusalem; which thing I was anxious to do. God, who made Peter the apostle of Jews who believed in circumcision, made me also the apostle of foreigners.

“Afterwards, when Peter came to Antioch, I resisted him to his face, for he was guilty. He used to eat at the table with the men of Antioch, until certain men, from James at Jerusalem, came to the city; and then he drew back, and separated himself, being afraid of these men, who belonged to the party of circumcision. The rest of the Jewish Christians at Antioch dissembled and did the same, so that even Barnabas was carried away with them. But when I saw that they were not behaving uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, If you, being a Jew, live like a foreigner, and not like a Jew, why would you compel foreigners to live like Jews? We who have been born Jews, and not foreigners, know that a man is not made just by obeying the Jewish law, but only through faith in Jesus the Christ; and we Jews have believed on Jesus, that we may be made just by faith in Him.”

One of Jesus' Sayings.

DERBE: AGED 50-60.

AFTER the men of Derbe heard of Paul's former successful struggle on behalf of foreign Christians with those very men who fled on his approach, he would have no difficulty in getting them to stand true to what they had at first been taught; and now he bade them make a collection every Sabbath for the poor Christians of Jerusalem, and left them, to hasten on.

From Derbe they rode along the dry salt marshes and over the hills towards Timothy's home at Lystra, sleeping in a shepherd's tent, or hut of dry mud, and living on milk and cakes of coarse flour. There they would be expected; and meeting with the Christians, he exposed the false teaching of his enemies, and explained his letter, of which this is another part:—

“O foolish Galatians, before whom I openly set forth Jesus crucified, who has bewitched you? I would like to know this from you, Did you receive the Spirit of Jesus by hearing the gospel of faith in Him, or by obeying the Jewish religious law?

Are you so foolish as to think that, having begun your higher life in the Spirit of Jesus, you are going to perfect it through obedience to the Jewish law? Have you suffered so many persecutions as Christians for nothing? Is the Spirit of Jesus given to you by God for keeping the Jewish law, or because you believe in the truth which I taught you? All who undertake to obey the Jewish law are liable to the curse written in the book of Deuteronomy, which says, Cursed is every one who does not continue to keep and to do all the things which are written in the book of the law. Jesus has redeemed us from this curse of the law, having become cursed for us: for it is also written in Deuteronomy, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. And He died, that foreigners might share the blessing, and receive His promised Spirit through faith.

“The Jewish law has been as a teacher to bring us to the Christ, that we may be saved by faith in Him; but now that this faith has come, we are under the teacher no longer. You are all sons of God through faith in Jesus the Christ: for as many of you as were baptized in His name did receive Him. In Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, man nor woman: you are all one in Him. And if you are His, then you are children of Abraham, and heirs of the Jewish promises.

“When the time came, God sent His Son, the child of a woman, born under the Jewish law, that we might become sons of God. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of Jesus into your hearts, that you may call Him Father. You are therefore no more slaves, but sons and heirs through God. At one time you did not know God, and were the slaves of idols, which are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, and to be known of Him, why would you turn back again to these weak and beggarly things, wishing to be in bondage again to them? You keep days, and months, and times, and years. I am indeed afraid of you, lest my labour upon you has by any means been all in vain.”

It is likely that they would stay some time at each of these cities, until Paul felt that he had firmly re-established the congregation; and at Lystra they would spend a longer time, because of Timothy, who would travel on with them. And Paul met his mother and grandmother there, who were so well learned in the Bible that he told Timothy he was fortunate in having been taught by such good people.

Leaving Lystra in the early morning, when the dew lay like hoar frost on the grass, to rise in a mist before the sun, they rode over the hills and across the wide plains towards Iconium, amid

its gardens and orchards, where the apples and olives, the red cherries and oranges, were already twinkling amid leaves kept green by water from the river. They had no fear of attack, as they rode through the low arch in the city walls; for they would not speak in synagogue or street, but to the Christians only. They were coming to strengthen the Christians, and found them ready to receive them, and eager to hear more about Paul's strange and wonderful letter. What he said, as he spoke scathingly of the Pharisee Christians, who had travelled so far and done so much to spoil his work, we do not know; but this is more of the letter, which he would explain to them, as they sat in dim lamp-light with the door shut:—

“See! I Paul say unto you, that if you become circumcised, Jesus will do you no good. Yes, I declare again to every man who becomes circumcised, that he becomes bound to keep the whole Jewish religious law; and you who wish to be made just by keeping that law have fallen away from the grace of Jesus, and are cut off from the Christ. But we through His Spirit, and by faith in Him, wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Jesus neither being circumcised or not being circumcised is of any use, but only faith in Him working through love. You were doing well; who hindered you, that you should not obey the truth? The advice came not from God who called you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. But I have confidence in you in God, that you will not think differently from me. He who is troubling you will receive his judgment, whoever he be. If, as they say, I still preach circumcision, why am I thus persecuted? I wish that they who trouble you would cut themselves off.”

In this passage he refers to another of the sayings of Jesus, uttered when sailing in Peter's boat, as He warned His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, whose evil words, if they listened to them, would soon make them all bad.

A Dangerous Bridle Road.

ICONIUM: AGED 50—60.

TH**ERE** were no Pharisee Jews to dispute with Paul as he explained to the Christians of Iconium the glorious gospel of the life, death, and rising of Jesus; and in a few days he had undone the work of his enemies, for the Christians of Iconium preferred the freedom of faith to the slavery of Jewish laws and rules.

Again he rode out by the low archway of the city gate, and through the gardens and vineyards of Iconium at their loveliest, with leaves still cool and green, and young fruit hanging on the branches. Riding, camping, cooking, keeping a look-out for robbers and wild animals, in a few days they came to the paved Roman road, where horses galloped past them, and the laden camels of the merchants moved with soft feet in long strings; and in about a week they were toiling up towards Pisidian Antioch, at the foot of the Sultan Mountains.

This was his fourth visit to this military city in the hills, to which Barnabas brought him, a sick and weary man, five years before; and it would be his last, for his work in Galatia was done, and well done. What did he say to the men, who were not surprised to see again the travelling Jew in the brown cloak, before riding on across Asia? In his letter he spoke of their kindness when he was a stranger and sick, and he would not be silent about that, as he stood among them strong and well, in the large room with slits for windows, through which the white sunlight of heaven streamed over the heads of listening Christians, for his letter would still be his subject.

"I beseech you, brothers, be as I am. You would not wrong me, but you know that it was through being ill that I first preached the gospel to you; and that though you were tempted to despise and reject me because of my frailty, you did not, but received me as if I had been an angel of God, or Jesus Himself. Where now is your gratitude? For I say that, if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. Am I your enemy now, because I deal truthfully with you? These men who have come among you so zealously, seek you for no good; nay, they wish to shut you out of the good way of Jesus, that you may follow them. But it is right always to follow in the good way, and not only when I am with you. My little children, of whom I am again anxious that Jesus should be in you, I would like to change my voice from blame to praise; but I am perplexed about you.

"Tell me, you who wish to be under the Jewish law, do you understand what it means? We are not the children of slaves, but of freedom; for Jesus has set us free. Stand fast therefore in your freedom, and be not entangled again in any yoke of slavery."

He had visited the towns of Galatia, and would stop at other places by the way. It was now hot midsummer, when the people were flying from the fever plains by the sea to the healthy mountains, and he did not go down to the cities of Perga and Attalia. This was his third journey through these mountainous

districts, amid the snow wreaths of winter and dazzling suns of summer, and he was about to leave them and break one more life-thread, for he would not return. The people of distant Ephesus were waiting for him, and he must travel on, for they were thirsting for the water of life.

The leaves were fluttering yellow upon the plane trees, and russet upon the oak and chestnut, by streams whose channels were a bed of hot stones, where the golden lizard basked and the green snake coiled. Patches of grey grass were on the hills, and yellow shrub among the wastes of black and white rock; and the horse roads were hot to the foot, for among these mountains the cold of winter was biting and long, and the heat of mid-summer scalding and blinding among the white stones.

Bidding farewell to their friends of the city, Paul rode out again in the early morning from narrow streets into the wind-swept country. They were at first upon the Roman road along which they began their long ride to Troy two years before; and they crossed the great caravan road from the high country, a winding ribbon all the way, past lakes and cities, down to Ephesus by the sea. But they did not follow it. They took instead a shorter, higher, and quieter road for horses through the hills of the province of Asia, in a more direct line to the distant city; but why the busy road was avoided we do not know. Perhaps Paul did not yet feel free to proclaim the gospel as he passed through Asia.

The distance from Pisidian Antioch to Ephesus by this bridle road was about a fourteen-days ride. They were leaving the highest mountains, and while the road went up and down as they climbed bare hills and went through wooded valleys, it was ever getting lower, for they were riding towards the sea; and if they travelled with a caravan of merchants or packmen, they would get on very slowly, with long rests in the hot part of the day.

In autumn the dews at night are heavy enough to soak through a tent-cover, and in the moonlight the rocks stand out on the hillsides as clear as day, with deep black shadows. But they would neither travel at night nor sleep in tents. The lonely road was infested with robbers, who lived in the caves in the hills, and in the deep wooded gorges, whence they watched for careless travellers; for they did no work, and lived by robbing strangers and fighting each other. They would sleep night after night in the bare but welcome shelter of the house for strangers in the villages, where they would get water without having to go to the river, and walls to protect them, without having to keep up blazing fires to scare the wolves and leopards; and there, too, they would get eggs and cakes, milk and cheese to buy, if they

had any money. Danger from robbers and wild beasts was the great dread of travellers; and these shelters for strangers, though rough and dirty, would be most welcome places to Paul and his companions at the end of each long, weary day.

A Wonder of the World.

EPHESUS : AGED 50—60.

THERE were many streams to cross, and although it was the dry season, they would still be troublesome; for there were few bridges by this bridle path, and the travellers would often have to swim their asses across rivers, and not always without danger. These streams were the branches of the great Meander, deep, rapid, and red, that flowed through the hills, past towns and villages, woods and castles, for two hundred miles, and the old caravan road followed it for miles. From the Meander valley, Paul and his companions would ride over the hills to higher country, where the river Cayster begins as a little stream that winds for seventy miles between high hills, until it flows past Ephesus on the plain, and into the blue gulf there. At the end of this huge Cayster valley are the cities of Smyrna and Ephesus, forty miles apart, and the road between them, which was then one of the busiest, is now a railway.

Riding down the broad valley, they saw the russet pomegranates in the trees, and dark olives; and the red stubble fields round the mud and stone huts showed that the country people were farmers more than shepherds. On the terraced hillsides, women, in dresses of red and yellow, were busy among the golden vines, plucking the grapes of purple and green; for it was the time of year for making oil and wine, and for drying the raisins, figs, and dates.

They saw the silver line of the river winding in the haze below them, and could tell that they were getting near to the great city. Strings of laden camels, asses, and horses were moving slowly along in the heat, laden with fruit, oil, corn, and wine for the ships in the harbour, and led by a dusky-faced countryman; and women, with strings of brass coins gleaming in their black hair, walked cheerfully beside them, with loose shoes on their bare feet, and red-cheeked children tied on their backs.

At the end of the mountain range they saw the blue bay of Ephesus sparkling in the sunshine, and the island of Samos, past

which Paul had sailed six months before. A few hours more and they saw the great city, still far beneath them, with its white buildings, and harbour crowded with ships. There stood Diana's temple, the wonder of the world, with walls and pillars of snowy marble, and shining roof. As Paul rode down the bridle path overlooking the vast city, he saw a fruitful plain spreading for about five miles round it, through which the river coiled—a plain bounded by the blue sea and by wooded hills. In the midst rose Mount Coressus, a mass of marble, the source of all the snowy buildings; nearer him were the masts of the ships in the outer and inner harbours; and farther off, the river, gleaming for four miles towards the sea.

The city walls were four miles round, and there he saw the racecourse, with tiers of stone seats, the ruins of which are still there. Across the city, at the foot of Mount Prion, was the meeting-place for the people, a vast theatre with seats for fifty thousand, so that one wonders if those on the highest seats could see, and whether they could hear. Among the woods on the surrounding hills were the white pillars of more temples, palaces, and houses of the wealthy, with parks and pleasure-grounds, streams, ponds, and gardens; for Ephesus was one of the richest of cities.

Between the mountains and the sea lay the proud city that Paul, in his brown cloak, had come to conquer in the name of Jesus of the little village of Nazareth. Great was man's power to rear temples and carve images, but the power of God was greater. And he rode on through the massive Smyrna gate, and along the paved streets, crowded with men of all nations, seeking his way to the Jews' part of the city, near the harbour, where the synagogue was, with the vine and grapes carved over the door. The people saw a grey-haired Jew, with dusky face and grey eyes, wearing a brown cloak and worn sandals, and stooping somewhat, as, staff in hand, he led his weary ass along their city street; but they did not know that long after their deep harbour had been silted up with sand, their city strewn along the plain, and the huge temple itself sunk out of sight, the letter which he wrote on feeble paper to certain despised Christians in that city would be one of the treasures of the world, and more enduring than their graven marbles.

Apollos the Egyptian Jew.

EPHESUS: AGED 50-60.

AQUILA the weaver and his wife Priscilla were still at Ephesus, and they told Paul of a Jew called Apollos, who had been there, speaking with great power in the synagogue about Jesus, and doing much good, and he came neither from Jerusalem nor from Antioch. He was born in the town of Alexandria, at the mouth of the broad flowing Nile, a fine-looking, dark-featured man. Alexandria was a great trading city, containing thousands of Jews, many of them wealthy merchants, who built a splendid temple of their own, and also sent temple money every year to Jerusalem in sacks heavy with coins. They were learned, and had schools and colleges where their sons were taught, and their views were so broad that they had a synagogue of their own in Jerusalem. They did a thing for which they were hated by the Jerusalem Jews, but which did more to spread the knowledge of God and the Bible throughout the world than all the work of the Jerusalem rabbis—they translated the Bible from Hebrew into Greek. It was done three hundred years before Jesus was born, and is called "The Translation of the Seventy," because seventy men helped to do it; and Jesus read it, and Paul too, and many scholars of other nations who knew Greek but not Hebrew read it also.

Like Paul, Apollos was a man of education, well learned in the Bible, an eloquent speaker, and a powerful debater. He heard of John the Baptist, who stood by the fords of Jordan, where the pilgrims passed, calling upon them to repent and be baptized, for the Messiah was coming. He may even have seen the cousin of Jesus standing there in his raiment of camel's hair and leather belt, and he believed his message and became one of his followers. To him Jesus was the Messiah and Saviour of whom John and the Bible spoke, and what he knew he must tell to others. And so this dark-faced Jew of Egypt cast his cloak about him, and, with a stout stick in his hand, went forth to proclaim the gospel of Jesus the Christ, with which his great heart was full.

He had never seen Jesus, nor talked with the apostles, nor heard Paul speak, but he had got fragments from others; and his heart was on fire to spread the truth amongst his countrymen in foreign cities. Like Paul, he knew about ships, for those of his native city were the most famous in the world for their size and

speed, carrying the golden grain of Egypt into every river where there was a large city to be fed; and in the course of his travels he came to Ephesus, five hundred miles across the sea from Egypt. He spoke boldly to his countrymen in the synagogue, proving that Jesus was the Messiah, and that they must repent and be baptized, as John the Baptist had said. John being the son of a priest, the Jews never hated him as they did Jesus, and Apollos found them willing to accept his teaching, and he became a leading speaker in their synagogue.

Aquila and Priscilla, who were teaching Christianity and weaving their cloth, found him at work, as they found Paul at Corinth, and saw that this gifted, earnest man did not know enough. They spoke to him, and he went home and lived with them, that he might learn more about Jesus and the new way. They told him that John's way of baptizing had passed away when Jesus came, and that he should baptize in the name of Jesus. And day after day this scholar and orator sat beside the tentmaker and his wife, as they clipped and sewed for their daily bread and told him all they knew; and when he spoke again in the synagogue his teaching was closer to Paul's, though not the same, and he made many friends.

Hearing from the weaver and his wife of the congregation Paul had formed at Corinth, he crossed the Ægean Sea in a trading-boat with a letter from Aquila, and was warmly welcomed by the Christians. There he greatly helped and encouraged them; and turning to the synagogue Jews, he attacked them publicly, with great eloquence, proving from the Bible that Jesus was the Christ, and refuting their objections.

And thus while Pharisee Jews from Jerusalem were going about doing their best to injure Paul's work in foreign cities, another and a nobler Jew from Africa was eloquently supporting a man whom he had never seen, but of whom he heard great things. And when Paul arrived in Ephesus he found that a strong man had been at work preparing the city. Aquila and Priscilla gathered together a number of Christians; and he found the Jews still willing that he should come and speak about Jesus in their synagogue.

When Apollos baptized, he used the words of John the Baptist, but this did not satisfy Paul; and about twelve men asked to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and he baptized them again. It is not easy to see why Paul should do over again what Apollos did, but we are told that when Paul put his hands on their heads "they spoke with tongues and prophesied," the Holy Spirit having come to them. They felt a

desire to live after the Holy Spirit of Jesus, and tell to others what they knew of Him, and beyond that we do not know.

Weaving and Preaching.

EPHESUS: AGED 50-60.

THE paths of Paul and Apollos crossed for the first time at Ephesus, but the men did not meet until later; and Apollos maintained his independence. He did not become Paul's travelling companion, or a disciple of his, but, on the contrary, he would not do what he asked him; yet Paul regarded him with great friendliness.

Paul began his work by making the synagogue his chief place of teaching, speaking openly of Jesus, and reasoning that the kingdom of God was not to be for Jews only. We have no record of his speeches in the dim synagogue with the star-like lamp, where his countrymen sat with bowed heads; but this is what he wrote not long afterwards to the people of Corinth:—

“Knowing the fear of God, I persuade men; but I am known of God, and I hope in your consciences also. I am not praising myself, but I wish you to have cause to rejoice because of me, that you may have an answer to them who glory in appearance, but not inwardly. For whether I am out of my mind, it is for God: or of a sober mind, it is for you. The love of Jesus compels me to speak; for I consider that Jesus having died for all, it is as if all men had died to sin. Jesus died for all, that they who live in Him should not live selfishly for themselves, but for Him who for their sakes died and rose again. Therefore I think of no man as a man; and even though we have known Jesus as a man, we know Him thus no more. If any man is in Jesus, he becomes a new creature: the things of his old life have passed away, and all has become new. Everything is of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus, and given us the gospel of love to preach: which is this, that God is in Jesus, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting men's sins against them.”

He lived again with Aquila and his wife in the Jews' part of the city, near the harbour, enjoying the rights of citizens; for in that great city Jews had special privileges. They worked hard together during the day, and sometimes all through the night, spinning and weaving the thick waterproof cloth for tent-covers,

sacks, and sailors' blouses, and selling it among the ships in the inner and outer harbour, to keep themselves independent.

Beside the harbour were large stores for grain, flour, oil, wine, and warehouses where sacks were wanted, and a broad paved street led up to the market-place in the centre of the city, famous for its size and beauty, surrounded with sheltered walks, and, like the market at Athens, peopled with statues of great men. Through the high stone arch came corn from Egypt, glass and brass from Sidon, silk and dyed cloths from Tyre, wine and fruit from Cyprus, oil, hides, horses, slaves, jewellery from beyond the green hills, as well as from over the sea. There the rich merchants of the city had their stalls, and the cattle-dealers and traders from all parts of Asia came thither to sell their goods, and get copper coins of Ephesus, with the head of the Roman emperor on one side and the temple of Diana on the other. And in the slaves' corner were youths and girls, men, women, and children, standing in hundreds with their feet chalked, as a sign that they were for sale; for it was one of the largest slave markets in the world. There, too, were the stalls of the silversmiths and carvers, who made models of the temple in silver and brass, marble and lava, porcelain, clay, and wood, and sold them in large numbers to the strangers.

The people loved bright dresses, and wore thin robes in all shades of blue and green, yellow and red, and liked to watch the jugglers and tumblers in the street, and listen to stories of cheats and mountebanks, and to slaves singing; for they liked dancing and music, but were not so debased as the Corinthians.

They were very proud of their city, and boasted of the beautiful buildings on Mount Prion, and of their theatre, the largest in the world, cut out of the side of the hill, where the people sat in thousands with broad hats and bright sunshades, as they watched the performance under the open sky. They were proud, too, of their racecourse, and the magnificent street lined with statues, and shaded with green trees; of their inner harbour and canal; of their water supply, coming like a river on stone arches from the hills; and of their palaces and temples. But most of all they were proud of the great temple of Diana, that could be seen from Mount Coressus, covering acres of the finest of the land outside the city wall to the east, and joined to it by a fine colonnade of pillars.

Black Diana.

EPHESUS : AGED 50—60.

THE people worshipped idols, and liked to have their city called "The Temple Keeper," for there had been a great temple of Diana on the same spot for over a thousand years. Four hundred years before Paul's visit, when Alexander the Great was born, the temple was burned in a night. But the men of Asia sent gold and silver, ladies sent their jewels, men their rings, and a new temple, the finest of them all, designed by Dinocrates, a Macedonian, was built, which Paul saw.

Vast woods surrounded it, of oak, cypress, poplar, plane tree, myrtle, bay, and many others, encircled with a wall, and called a sanctuary, just as Westminster and Holyrood used to be called. For when the building was finished, a Persian prince shot an arrow from the highest tower, saying that whoever came within that distance of Diana's temple should be free from pursuit. But they who needed protection most—the slaves—were not allowed to shelter there, and that takes away from the fine-sounding words of the Persian prince.

In the midst of these dense trees, and surrounded by another wall, stood this vast white temple, with double rows of dazzling pillars supporting a low, broad roof rising to a ridge in the middle. It is not likely that Paul ever entered this huge house of the idol Diana, but all who came had first to go up the fourteen broad marble steps that went all round the building, and then they reached the great pillars, carved round the base with full-sized figures of men and women. Just as at Jerusalem, the worshipper had to wash and go barefooted through the pillars before passing the great doors of carved cypress wood and entering the outer hall. There he looked round upon statues of gold, and silver, and brass, and marble of every hue, from snow white to deep red, green, and blue, the work of the world's best sculptors. The chief statue was one in gold of Artemidorus, who went to Rome to plead for the great temple. Pictures, too, were on the walls; but the painting of "Alexander the Great Grasping a Thunderbolt" was not so fine as his statue in the open square.

In the temple was the secret chamber of the precious image. The ceiling was of gilded cedar, supported on pillars of green jasper (now in Constantinople); the walls were hung with presents from kings and princes; and there was a beautiful altar, the work of Praxiteles, behind which, as at Jerusalem, was a curtain of

purple and embroidery, hanging from the roof down to the coloured pavement. The priests and priestesses took good care that no worshipper ever got behind that thick curtain to see the rough wooden figure of a woman kept there, decked like a child's doll with coloured ribbons and white robes. It needed washing more than ribbons, for it was so black that it could not be told whether it was made of dark vine, dusky cedar, or black ebony, and no one dared cut it to see. Strange to say, they had women priests to dress this black doll; and they said it fell from the stars, and was very sacred on that account, though why they should think so is not easy to see. When copies of this image were made, it was of a very pretty woman with a little castle upon her wavy hair, her limbs wound round with a light skirt figured all over with animals and strange writing, and between her feet a honey-bee; for they said the bee was sacred to Diana, just as the cat and the fox were sacred in Egypt. But behind this idol's chamber was by far the most important place, for it was the great treasure-house where the temple riches were kept; and all over Asia the people thought this dark room was the safest bank in the world, and kings thought it was a good place to plunder.

A stair of vine-wood let up to the broad roof of the temple, and those who went up saw the corner whence the sanctuary arrow was shot, and looked abroad on the swaying tops of green trees planted so densely in the temple woods as almost to hide the paths and white statues. They looked down, too, upon the crowded houses of the city, and over distant gardens and orchards, fields and meadows, until their eyes rested on the soft outlines of hills clothed in woods, over which the rain-clouds drifted and the shadows ran.

In the School of Tyrannus.

EPHESUS : AGED 50-60.

PAUL came to Ephesus in the autumn, when leaves of crimson, and russet, and grey were falling to the ground, and the ruddy fruit was being plucked from the boughs, and the black grapes turned into wine, to be stored away in leather skins in cool caves, or shipped in late-going vessels. He saw the rejoicing crowds surging through the streets, and out to the temples, to dance, feast, and drink, in the way recommended by their priests for holding the festivals of harvest-home and vintage. Winter

came with white covering on the mountains and heavy rains among the hills, flooding the vast plain with gleaming lakes and overflowing streams, and the gales and storms of hail and lightning kept the harbours full of ships that would not go to sea again until the spring.

For three months he taught in the synagogue, speaking of the kingdom of God among men, and the new way of Jesus, and the higher life. What he said to these black-eyed Jews sitting with covered heads, and these ruddy women and little Jewish children behind the carved screen in the dark synagogue, in the more than twenty addresses which he gave, we are not told; but this is part of what he wrote to Jews in Rome:—

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue to sin, that we may be forgiven? God forbid. For we who have died towards sin must no longer live in it. We who are baptized into Jesus are as if we shared in His death, and were buried with Him. As Jesus was raised from the dead through the glory of God, so must we also rise from sin, and live a new life. As we have shared with Him in the likeness of His death, so shall we share in His resurrection. It is as if our old sinful life were crucified with Him, that our sins might be done away, and that we should be no longer the slaves of sin. Having thus died with the Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him: knowing that being raised again, death has no more power over Him. For the death that He died was as the death of sin, and the life that He lived was life unto God. Even so count yourselves also to be as dead towards evil, but alive towards God and goodness in Jesus the Christ.”

So he spoke, and so they listened, and some of his countrymen joined the Christians. But this was too good to last. He had never yet won over a whole synagogue, and he would not do it there. The chiefs in the old place of worship began to think they had heard enough about this new way to serve God, as they called it, and they became disobedient to Paul, and spoke against his teaching of the way, disputing and arguing with him, until at last the split came. There was no riot or even open quarrel, but the Christians left the synagogue, as at Corinth, and went to the class-room of Tyrannus, a teacher of philosophy, who opened it to them. There he taught heathen philosophy to his scholars in the morning; and Paul taught Christianity in the afternoon to all who cared to hear about the living God and the new way of Jesus, discussing what he taught with all who wished to argue or ask questions. We do not know what he said to these Christians, but this is part of what he afterwards wrote:—

“God has made you to live again, who were as dead in the

sins in which you used to live according to the way of the world, and the mind that works in evil men. We have all lived in this way, obeying our selfish desires and thoughts, being naturally children of wickedness like others. But God, rich in mercy, because of His great love for us while we were as dead, has made us live together in Jesus; raising up life in us with Him, to sit in heavenly places. By grace you have been saved, that in ages to come God might show His kindness towards us all, in Jesus the Christ. By grace and through faith are you saved; not of yourselves, or by your own good deeds. Let no man boast, for salvation is the gift of God. You are God's workmanship, made in Jesus, that you may do good works, and live good lives."

The synagogue Jews seem to have been satisfied when the Christians left, and did nothing to annoy or persecute them. And thus the winter, which was never severe in the plain of Ephesus, passed into spring, and the white snows melted from the distant hills, and the bushes along the banks of the streams broke forth again into bud and blossom, with the sweet, heavy odours of almond and myosotis. Then the temple groves and the slopes and clefts of the hills swayed again with trembling leaves, from the golden green of the aspen to the indigo of the distant pines. Lakes and streams of yellow, hills of dazzling blue, sheets of flaming scarlet, of the anemone and marigold, glittered in the green of the Caystrian meadows. When the nightingale and stock-dove were heard in the woods, and the cry of the crane in the sky, there came a season of rejoicing in the streets of Ephesus, greater, wilder, madder than any that Paul had yet seen in all his travels.

An Idol's Birthday.

EPHESUS: AGED 50-60.

LONG years ago, the priests fixed that the twenty-fifth of May was the birthday of the black doll Diana in their temple of snow, and said that at the sweet spring season of creamy blossoms and dewy flowers, when the skies are purest and winds softest, the city should go mad with wild revels and riotous feasting, the priests leading the way. As a free city, they had their own magistrates and council, town clerk, juries, and law courts; and the May games in honour of their idols were so old and well established that they appointed ten asiarchs, leading wealthy men, to be responsible for the proper management of the

festivities, that lasted for three days, during which all business was stopped, and the people did nothing but attend the sports and the temples, with feasting, drinking, and worse. The dawn of each rosy morning saw the vast racecourse and vaster theatre crowded, not only with city people, but with strangers who came by boat and road from all parts of Asia to see the wild May revels. There were horse, foot, and chariot races, and fights between trained men and wild beasts that were kept in vaults under the theatre, to be hoisted up in their iron cages and let loose in the wide ring of yellow sand, where the men stood with drawn swords.

Every day the thirty gold and silver figures of Diana and her stags, presented to the temple by Salutaris, a wealthy Roman, were carried with great show down the temple steps, through the green woods, the marble colonnade, the Magnesium gate, and along the crowded streets towards the vast theatre, and thence through the city and out by the Coressian gate, and back to the temple again. And when the stars glittered over the dark city, Paul would see the wild night procession of priests in white robes, and priestesses with dark hair hanging down, followed by crowds of temple slaves, men and women, boys and girls. With crash of cymbal, beat of drum, and blare of trumpet, they danced in circles down the street, shouting and yelling to Diana, their faces lit up with pine-wood torches held aloft by slaves, that the people might see their wild movements, and be drawn to the revels. And Paul knew that during these bright May days whoever went to the great white temple could join in the feasting, drinking, and wild excesses of every kind which went on among these thick green trees, where the people were taught to dishonour themselves in honour of a vile black image.

Paul's heart burned with anger and pity, and his voice thrilled as he called upon all who would listen to turn from dead things and worship the living God. The weather was warm and sunny, the people knew him, and he spoke openly in their market-place. What did he say? He told them what he told the men of Athens—that these beautiful things made by men's hands were not gods, but only pieces of marble, brass, and wood; and the shrine-makers did not like this.

In the butchers' market the priests sold the flesh of the animals that had been given to them as sacrifices in the temple, and since it cost them nothing, they could sell it very cheap, and poor people were glad to get it; but some who joined the Christians were not sure if they should eat such meat. And this is the kind of guidance Paul would give them to set their minds at rest, for he wrote

it to the people of Corinth, having given up the compromise arranged by James and his friends at Jerusalem :—

“ Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. If a man thinks he knows anything without God, he has not even begun to know rightly. But if a man loves God, God is known to him. But about eating meat which has been put before idols. You know that an idol is nothing in this world, and that there is only one living God. For though there are many things which men call gods in the sky and earth, to us there is but one God, the Father of all, who made us, and all things; and one Lord, Jesus the Christ. Yet all men do not know this; and some being accustomed to think that idols are gods, when they eat food that has been put before an idol, they being weak, their consciences are uneasy, believing they have done wrong. Food cannot please or displease God; and whether we eat or do not eat such meat, it does not make us better or worse. But be careful that in doing this you do not offend a weak brother; for if he were to see you sitting eating such meat in the temple of an idol, his weak conscience might be made bold to eat also, although he believes idols are gods, and thinks he is doing wrong.

“ And so through your strength and your knowledge a weak one for whom Jesus died might be led to go against his conscience, and so you would sin against Jesus. If eating such meat should make my brother do what he thinks wrong, I would not eat flesh meat as long as I lived, that I might not lead him astray.”

Tidings from City to City.

EPHESUS : AGED 50—60.

SPRING, with sea-breezes, white clouds, and crimson flowers upon the plain, its May games, and streets crowded with pleasure-seekers, came and went, passing from green and gold into glowing summer, when everybody sought the shade of trees and covered pathways and awnings of pale-yellow and white; for the heat in Ephesus was very great, especially to those who were accustomed to hills. But the slaves toiled on unshaded, watering the fields, trees, and gardens, and carrying loads to and from the ships, the slave-driver sitting in the shade, with long whip in hand; for in all ages the whip and the scourge have been for the laden beast and the toiling slave.

Paul did not work in the city only, but went himself and

sent out others along the great roads that led to the surrounding villages, spreading the gospel of Jesus, and calling on the people to turn from their dead idols and worship the living God. And congregations of Christians were formed up and down the great valleys of the Meander and Hermus, covering hundreds of miles of the rich country of farmers, fruit-growers, and shepherds, and the cities of Smyrna, Laodicea, Colosse, Hierapolis, Sardis, Philadelphia, Pergamos, and Thyatira, all within a week's ride. And thus his teaching spread over the two hundred miles of the province of Asia, until Paul could say that all the Jews and Greeks in these parts had heard the gospel. And yet we have no account of his hundreds of addresses during these months and years. His letters are the only record of what he thought and said at this time.

In hot summer he would speak to the people more often under the shade of a spreading tree than in a house, for in the villages there would be no meeting-place large enough. And we can picture the people in their coloured dresses sitting close round him in the shadow, and some standing back in the sunshine, with their eyes fixed upon the dusky face of the travelling Jew in the brown cloak, who speaks with glowing eyes, as if life indeed were in his words:—

“Beware lest there be some one among you spoiling you with his philosophy and deceitful foolishness, after the learning of men, and the way of the world, and not in the way of Jesus. For in Jesus dwells the fullness of God, and in Him are you made full; for He is the head of all power, in whom you are marked, not with the mark of circumcision, as some men teach, but with the changing of your whole life through Jesus. In your baptism it is as if you had been buried with Him, and raised with Him, through faith in the working of God, who raised Jesus from the dead. And you, who were as dead in trespasses, God has made to live together with Him, having forgiven all our trespasses, and taken the Jewish rules out of the way, as if nailed to the cross of Jesus.

“Let no man blame you because of what you eat or drink, or for not keeping the New Moon and Sabbath festivals, as some teach. These things are but the shadow, and Jesus is the substance. And let no man rob you of your just prize of worshipping God, by getting you to worship angels. Such a man is vain and puffed up in his mind, not holding fast to Jesus, our Head, through whom we grow toward God. If you have died with Jesus to worldly teaching, why would you keep Jewish rules, as though bound by such things? Touch not, taste not, handle not; for

they are the rules and teachings of men. For although they have a show of wisdom, in humility and will worship, and severity to the body, they are not of any value in resisting the temptations of the world."

These words are from his letter to the people in Colosse, and it is likely that he wrote other letters, to other congregations, that have been lost. About this time he wrote one to his friends in Corinth, which has been lost. As you know, there were plenty of boats sailing between the two great cities, and he heard from men who were passing to and fro in these trading-boats how the Christians were prospering with Apollos to guide them; but the news was not satisfactory. The men of Corinth did not find it easy to give up the customs of idolatry to which they had been used all their lives, and in that letter he spoke to them about their marriages; and they replied, asking questions which we would think foolish, for they thought he wished them not to marry at all.

He had now the care of many congregations on his mind, and had many questions to answer; and when he heard of Christians going wrong, especially if they began to attend the temple feasts and revels, it grieved him deeply. Writing letters, sending messages, and answering questions thus became a most anxious part of his work, in addition to teaching, and going to places where he was not always kindly received.

One of these letters, of which the place is not fixed, is to Titus, of whom we last heard at Antioch, twelve years ago. During all these years he had been working as a Christian teacher in different places; and although we are not told of his meetings with Paul, there need be little doubt that they sometimes met. Paul speaks in the letter of having left him in the island of Crete, to work there; and this may mean either that on some of his voyages he called at Crete, or that Titus went to Crete by his orders. As if Titus had a special charge over the Christians of that island, he gives him advice and guidance about what to do, in much the same manner as in his letter to Timothy; and I shall give a sketch of the narrative parts, leaving you to read the complete letter in your Bible.

He calls the young Greek his true child in their common Christianity. He had left him to put in order the congregations in Crete, with office-bearers, men of blameless life and ability, to rule and teach as he said—"Beware of foolish talkers, who teach for money, especially they who teach Jewish tales and the traditions of the rabbis." Epimenides, a Cretan, who wrote six hundred years before Paul was born, said of the Cretans that

they were liars, wild beasts, and idle gluttons; and, curiously enough, Paul calls him a "prophet." Husbands and wives, sisters and brothers, children and parents, slaves and masters, are to be instructed in their duty, and rulers and magistrates are to be obeyed; and Titus is to let no one despise him. He intends to send Artemas or Tychicus to him, and to spend the winter himself at Nicopolis, where he wishes Titus to meet him. He is to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey. And with greetings to all the Christians, he closes what is a short private letter of guidance to a young friend, who, wherever he was working, would look to the older apostle for advice and instruction.

A Short Sail.

CORINTH: AGED 50-60.

THE state of the Christians in Corinth now gave Paul much concern. Theirs is the only congregation to which he wrote three letters, and there is little doubt that about this time he sailed across to pay them a hurried visit, probably in the spring, when boats were pulled down and sails shaken out, and the trade between the cities started afresh after the storms of winter. He had something very serious to say to them, as we learn from the letter that followed. Again, in a swaying boat, he saw the white temple of Diana as he sailed round the cape of Sunium; again the sunlight burned on Minerva's helmet over Athens; again he rode up the paved road, to stand among his friends in Justus's house, next to the carved door of the Jewish synagogue. This is part of what he wrote in the letter which followed, and it is likely that they listened to similar words from the man with heart on fire who had come across the sea to speak to them:—

"I am told that there is actually unfaithfulness among you, such as is not to be found among idol-worshippers. I wrote you in my letter to have no companionship with unfaithful men, or men who are greedy, extortioners, or worshippers of idols; and if any Christian is unfaithful, covetous, a reviler, drunkard, or worshipper of an idol, do not eat food with him. Put out the wicked man from among you.

"Would any of you that has a complaint against a Christian dare to bring a case at law against him before an unbelieving judge, and not bring the matter before the congregation? If

such things have to be judged among you, why go before judges who are not in your congregation? I wish to make you ashamed. Can there not be found among you one wise man able to decide between two Christians, but that you must go to law before unbelievers? These lawsuits one with another are a great defect in you. Why not rather be wronged and defrauded, seeing that you wrong and defraud others? Do you not know that unrighteous men shall not enter the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: unfaithful persons, worshippers of idols, thieves, covetous, drunkards, evil-speakers, extortioners shall not enter the kingdom of God. And some of you are such: but you were washed and made pure in the name of the Lord Jesus the Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

“Things may be right to do that are not expedient; for they would cause harm. Let no man seek his own good only, but also his neighbour’s good. Eat whatever flesh meat is sold in the market, asking no questions for the sake of your conscience. The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof. If one who is not a Christian invites you to a feast, eat whatever he puts before you, asking no questions for the sake of your conscience. If some one should tell you that the meat was offered on an idol’s altar, then, for his and for your own sake, do not eat it. But whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do it to the glory of God; and give no cause for stumbling, either to Jews, or foreigners, or the Christian congregation. I seek to please all men in all things, seeking not my own profit, but their good. Imitate me, even as I imitate Jesus.

“Follow after love, earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may speak inspired words. Brothers, be not children in your minds, but men; but in malice be babes. Speaking inspired words is better for Christians than speaking with tongues. If, when the congregation is gathered together, all were to speak strange languages, and unbelievers were to come in, would they not say you were all mad? But if you speak inspired words, and an unbeliever were to come in, he would be convinced and judged, the secrets of his heart being made known, and would fall upon his face and worship God, declaring that God was indeed among you.

“When you meet, it is confusion; for each one has a psalm, teaching, revelation, strange language, or interpretation to tell. Let all things be done rightly. If any wish to speak in a strange language, let it be one, two, or three at most, and in turn; and let one interpret what is said. If there be no interpreter, let them keep silence, and speak to themselves and God. Let two or

three teachers speak, and the others listen. But if one who is sitting should have a revelation from God, let him speak, and the others keep silence.

“One at a time you can all speak, that all may learn and all be taught, keeping control of yourselves: for God loves not confusion, but peace, in all congregations of Christians. If any one of you thinks he is a speaker, or spiritually gifted, let him know that what I say is the commandment of God; and if any is ignorant of this, let him alone. Therefore, my brothers, earnestly desire to speak inspired words, and do not forbid speaking in strange languages; but let everything be done decently and in order.”

If Paul met Apollos there, it was not to find fault with him. He had laid the broad foundation, and Apollos was building upon it. There was much to give him anxiety in the state of the Christians at Corinth, but he could not stay with them, and soon he was in a boat, under a spreading sail, with the free wind blowing in his face, and the white-tipped waves rushing past and dashing their spray over him, as he sailed back through isles of green trees and dark rocks, the islands of the Cyclades, with the outline of the blue mountains of Asia rising in a heat haze before him.

Burning the Wizards' Books.

EPHESUS: AGED 50-60.

SOON Paul was back again in Ephesus, where the people looked upon him with greater wonder than they did in Corinth. The city was noted for magicians, sorcerers, wizards, astrologers, diviners, fortune-tellers, prophets, cheats, jugglers, charlatans, who imposed on the people, and made money out of them, in the name of religion, and also for sheer fun and wickedness. Many said they were wonder-workers; and, as in India to-day, some were very clever men, who could do tricks that people thought impossible, and called miracles. And they sold charms and incantations to work wonders with. But their real aims were money and power; and this suited the priests, curiosity-sellers, jewellers, and merchants, for it brought custom to their temples and shops, and they encouraged the traffic in such foolishness. The jewellers made coral necklaces, bead bracelets, silver and gold anklets and rings, and cut curious stones, and made little figures of Diana, and the magicians told them what words and signs

to carve on them ; and these were the charms that kept off harm. Every child had something of that sort round his little neck, to keep off the evil eye, as they called it. In that country still, mothers think their children are in great danger if an English person looks at them and they have not on a charm of some kind.

In Paul's day, people wore a few senseless words written on a piece of parchment, which, they said, tied on the arm, or dipped in drinking water, would cure all diseases. Others looked at the stars, and for a very small coin would tell what your life would be, and whom you would marry ; and there were many foolish people who paid the money and believed the nonsense. And these little charms with letters written on them were known far and wide as Ephesian letters. The men and women of the city therefore believed in miracles, if there was only enough of wonder and secrecy about them ; and whatever they could not understand they called a miracle, as the easiest way to account for it.

We read that God worked special powers through Paul in Ephesus, but we are not told what they were, and he does not mention them in his letters. But it is easy to see that these superstitious people would see wonders, and make up more, in connection with so great a man, who spoke to them in the name of the living, unseen God. They were daily accustomed to see signs and look for wonders, and we are not surprised to read that the common people came about Paul, as he spoke in the market-place, and touched him with their napkins and aprons, and carrying them away to their sick friends, said that at their touch the diseases left them, and bad spirits went out. But this is so unlike Paul in other cities, that it may be doubted if he knew what these superstitious people were doing.

We are also told that strolling Jews, who pretended to have wonderful powers like the wizards of the city, and said they could send bad spirits out of people, began to use the name of Jesus in the wild incantations and silly words which they repeated with mysterious gestures and strange dancing, saying as they did so, "I charge you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches, come out."

The seven sons of Sceva, a chief priest of Jerusalem, used to go about the city pretending to cure people in this way, and two of them tried it in the house of a wild man ; and we are told that he replied to their foolish gestures, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" And springing on them, he tore off their long wizards' cloaks and coloured tunics, and wounding them, drove them out into the street. When this was told among the people, those who were using the name of Jesus in their silly

rhymes were afraid to do so any more; and the Christians rejoiced.

And then many of those who, on becoming Christians, gave up miracles and magic, came forward and publicly confessed the foolishness of their trade, telling how they cheated the people. There were many books about magic, astrology, and incantations that had been written by cheats and swindlers for hundreds of years; and these the people brought out of their houses, and making a heap, they set fire to them. And as they were not heavy volumes like ours, but open rolls of dry papyrus, they made a great heap, and burned with a quick flame that rose higher than the houses; and the sight of these burning rolls greatly impressed the people with the power of Paul's teaching. They had been written by the pens of careful scribes; and as some were old, the work of great bygone wizards and cheats, and could not be replaced, and as they were all expensive, it is not surprising that those who saw the fire said that the manuscripts burned that day could have been sold for more than a thousand pounds.

What did Paul say to these miracle-workers and silly sorcerers, these people who believed in ghosts and wizards, incantations and charms, that caused them to change, and regard such things as foolishness, and turn to Jesus and the higher life? This is what he wrote in his letter to them:—

“Let no man deceive you with empty words, lest the anger of God should come upon you. Have nothing to do with disobedient men. You were once in darkness, but are now in the light of God. Live as children of the light. The fruits of the light are goodness, righteousness, and truth, which are all pleasing to God. Have nothing to do with unfruitful deeds of darkness, but resist them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things which are done in secret by such men. Such things, when they are rebuked, are brought forth to the light, and seen. Awake, you who sleep; arise as from the dead, and Jesus will shine upon you.”

His teaching prevailed not only against the miracle-workers and cheats, but also against the worship of idols in their white temples throughout Asia. Apollos and Aquila had prepared the way for his broad teaching; and five hundred years before Apollos, Heraclius, an Ephesian philosopher, and also a learned Jew, had denounced the horrid idol-worship of the temple. The influence of the Jews and their worship in the city was considerable, for they had got the right from a Roman governor, Dolabella, to meet together and worship God in their own way.

Yet Paul toiled and suffered in Ephesus, for during all the

time of his stay he worked at weaving and sewing the hard cloth of striped brown and blue, of green and yellow, for his tents; and he also went from door to door, and house to house, persuading people to listen to the gospel. Often, too, when he spoke in meetings, riotous people came in and broke them up; so that while his work prospered, it was not without toil and suffering, hardship and danger to him. In one place he says he fought with beasts at Ephesus. Whether this was as a prisoner in the arena, we do not know; but that he suffered much ill-usage, that depressed his spirits, and was in danger of his life, is certain, for we read that Aquila saved him at the risk of his own life.

Once more the old feeling of traveller's unrest came over him. Others could carry on the work in Ephesus, but they could not do what lay before him in other lands. He wished to cover the Roman Empire with the religion of Jesus; and he told his companions that it was in his mind to go by ship to Corinth, and thence to ride back through Greece into Macedonia, visiting Thessalonica and Philippi, before sailing for Jerusalem, with this star of hope still shining in the heavens,—

“After I have been to Jerusalem, I must also see Rome.”

He did not, however, start at once, for work was crowding in upon him. He made plans, and changed them; for his congregations were many and widespread, and the messages he received were so weighty that he had to toil on from day to day, giving up his own wishes to the pressing duties that lay to his hand, but hoping soon to depart to other cities.

The Slaves of Chloe.

EPHESUS: AGED 50—60.

APOLLOS came back from Corinth, bringing news of the Christians—in some things good, in others very bad; and Paul saw that they were not keeping to the simple gospel of Jesus as he taught them, but were troubling themselves about many questions, and mixing up a large share of the old idolatrous customs with their new life—feasting, drinking, revelling, like the idol-worshippers in the temples. Apollos was not willing to return to Corinth, and Paul sent his young friend Timothy, accompanied by Erastus of Ephesus.

A boat arrived, and in it were some of the slaves of Chloe of Corinth, and they too brought news of the strange doings of some of

the Christians ; and he heard disquieting stories, too, from Stephen, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and this caused him much anxiety and distress. Timothy was going by Macedonia, but that was too slow. These men of Corinth must be spoken to at once ; and he wrote them a letter, sending it by a special messenger, supposed to be Titus. It is to the Christians at Corinth, but was intended to be read in surrounding places, and a great part of it is about men who were combining the customs and practices of idolatry with the life and worship of Christians. Portions of this letter have already been referred to, and other parts will be mentioned later on. Only the business parts will be given here, and you can read the whole in your Bible.

It is long, and Paul would take many days to write it, sitting in the house of Aquila the weaver, the meeting-place of the Christians. He would not write at night, for lights were bad, but with the sunshine of autumn on the page. Who wrote as he spoke, now that Timothy was away, we do not know—perhaps Titus. Others were sitting round him in silence, for he sent messages from them ; and the letter is also from Sosthenes, who was helping him in Ephesus, and knew the Corinthians well.

He told them that he had heard from Chloe's slaves of their divisions and disputes about being followers of Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, or Jesus, and bade them join and be of one mind in Jesus ; and he told them he had sent Timothy, his beloved child, to remind them of what he himself taught when living with them. There were some among them who were puffed up, speaking against the gospel, as if he would never be in Corinth again ; but he would come soon, and would test the power of these talkers. Some were still following the marriage practices of the idol-worshippers, one man in particular, and the rest were not blaming him. They must stop it at once, and put him out of the congregation if necessary.

He had heard of their lawsuits, and uses some very strong words, showing that some of the people who joined the Christians had turned out very bad, and that the congregation was much in need of correction. We must bear in mind, however, that many were ignorant slaves, and not a few were from the lowest of the people, for no one was too low for Paul to pity and save. He reminded them of a thought of Jesus, which he often repeated, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, and which you have from God?" If anything could induce them to give up the vicious customs of the temples, it would be the luminous thought of God dwelling in them, and that they must not dishonour His temple.

They asked strange questions about marriage, and in his reply

he said that sometimes he had, and sometimes he had not, the guidance of God in his answers. Paul was not married, and never knew what it was to have a wife to share his thoughts, or little children to melt his judgments, or his writings about them might have been different; for he laid down rules for women to which no regard is now paid, and he seldom referred to children.

Some of them wished to know, if a man became a Christian, could he send away his wife if she would not become one too; others wished to know if they should let their daughters marry; others were concerned about the meat they bought in the market, that had come from the idols' temples: and to all he gave their answer.

His enemies had told them that he was not an apostle, and he replied that he was. Apostle means "one sent to teach;" and he meant that he had been sent to teach as much as any man, adding proudly that they themselves were the proof of his teaching, for he had formed their congregation. He had had visions, too; and whereas other apostles and teachers lived at the expense of the people they came to teach, he worked, and kept himself, although he might have asked them to keep him.

Some of them were making a drunken feast of their meals together, as they used to do in the temples of the idols; and he checked them sharply, for it deeply grieved him that they, in memory of Jesus, should feast in such a shocking way. It was not possible to call such feasts the Lord's Supper.

They were also concerned about whether women should be allowed to speak in their meetings, and how they should dress and wear their hair; and he answered that also, but his answers have less interest for us now. The difficulty with them was, that whereas Jewish women wore a white veil and sat behind a screen in their synagogue, Greek women did not, and thought rightly enough that they had as much right to speak as men, when they believed God had given them something to say.

They had also asked for guidance about when a man should be listened to in their meetings as if he had a message from God, and when he should not; for some uttered wild things, and others could not be understood at all, and some said wicked things in their excitement, and others spoke well. These were hard matters, and he answered them in a firm and calm way, although there are some things difficult to understand, about speaking in unknown languages, which have only a historical interest, as there is none of it now. He gave them, however, a clear guiding line. No one could be guided by the Spirit of God who spoke against

Jesus ; and whoever said Jesus was the Lord was guided by His Spirit. Reminding them of one of the most beautiful sayings of Jesus to His disciples, he said they were to have earnest love one toward another ; for unless they had that, spiritual gifts would be of no use.

In a very few words he summed up the gospel which he preached to them, and which they believed, and must hold fast. He also explained the meaning of the resurrection from the dead, and answered them that their bodies would die, but their spirits would live, for flesh and blood could not inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Regarding the collection for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, they were to put past a little every Sabbath day, so that no collections would have to be made when he came ; and he would settle who should carry it to Jerusalem, and might even take it himself. He was coming through Macedonia, and might stay with them for a time, or even over the winter, but would not leave Ephesus till the beginning of summer, as he had much to do, and many adversaries.

If Timothy came, they were to help him to return to him soon. He had besought Apollos much to go with the others to Corinth, but he would not return until later. He begged them to be obedient, and was glad when Stephen, Fortunatus, and Achaicus arrived with their messages. All the congregations in Asia sent them greetings, and especially their old friends Aquila and Priscilla, who did so much ; and the congregation that met in their house, and all his own friends ; adding this last splendid message, like the trumpet note of an old commander to men who were holding a city for him, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let everything be done in love." As usual, when the long letter had been read over to him and corrected and copied, he took the reed pen from his young clerk's hand, and leaning over the roll, wrote for a time in large black letters. When he finished, this is what he had written as his final message to his friends at Corinth :—

"The good wishes of me, Paul ; I write with mine own hand. If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be cursed. Jesus comes. May His favour be with you. My love be with you in Him."

The Silversmith's Speech.

EPHESUS : AGED 50-60.

THE long letter would cover many yards of yellow papyrus paper, and would be a large bundle when rolled on a stick. It would be carefully wrapped up with a strong outside cover of cloth, sealed, and directed to a friend in the city over the sea, and given to a trusted messenger, who carried it from city to city. We read that letter with calmness now, but we can have little idea of the effect which it would have on the defaulting members of the congregation, as they sat listening to the command, that they were to cease from their wickedness or leave the congregation; for they looked upon what he said as a message from God. They were glad that he was coming to visit them, for his letter raised many more questions which they wished to ask him.

Meanwhile he remained in Ephesus, not living a quiet life; for the great interest which his teaching aroused raised up many enemies, who gave him much trouble and anxiety. They sought to frighten him away with threats. But he was not to be frightened. He kept out of their way, but did not slacken his energy, or the energy of those around him, sending them out to other places in Asia.

He did not assail the great white temple or the black idol, but the effect of his teaching was to draw people away from them, to worship the living God; and the temple was a source of wealth to the city. People came as pilgrims in great numbers, and the flower processions of the priests by day, and torch processions by night, and their feasts, revels, and public games for a month, brought profit to the citizens, who let their lodgings, and sold food, clothing, fruit, wine, and many other things which holiday keepers like. The temple also had thousands of priests, priestesses, gardeners, bakers, guards, tradespeople, men and women and boy and girl slaves, who all lived by it, while the townspeople got cheap food in the market which had been given in presents to the temple.

The pilgrims also bought Ephesian charms in wood, metal, and stone, and mystic books; but the favourite was a little model of the white temple and black idol, made of silver and gold for the rich, white marble for the middle class, and red terra-cotta for the poor. Although they were only models of the sloping roof and the front pillars, with a little figure sitting among them, they were much prized; for the priests and others who sold them said they

had power to keep harm away, and mothers hung them round their children's necks, lovers gave them to each other, people took them on a voyage or a journey, or set them up over their house door, and some even had them buried with them, as the Egyptians long ago did with their little figures of blue china.

The tradespeople and merchants cared little about the religion of the Christians; but when they found their business falling off, and that they were losing money through the new teaching of this travelling Jew in the brown cloak, who was making his home in their city, resentment and discontent rose, and they began to say to each other that, if it did not stop, a good many of them would be ruined. Paul and his friends had been discussing with their opponents whether men should keep to the old way of worshipping idols of wood and stone, or turn to the new way of worshipping the living God and living the higher life in Jesus. Perhaps they had been speaking to the people in the market-place and stirring them up, for there the trouble began.

Demetrius, a rich silversmith, called together the silversmiths, potters, workers in metal, jewellers, marble and wood carvers, butchers, weavers, slipper-makers, and all the tradespeople who made a profit by the great white temple. He called them out of their booths, stalls, and shops, to stand among the trees and statues in midst of the wide pavement; and as it held many thousands, he would have to stand on the base of a statue to be seen, while he put into a speech what they had all been saying to each other for days and weeks in the bazaars and markets,—

“Sirs, you know that by our business we have made our wealth. And you all see and hear that, not only in Ephesus, but almost throughout the whole province of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people from buying shrines, saying that things made with men's hands are not gods at all.”

He had to speak in a loud voice to be heard by the crowd gathered in the heat of that autumn day, and what he said was true. Now he came to the effect upon their business and purses.

“Not only,” he continued, “is there danger that our trade of shrine-makers will be thought disreputable, but the temple of the great goddess Diana will be made of no account, and she who is worshipped by the province of Asia, and all the world beside, will be brought down from her magnificence.”

His speech stirred the people deeply, for he was a clever man, and brought to a head the feeling that their loss of business was the work of that travelling Jew in the brown cloak, finishing off with a picture of Diana upset, the great temple deserted, and no more thronging pilgrims in their bazaars. Some in the crowd

thought it was impossible, but many had felt the change, and were ready to do something. Just as in an English crowd, after a telling speech, a single voice calls for three cheers for the Queen, that are heartily given, some one shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"—no doubt a common cry among them. Again the hot iron had been hit, and at once the cry was repeated by hundreds of voices; and the louder it rose, the more confident they were of Diana's greatness—convinced by shouting. But what next? The market was not the place to do anything worth while. They must rouse the city, and gather in their thousands in the great theatre. And the traders broke up into bands, thronging out by the stone arches of the market, to shout through the streets, and draw idle people after them away to the vast theatre. Paul, however, knew nothing of what was happening, or of the danger he was in.

"Great is Diana!"

EPHESUS: AGED 50—60.

THE men in the streets wondered what was the matter when the traders were shouting so; and as in England people follow to a fire, so they followed with the crowd. They poured into the open-air theatre, running up the stone stairs, along passages, over backs and rows of seats in tier above tier to the blue sky. The vast place could hold over fifty thousand, but it would not be full, although the seats nearest to the speaking-place would be packed.

Paul had not been seen, but Gaius and Aristarchus, two of his friends from Macedonia, were captured by the running crowd, and dragged with them till it was seen what was to be done. But Demetrius could not be heard, for everybody wished to speak, and nobody would listen. Some were in deep earnest, others shouted out of mischief, to increase the noise and fun; and so the time passed in continual confusion, in which loud voices could be heard shouting, some one thing, some another—for the most of the people had no idea what all the turmoil was about, and they would not be quiet to hear. This lasted so long that word was sent to the city authorities and to Paul, and they hastened to the place. He had been told of Gaius and Aristarchus, and wished to go into the theatre and speak to the people; but his own friends, among them some of the city rulers,

would not allow him. They could do better if he kept out of sight.

At length Demetrius and his friends, some of whom were Jews, put forward a Jew called Alexander to speak, most likely because he could speak well, and had a loud voice. What he was to say we do not know; for as soon as he held up his hand for silence, and the people saw by his features that he was a Jew, they shouted against him, so that his voice could not be heard—“Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” The noise grew and increased to drown the voice of the Jew, hundreds of voices being added whenever Alexander or any one else tried to speak, until nothing could be heard but a hoarse roar like the sea of “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” for they were determined that nothing else should be heard. The people did not care why they had been brought together; they would shout as loud and as long as they chose. It was an idle shout, for only those from the market knew what had begun it. And whenever it was like to die down it broke out afresh, until after about two hours of such amusement the people grew tired, and were ready for something else.

The city rulers were in the theatre, ready to speak when the people would listen, and among them was the town clerk and keeper of the city records, a man accustomed to read notices at great meetings, well known to them all, and not a little feared by some. When he came forward to the speaker’s place, the people knew that they had come to business, and were quiet. While they were shouting, he had been inquiring, and knew why they were there. He also knew how to send them home, for he had done it before.

“Men of Ephesus,” he called in a loud voice, “is there a man here who does not know that this city is the keeper of the great temple of Diana, and of the image that fell down from the stars?”

His bold and flattering question pleased the people, and they would listen now.

“Seeing that this cannot be denied, you ought to be calm, and do nothing rashly. You have brought hither these men,” pointing to Paul’s two friends, “who are neither robbers of temples, nor speakers against Diana. If Demetrius or any of those who are with him have a case against any man, the city courts are open, and the weekly court days kept, and there are judges to settle who is in the right. Let them accuse these men before them in the proper manner.”

Thus, in cold, lawyer-like fashion, he told the people that this was not the place to bring accusations or try law cases. But if

there was something deeper yet underlying the disorder, he told them what to do.

"If you seek anything about other matters," he continued, "it will be settled in the regular assembly of the people."

He had told them what was the proper and lawful course to take, and now he brought the weight of his authority down on the unruly gathering, backed by the well-known practice of the Roman rulers of the province, whose duty it was to punish swiftly and severely all rioting and disorder,—

"For, indeed, we are in danger of being accused before the Roman governor about this day's rioting, there being no good ground for it, because we cannot give any reason for this great gathering."

After these warning words, and in a voice of authority which none cared to disobey, he bade the people disperse and go home.

Soon they were all on their feet, moving out by the hundreds of passages, and down the broad stairs; and in a few minutes the vast place was empty, and the streets instead filled with talking, arguing, laughing crowds, hastening home to get food, for some of them had been rushing about all day shouting themselves hoarse. And so ended in failure the attempt of Demetrius and his friends to stop the teaching of Paul and the Christians; for they did not take the advice of the town clerk and bring a case into the law court, nor did they ask for an inquiry before the people in a regular meeting. And the result of that day's great stir was to raise the Christians higher in the public esteem.

There would be much talking in the markets, bazaars, and shops about Demetrius and the great gathering; and when it was seen that he was afraid to do anything more, the people began to forget, but Paul did not. His friends among the city rulers would advise him what to do, and he may even have had a message from the town clerk that he should not remain in the city. He had written to Corinth that he would stay in Ephesus till spring, but he resolved to leave before then, and go first to Macedonia, and then to Corinth. Winter was approaching, and although the sun was hot, rough winds were driving the withered leaves into the air in the vineyards, and sailors were thinking of harbouring their boats for the winter.

There was now a strong congregation of Christians in the city, with elders and office-bearers, who could work by themselves; and he called a farewell meeting and told them that he must go on to Macedonia, urging them to stand fast in the faith in Jesus, as he taught them. And we may be sure that those who heard him did not forget what he said, for it was the last address he would

give in that city. On such occasions he spoke for hours, but we are not told what he said. This is part of the letter which he afterwards wrote them :—

“When I first heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and the love which you show to all Christians, I ceased not to mention you in my prayers, and to give thanks for you; that the God of our Lord Jesus the Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. May you have your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is your hope in Him, what the riches of the glory of His gift, and what the greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to what He wrought in Jesus. For God raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit on His right hand in heaven, far above everything in this world or in the world to come.

“I beseech you to live worthy of Christians, having lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance in love one toward another, being careful to be of one Spirit in the bond of peace. There is only one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, and in us all. To each of us there is grace given according to the gift of Jesus. It is written in the Psalms, When He went up on high, He led captive captivity, and gave gifts to men. Some men God has made apostles, inspired speakers, evangelists, ministers, teachers, for the work of ministering and building up in Jesus, until we shall reach one faith and knowledge of the Son of God, as of a full-grown man, in the height and fullness of Jesus. Then shall we no longer be children, tossed to and fro like boats, or carried about like chaff with every wind, by the cleverness and craft of men full of cunning and errors; but speaking the truth in love, we shall grow up in all good things unto Jesus, who is our loving Head.

“May peace be with you, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus the Christ; and may grace be with all that love our Lord in purity.”

Among Islands and Capes.

EPHESUS : AGED 50—60.

MEETINGS of Christians in these days were not hushed and quiet as they are now, and when Paul ended his farewell address to the Christians of Ephesus there would be loud weeping

and wailing of women and groans and cries of men. And when the day came for him to go into the ship that was to carry him to Troy, the Christians would come in hundreds to the quay, to wring their hands and kneel in prayer, and shout and cry as the ship was dragged with ropes out of the harbour, and along the canal towards the river and the open sea.

There the white sail was once more spread, and the green hills and white houses blended together, as the ship sped out into the blue bay towards the narrow passage between the island of Chios and the land. The sea had no terrors for Paul: the lonely, wind-tossed waters would rest his mind; but the long dark nights were cold.

He had been for about three years in and about Ephesus, and his success had been as great as at Corinth; yet he was not satisfied, for he was being driven away, leaving many enemies behind. He was sailing northwards up the coast of Asia, and while it would take about a week, they would never be far away from islands, or out of sight of the mainland; and each night they would anchor in a sheltered place, until the yellow dawn broke over the dark mountains, and the large sail was shaken out again.

Sailing across the wide and stormy Gulf of Smyrna, through the narrow channel between Mitylene and the mainland, and out towards the open sea, the voyage was not unlike sailing along the broken west coast of Scotland, with beautiful islands, narrow channels, rapids, capes, cloud-shrouded mountains, and rocky valleys. Round the headland and they saw Troy, which he had not visited since he sailed from the harbour with Luke five years before. Who were with him now we do not know, for he left his warm friends Aquila and Priscilla behind, dearer to him than ever, for they had saved his life. Perhaps it brought trouble upon them, for they had to leave Ephesus, and we next hear of them back again in Rome. There is little wonder that Paul loved this humble weaver and his wife, when we remember all that they did for him and for Christianity.

If the ship reached Troy harbour at the close of the day, they would see the sun sinking behind the deep purple island of Lemnos, far out at sea, casting a ruddy hue on the white houses and temples of the town, and flushing the woods and rocks of Mount Ida. The great sail was looped up to the yard as they passed between the granite towers of the breakwater and into the large harbour, safe from winds and waves.

Paul and his friends were going to Macedonia, and had to leave the boat, which was not going any farther; and so they landed on the stone quay, paid the hire, and went up to the city.

On his former visit he did not preach, but now he found friends, and taught daily, while waiting the arrival of a boat going to Neapolis; and as the stormy season had now come, and boats were scarce, he may have had to wait for weeks. We are not told what he said to the people, but in his letters we find what he was saying to other congregations at this time:—

“Thanks be to God, who leads us in triumph in Jesus, and makes Him known through us in every place. To them that are being saved, and in them that are not, we are as a sweet smell of Jesus unto God: from death to death in the one, from life to life in the other. We have a right to teach these things, for we do not sell the word of God, as some do; but of God, and in the sight of God, we speak sincerely in Jesus.

“Do we seem to be praising ourselves? Do we need a letter of praise to you, or from you, as some carry? You yourselves are our letter of praise, written in our hearts, known and read of all men; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. We are confident through Jesus toward God, who made us ministers of a new gospel; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life. If the ministration under the Jewish law, which was to pass away, was with glory, how much more glorious shall the ministration of the spirit be, which is to remain.”

“Timothy, My True Child.”

TROY: AGED 50—60.

PAUL expected to meet Titus at Troy, with news from Corinth; but he was not there, and it was a keen disappointment. If Titus was the bearer of Paul's long letter, we can understand how anxious he would be to hear how it was received, and whether they were going to obey him. Titus was indeed on his way back, but they would not meet until he reached Thessalonica. Paul did not go on his voyage at once, for he found the people of Troy so willing to listen to the new gospel that it was like a new door opened to him. What he said to the Christians day by day may be gathered from his letter about this time. They would meet in a large room of a house.

“Be not puffed up one against another. Who makes you better than another? and what have you that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast, as if you did not? You think that you are filled, and rich, and can reign without us.

I wish you did reign, that we might reign with you. I think God sent out apostles last of all, like men doomed to die: for we are made a show to the world, the sky, and the earth. We are as fools in Christ, but you think yourselves wise in Him; we are weak, but you think yourselves strong; you have honour, but we have dishonour. Even to this present time we hunger and thirst, and are naked and buffeted, and have no sure place to live in. We toil, working with our hands. When called names, we bless; when persecuted, we bear it; when slandered, we speak gently. Indeed, we are as the mud and rubbish of the world. Still, I do not say this to vex, but to admonish you, my beloved children."

The first letter to his young friend Timothy was probably written about this time, full of advice and instruction as to the work of teaching, and arranging congregations, to which I have already referred. You will read it in full in your Bible, for it is the best letter to a young man that you can find anywhere. Paul felt his years growing upon him, and was beginning to look to others to carry on his great work. Calling Timothy his true child, he reminds him of what he said when he asked him to wait behind in Ephesus when he was leaving for Macedonia. Certain men were teaching a wrong gospel, and he was to correct and instruct them not to trouble themselves about fabulous stories and endless genealogies, which only bred quarrels; and he specially named Hymenæus and Alexander—perhaps the Alexander who tried to speak in the theatre.

He hoped to see him soon, but sent the letter lest he should be delayed. Slaves were to honour their masters, and if they were also Christians, were not to despise them. Nowadays we should expect Paul to order the masters to free their slaves; but things were different then, and the light of the teaching of Jesus was spreading slowly. Paul bade him no longer drink water only, but a little wine, for the sake of his health, which was not strong, and closed his wise letter with these beautiful words, which any father might write to his son:—

"O my child, guard what has been given to you. Turn away from irreligious talk and false knowledge, which some have taken up, and so missed the mark of faith in Jesus. And may the grace of God be with you."

The day came when he had to take leave of his friends at Troy, and it would be with words of cheering and hope; for when he paid them a passing visit a year later, he found a considerable congregation of Christians. Before going down to the harbour with him, they would meet in a friend's house to say farewell, and

we can picture him standing in his brown cloak and traveller's kerchief, speaking to them in words like these:—

“I am an apostle of Jesus the Christ, by faith in God and the knowledge of truth; in hope of life for evermore, which God has promised, and has made known in the message which by commandment He has entrusted to me. Overseers in the congregation must be blameless; not self-willed or soon angry, not quarrelsome or greedy; but hospitable, sober-minded, just, and temperate; holding to sound and faithful teaching, that they may be able to teach others. For there are many unruly, vain, and deceitful talkers, especially they who teach circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped. To the pure all things are pure: but to the unbelieving there is nothing pure, for their minds and consciences are defiled. They say they know God, but their lives deny it; for they are wicked and disobedient, and strangers to all that is good. I would have you learn to work at honest work for your necessary wants, and be not unfruitful of good. All that are here with me greet you. Greet them that love us in the faith of Jesus; and may grace be with you all.”

A Winter Voyage.

TROY: AGED 50—60.

SO few ships were on the sea during the stormy months that it may have been early spring before Paul found a large boat that would take him on the voyage of over a hundred miles, across what was in winter a very exposed sea. He tells us in his letters that he was shipwrecked several times, and that on one occasion he floated on wreckage for a night and a day before being saved; and as the voyage from Troy was dangerous at this season, he may have been shipwrecked.

When he reached again the port of Neapolis, behind the island of Thasos, they were at the end of their dangers, and in the province of Macedonia. He did not stop to teach here, but rode with his companions up the twelve miles of paved Roman road towards the town of Philippi, where he hoped Titus would be waiting from Corinth. Soaked with rains that drifted over the hills, their cloaks would be small protection, while the streams they had to cross were deep enough to drown them; so that they would be glad when they rode through the low, dark archway in the city walls, and up the broad street, to seek friends

who would take them in and give them shelter and food. It is likely they would be welcomed to the house of Lydia, the seller of purple cloth, with whom he lived five years before ; and again he would address the Christians, but not at the Jews' meeting-place in the glen by the side of the river. There were more to hear him now, and he had a different story to tell, of visits to Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Antioch, Ephesus, Galatia, Jerusalem, and why he did not come to them from Athens as he intended. We have no record of the addresses which he gave to his friends in the city where he was scourged and imprisoned, but this is part of his letter to them :—

“I thank God, and remember you in my prayers with joy, for helping forward the gospel from the very first day until now. I am sure of this, that God, who began this good work in you, will finish it. It is right for me to think so, for both in my imprisonment, and in defending and confirming the gospel, you shared my labours with me. God knows how I have longed after you in the mercy of Jesus the Christ, and prayed that your love may increase more and more in knowledge and insight, so that you may know what is right, being sincere and inoffensive, and filled with the fruits of righteousness, to the glory and praise of Jesus the Christ.

“Let your life be worthy of the gospel of Jesus : so that whether I come to see you, or am absent from you, I may hear of your state. Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving for the faith of the gospel of Jesus ; in nothing afraid of your adversaries : which is a sign of their condemnation, and of your salvation from God, in whom you believe, and for whom, like me, you suffer.”

He had come to strengthen and encourage them after their fight with persecution from their own relations and the magistrates of the town, and to praise them for their faith and bravery. Living in that city of sunshine, guarded by its strong castle, and with a beautiful plain of streams and trees spreading out towards the purple mountains, to his great relief and joy he was joined by Titus, who may have sailed down the coast of Greece to land at Neapolis. But his news from Corinth was not cheering.

The Christians had received him with the greatest kindness. They had the tenderest recollections of Paul's visit, and were longing for another. His long letter was read in the congregation, and his advice about their manner of worship was being carried out. The evil man of whom he wrote had been put out of their midst. But when he inquired about their divisions and the false Christians from Jerusalem, the news was not so good. The false Jews had been so successful that many of the teachers

in Corinth had gone over to their side, and Titus told him with much sorrow that they were repeating there the same wicked things about Paul which they told the Christians in Galatia. They ridiculed his appearance and speaking: they said he was very brave in letters, but a coward when present; that he worked for his living, because he was not a real apostle, and had no right to be kept by others; that he was a Greek Jew, and not a Jew of Jerusalem like them, and had no authority to teach. They also proclaimed how he persecuted the followers of Jesus before he became one himself, and said they were from the apostles of Jerusalem, who lived and talked with Jesus. They also objected to Paul's great plan of collecting money everywhere for the poor Christians of Jerusalem. It was like taking money which ought to go to the temple.

This news set Paul's mind on fire. It was what he had dreaded. These false hypocrites, driven away from Galatia, had followed his path from city to city, and settled in Corinth to blast his character if they could, and turn his friends away from the true faith in Jesus to false Jewish beliefs. He could not bear it in silence; and although he was journeying thither, he resolved to send them a letter, as he had done the Galatians, to warn them of his coming. He did not, however, write at once. Timothy was on his way from Corinth also, and he would wait till he heard his report. He was going on towards Thessalonica, and once more he bade farewell to the Christians of Philippi, who were always so kind to him. We can picture the last meeting which they held with this grey-headed, determined man, who had suffered so much, but had no thought for himself. What he said we do not know, but again I turn to one of his letters, in which he speaks in the figurative way which rabbis loved:—

“I speak to you who are not Jews, for I am the apostle of foreigners, and glory in my work: if by any means I may make my countrymen jealous, and save some. If the casting away of the Jews were the drawing near of the world, what would their coming in be, but as life from the dead? If the first fruits are holy, so is the harvest; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. But some were broken off; and you, as a wild olive, were grafted in among the branches, and became a sharer with them in the root and fatness of the olive tree. But do not boast over the other branches; for it is the root that bears you, and not you the root. If the first branches were broken off, that you might be grafted in; for unbelief were they broken off, and by faith you stand. But be not high-minded: for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither would He spare you.

“Consider then the goodness and the severity of God : severity toward them, and goodness toward you, if you continue in Him : otherwise you too will be cut off. And they too, if they give up their unbelief, will be grafted in : for God is able to graft them in again. If you were cut out of a wild olive tree, and grafted into a good olive tree, how much more shall the natural branches be grafted again into their own tree?”

On the Black Paved Road.

PHILIPPI : AGED 50—60.

AGAIN the Christians of Philippi escorted the travelling Jew in his brown cloak out through the west gate of their great city, riding on to conquer the world. Again he saw streams winding in silver braids through the emerald plain of Philippi, woods clothed with every shade of leaf, and white clouds coursing over the distant hills to kiss shoulders of snow ; again he heard the blackbird's song, for it was the time of spring, when boats fleck the sea with white sails, and travellers again ride through the glens.

It is not safe even now for travellers to ride through Macedonia, and in those days it was very dangerous ; and Paul and his companions would have to seek the company of others, or even pay some wild tribesmen to escort them safely through the hills that lay between them and Thessalonica on the far sea-coast. Five years ago he had gone along that paved Roman road, leaving his companions, Timothy and Luke, behind him ; but the hills which now basked in the sunshine, with white waterfalls twinkling through the trees, were glistening then in their snowy mantles. Passing the lakes, and crossing again the broad river, they reached the walled town of Amphipolis, in the mouth of the deep glen at the bend of the river. Paul, on this journey, spoke much to the people, who had heard of Christianity, for he would not pass that way again.

From thence they followed the Roman road until they saw the sea glancing and tossing in the sunlight, and distant islands of blue and pearl-grey, that changed at sunset to opal and crimson, purple and indigo, when clouds covered the sky with a foam of roses. At Apollonia the travellers would rest again—so near to Thessalonica that they would hear of his work and flight from that city. And we can picture them gazing on the travel-

ling Jew in the brown cloak—who was not afraid to return—as he exhorted them to stand fast in the faith of Jesus. And here we have gleams and lights of the sayings of Jesus, surrounded with Paul's reflections,—

“I say, by the power that has been given me, to every man among you, do not think more highly of yourselves than you ought; but think soberly, according to the measure of faith in Jesus which God has given to each. For we are all members of one great congregation, joined to Jesus and to each other. Having received different powers through the grace of God, and faith in Jesus, speak, minister, teach, advise, give liberally, and rule with care, showing mercy with cheerfulness. Let your love be without pretence. Hate what is bad, and hold to what is good. Be tender and affectionate one to another, preferring that others should get honour; not lazy, but diligent; earnest in spirit; serving God. Rejoice in hope; be patient in your trials; continue strong in prayer; give to the wants of others, and be kind to strangers.”

Apollonia was up among wild mountains, and as they followed the paved road winding down through the narrow glen, it brought them again to the blue sea, with islands and white sails, in the Gulf of Thessalonica, with range upon range of the blue mountains of Greece in the distance, under pearly clouds. The Greeks believed that imaginary beings sipped nectar and supped ambrosia lying among these fleecy clouds on those mountain-tops; but Paul's thoughts as he rode down from the hills were of the city whose white buildings he saw upon the sunny shores below. Soon they were riding through the low arch in the eastern wall, and along the broad street, amid the finest houses of the town, that looked out upon Octavius's arch of white marble, carved with bulls' heads and garlands.

He easily found his friends, for there was a large congregation of Christians, to whom he had written two letters from Corinth. They rejoiced to see his face again, for they were longing for him; and no doubt Jason would again take him and his companions into his house. He was chief of the men who suffered much for their religion, after they sent Paul away in safety, five years before; but there were men there also who thought that the Christ would appear so soon that they need not work any more, and were so anxious about the resurrection and life hereafter that Paul sent Timothy back to them from Athens to tell them that he would make all plain when he came. And he had much to tell them now, as they sat in their cloaks of brown and blue, close packed, in the largest room of Jason's house, with dark-eyed women

among them who had held to their faith since the day when they heard him speak the words of fire that changed their lives. Again I turn to his letter to them for what he would say when they were face to face :—

“I thank God always for this, that when you received from us the word of the message from God, you took it not as the language of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God working in you that believe. You became imitators of the Christians of Judea, and endured the same things of your countrymen as they did of theirs. For they killed the Lord Jesus and the holy men, and drove us out ; and, contrary to God and man, forbade us to speak to any who were not Jews, that they might be saved, filling up the measure of their wickedness : but wrath has come upon them to the last. Brothers, when I was away from you in body for a short period, though not in thought, I endeavoured with great desire to see your face again ; and would indeed have come to you, I Paul, again and again : but evil hindered me. For are you not my hope and joy, my crown and glory, before the Lord Jesus ?

“Therefore, when I could no longer delay speaking, I thought it good to be left behind alone in Athens ; and sent Timothy to strengthen and comfort you in your faith : that you should not be moved by your punishments ; for you knew that they would come. When I was with you before, I told you that you would be afflicted, as it has come to pass ; and as I could wait no longer, I sent to know of your faith, lest you had been tempted away, and our work spoiled. But when Timothy returned from you, bringing me glad tidings of your faith and love, and that you had good recollections of me always, and were longing to see me, as I was to see you, I was comforted in my distress by your faith. I live again, if you stand fast in the Lord. What thanks to God are enough for all the joy which I have ? For night and day I prayed greatly that I might see your faces again, and make perfect what is wanting in your faith. May God make you increase and grow in love one toward another, and to all men, as we do to you : so that He may establish your hearts pure and holy before Him who is our God and Father.”

The Blue Mountains of Greece.

THESSALONICA : AGED 50—60.

PAUL was now living in the sunny city built on the slope of the hill at the end of the deep Thermaic Gulf, with the blue mountains of Greece and Macedonia inviting him away into countries and kingdoms beyond the charming city in which Cicero chose to live during his banishment from Rome a hundred years before. But Paul did not spend his whole time among the marble arches of the streets, or the trees and statues of the markets. Nor did he go to the synagogue of his countrymen. They had already rejected him. He went along the Roman Egnatian Way, out into the fair country of vines and olives round about, speaking to the Christians everywhere, in town or village, camp or cottage, encouraging them to hold fast to the glorious faith in Jesus. This is from one of his letters to the people there :—

“Now I command you, brothers, in the name of Jesus, that you avoid Christians who live disorderly, and not according to the teaching which you have received from me. You yourselves know how you ought to live : for we did not behave disorderly among you. I did not eat bread for nothing at any man’s hand ; but in toil and labour I worked by night and by day, that I might not be a burden to any of you : not because I had not the right, but that we should show a good example for you to follow. When I was last with you I gave you this commandment, Whoever will not work should not eat. I hear of some that live disorderly among you ; that they do not work at all, but go from house to house interfering with other people’s affairs. Now, in the name of the Lord, I command these men to return quietly to their work and earn their own bread. My brothers, be not weary in well-doing ; and if any man does not obey my words, note him, and avoid him, that he may be ashamed of his conduct : but warn him as a brother, not as an enemy. And may the God of peace Himself give you peace at all times, and in all ways ; and may the Lord be with you.”

He expected to meet Timothy with further news from Corinth, and his heart was anxious till he came, probably sailing down the coast of Greece and across the gulf to Thessalonica. But it was only to have the bad tidings of Titus confirmed. The Christians were still in a state of doubt and division, notwithstanding his long letter. They were slipping back into the

horrid customs of idol-worship, out of which they had risen for a time. He resolved to write them at once. Timothy would again be his clerk, and tell him of the state of the people as he wrote. The letter must go in haste, for his feelings were hot.

He united Timothy with him in it, the elder speaking while the younger held the pen; and it was directed to all the Christians in Corinth, and in the province of Greek Achaia, of which it was the capital. He would have a copy of his first letter beside him to refer to, while Timothy sat in the shady, flower-hung veranda of the inner court of the house, with a large piece of papyrus paper on his knee, on which to write very slowly the rapid words of his master. Again you will get only the narrative part of the letter here, and must read it all in your Bible.

He told them that when he was in Ephesus he was sad beyond endurance, despairing of his life, and would have come to them direct, but he did not wish to visit them again in sorrow, although he wrote this letter in great grief. He told them to punish a certain wicked man, and he had been punished. They were now to forgive him. In Troy he had sorrow, for Titus was not there. He went on to Macedonia, and there the success of his teaching was as sweet incense rising round him. In reply to the false Christians, who went to them with letters of introduction and praise from Jerusalem, he said that they themselves were his letters of praise, which all the world might read. He told them of the afflictions which he suffered for the sake of Jesus, sometimes longing for death.

The false Christians said he was mad. As a minister of Jesus, he had been whipped, imprisoned, and suffered many other hardships. Timothy would hear his voice rising in earnestness, as if, instead of blue sea and sunny mountains, he saw before him a crowd of dark-faced men of Corinth, as he exclaimed, "My mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, my heart is enlarged towards you. My children, be enlarged towards me. Be not joined with idolaters, for it is light joined to darkness." He had grieved for them, and it was not until he met Titus in Philippi that he began to feel relief. His last letter made them sorry; but he did not regret it, for it did them good, and they rejected the man who had attacked him.

He told them that when he sent off Titus he praised them to him, and now Titus himself praised them for their kindness during his stay with them. And Titus would be sitting there listening to all that Paul said, and ready to correct him if he was wrong on any point.

Some Foolish Boasting.

THESSALONICA : AGED 50-60.

HE spoke of money at some length in this letter, and it is very touching to see how this worn and buffeted traveller, who toiled all night at his needle and his loom, rather than take anything for himself, planned, schemed, and begged money from these strangers for the poor Christians of distant Jerusalem. It is not easy to account for it, but if he and they wished to establish a system like the temple tax of sending money from all parts to Jerusalem as the centre, it did not last very long. The Christians of Macedonia gave liberally, and he urged the men of Corinth to complete their collection before he came, bringing some Macedonians with him. Titus would carry this letter, and would bring a man who was greatly praised in Macedonia, and who was to take money to Jerusalem along with himself.

The letter reads as if he intended to stop at this point, but he goes on to answer the Pharisee Jews in language at times sarcastic, boastful, foolish, and in a way which he says is not always under God's guidance, but is a temporary indulgence of human weakness; and some of it that may have interested, informed, and amused the men of Corinth at the time, is not of so much interest now.

Would they bear with a little foolish boasting? These men said that he was no apostle because he did not live at other people's expense, but he was not a bit behind the highest. He had taken money from other congregations rather than be a burden to Corinth, and no man in Achaia would stop his glorying in independence. Indulging his humour further, he said that if any one thought him foolish, then foolish let him be, that he might boast for a little. We can imagine a pause in the dictation of the writing while they counted up the perils and punishments Paul had endured since that day on the Damascus road when he was wrapped in flame brighter than the sun. When these were written down, he turned to dreams and visions.

Boasting, although he knew it was not very wise, he told of a vision fourteen years ago, about the time that Barnabas found him at Tarsus, and he spoke as if it had happened to some one else. The man felt as if taken up into the third heaven (the rabbis taught that there were seven heavens of different degrees above the clouds), where he heard strange things. Then Paul told them a secret. Connected with his visions, and lest he

should be too much exalted, he had a bodily weakness that tortured him like an evil thing sent to humble him. Three times he prayed that it might go away, but the answer was that God's favour was enough for him, and God's spiritual power was made perfect in his weakness of body. There has been much curiosity about this "thorn in the flesh," as Paul figuratively called it, but it really matters very little. To him it was a drawback connected with these visions; for when they were highest, his body was weakest, and suffered most. People who suffer from fits are like this. Their body is racked with pains, their mind filled with visions; and Paul may have had such trances and such visions, when things dawned upon his mind that he would not otherwise have known.

He goes on to say that he would soon make his third visit to them, and these men would say he was cunning in that he sent others beforehand to collect their money. But he wrote them, while yet on the way, that those who were carrying on their wicked practices connected with idol-worship should repent before he came, for he would inquire into everything before witnesses, and would not spare the guilty.

He was now at the end of the letter, but he does not seem to have taken the pen into his own hand this time, for he bade Timothy write this closing message:—

"Finally, brothers, farewell. Be perfected, be comforted, be all of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you."

It is a long letter, and you have had parts of it already, and will hear more as we go on. Like the others, it would be copied out, rolled up in a cover, and given to Titus, who was to carry it, and who would guard it as a precious thing.

Begging for the Poor Jews.

THESSALONICA : AGED 50—60.

HAVING sent Titus away on his voyage back to Corinth with the letter, Paul and Timothy remained in Thessalonica. They did not keep to the city, but spent the summer and autumn in travelling up and down the roads and paths of the province of Macedonia, which was about the size of Scotland. In these journeys through the hot valleys and over the breezy hills he went as far inland as the district of Illyricum, north of Mace-

donia, spreading the gospel of Jesus and the worship of the living God. Wherever he found Christians he urged them to give something to the great collection for the poor of Jerusalem. Here again he delivered many addresses, of which we have no record other than the thoughts in his letters at the time. And men who used to go upon their knees and offer prayers and gifts to idols of wood and stone would resolve to live the higher life, as they listened to words like these :—

“About times and seasons, brothers, I have no need to tell you. You know that the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. When they are saying, Peace and safety, then will sudden destruction come upon them, and they shall not escape. But you, my brothers, are not in darkness, that it should overtake you as a thief : for you are all sons of light and of the day, and not of darkness and night. Slumber not as unbelievers, but watch and be sober. For they sleep and are drunken in the night ; but you, who are of the day, must be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love ; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. God has appointed you not for punishment, but to get salvation through our Lord Jesus the Christ, who died for us all, that, whether we watch or sleep, we should be together with Him. Therefore continue to comfort each other, and build up one another, as you do.”

But he was soon to bid a last farewell to Thessalonica. Having strengthened the Christians by his stirring presence, he must ride round the blue gulf to Berea. Again there would be a farewell meeting with this messenger from far Judea, who came as an angel among them. They loved him, and would be sorry to lose his presence from among them. He was going to Corinth. Would they ever see him again in his brown cloak riding through the broad streets of their white city ? With what tenderness would he address them on the day of their last meeting in Jason's house. This is from his letter to them :—

“I give thanks to God always for you, brothers, as is right ; for your faith grows greatly, and you have love one toward another, so that I praise you in other congregations for your patience and faith in the persecutions and afflictions which you have endured. And that is a sign of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of His kingdom, for which you suffer. And so I always pray for you, that God may count you worthy, and grant you every desire of goodness and every work of faith : that the name of Jesus may be glorified in you, and you made glorious in Him, according to the grace of our God and our Lord Jesus the Christ.

“Now I would speak to you about the presence of our Lord Jesus the Christ, and our gathering together to Him, so that you may not be easily shaken from your present mind, nor troubled by speech, or letters said to be from me, saying that the day of Jesus has come. Let no man deceive you in any way : for there must be a falling away first ; and he who exalts himself against what is called God, and is worshipped sitting in a temple, and setting himself up as God, that man of sin and son of evil, must first be exposed. You remember that, when I was with you, I told you of these things. And now you know that Jesus will be revealed in His own time. I give thanks to God always for you, my brothers beloved of God, for He chose you as the first of the fruits to be saved and made pure by His Spirit through belief in the truth, to which I called you by the gospel, that you might win the glory of Jesus. Stand fast therefore, brothers, and hold to what you have been taught, whether by my words or my letters. And may our God and Father, who loves us, and gives us comfort and good hope, comfort your hearts, and strengthen you in every good word and deed.”

In this he speaks again about the coming of Jesus ; but it is plain by his reference to the Roman emperor, whose image was worshipped in every temple, that he did not now expect Jesus as he did when he first stirred up the men of Thessalonica, who looked for Him daily, for that was five years ago.

With tears and cries, men, women, and children would accompany Paul and his companions out of the city, and along the paved road, in the golden heat of autumn. The plains were burnt up and yellow ; the leaves on the dense woods rustled, blood-crimson and russet, and grey and scarlet, with a noise like waves on the shore. In three days they would reach the town of Berea, which, even in hot autumn, was refreshed with trickling streams in its streets. And here were more Christians rejoicing to see him, and longing to hear his voice, which to them was as a voice from heaven. In that hill town the houses were small, so that if he spoke under a roof, the little room would be packed to the door ; but more likely they would sit in the open air in the shade of trees. In his letters about this time he speaks on behalf of the poor Christians of Jerusalem, for whom he was collecting everywhere,—

“He that sows sparingly will reap sparingly ; and he that sows liberally will reap liberally. Let every man give as his heart tells him ; not grudgingly, nor because he is compelled : for God loves a cheerful giver. God gives you His grace freely, that you may be rich in every good work, and that it may be said of you, He has

scattered abroad ; he has given to the poor : his goodness lives for ever. God, who gives seed to the sower, and bread for food, will increase your seed for sowing, and the fruits of your goodness, and enrich you in everything, that you may be generous and have cause to give thanks to Him. The collection of money for the poor Christians of Jerusalem supplies all their wants, and brings many thanksgivings to God ; seeing that through this proof of your Christianity they glorify God for your obedience to the gospel of Jesus, and for the liberality of your gifts to them and to all Christians. And they themselves, with prayers for you, long after you in love, because of the exceeding grace of God that is in you. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift of Jesus."

Minerva's Bright Helmet.

DIUM : AGED 50-60.

HE had now made the journey through all parts of Macedonia which he planned when he left Ephesus, and the next thing was to find a ship and embark for Corinth. He was about to leave the Christians of Berea; and break one more life's thread, for he would never be back again. It was his custom, when saying farewell to the Christians of a town, to do it in words of lofty guidance and strong encouragement. We can picture him speaking thus to the men and women of that town who had been brought from the darkness of idolatry into the light of God at the call of his voice :—

"I beseech you, brothers, to know and esteem the men who work among you, and are over you, and advise you ; and to think much of them for the work they do for Jesus' sake. Be at peace among yourselves. Warn the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, and be forbearing to all. See that no one returns harm for harm ; but ever do what is good, one toward another, and toward all. Rejoice always, pray always, and be thankful : for that is the will of God to you through Jesus. Do not suppress His Spirit in others, or despise them that speak ; but test everything, and hold fast what is good, avoiding every appearance of evil. And may the God of peace Himself make you wholly pure ; and may you be preserved without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus the Christ. He is faithful whose voice calls you, and will do it. Brothers, pray for us ; and may the grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ be with you."

Riding through the low archway in the town wall, Paul and his friends were upon the road, through rocky valleys, down to the plain by the sea. Five years ago the men of Berea had seen him safely to the sea-coast, and some had sailed with him to Athens. Again they would go to Dium, at the river's mouth, and wait until he sailed away from their shores. The glorious gospel of serving the living God, rather than idols of wood and stone, of faith in the way of Jesus, had spread so far and taken such root since his last visit, that there would be Christians at this seaport also to welcome him, and listen as he exhorted them to stand fast in the new faith, and strive to live the higher life of purity and temperance to which they were called by the voice of Jesus. It is not to be supposed that the thoughts in his letters appear there for the first and only time, but rather that we have there garnered together what he was repeating to the people wherever he went, and that what is best in these letters was repeated often.

“By the power of God which was given to me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and others have built upon it. But let each one be careful how he builds. For no man can lay any other foundation for his life than Jesus the Christ. If any man shall build upon that foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or stubble, his building will be tested by fire, that will prove the work of what kind it is. If the work stands, which he has built upon the foundation of Jesus, he shall be rewarded; but if it is burnt up, he will suffer loss, and be saved himself, but only as through fire.”

There were no white waterfalls on Mount Olympus, no slabs of rock glittering with rain, no clouds trailing their misty mantles over the mountain's shoulder, as Paul, in his brown cloak, stepped into the small coasting-boat at Dium; for it was hot autumn, and the woods were tinted with russet and gold, and palpitating blue hung over the great hill.

Across the gulf were the white walls of Thessalonica, which they had left a few weeks ago. They were not going back, but seaward towards Corinth, with the huge peaked sail stretched across the mast, and a favouring wind for which they had waited. In golden autumn weather they would sleep on deck with their cloaks wrapped about them, and the great stars throbbing like lamps of silver. Beyond the long island of Negropont, they would again sail through the lovely scenes past which Paul glided years ago, in like autumn weather; through the quiet inland sea, and out among islands of every shape and colour, with the blue waves flashing round them. For the third time he would

see Diana's white temple on Cape Sunium, whence the citadel of Corinth could be seen sixty miles off, were it not for the high island of Ægina, which caused them to steer closer in to Athens. Again the steersman's shout told them he had caught the sun-flash of Minerva's helmet above the white temples of Athens. And Paul would think in silence of the morning six years ago, when he spoke with enthusiasm of religion to a circle of cold philosophers, who received his message with smiles and polite words. He may even have told his companions what happened on that day, and of his determination henceforth to speak of Jesus only.

The white queen of cities faded among the stained cliffs and yellow woods as they swept past Salamis and the islands, and entered the port of Cenchrea, to land on the stone wharf at the statue of Neptune, placed there to give courage to sailors, who believed in a bronze image. Again he saw the slaves of black and brown and their taskmasters heaving cargo out of the ships, and the droves of sleepy asses, camels, and horses being laden with sacks and bundles, to walk in long lines up the six miles of paved road to the proud city between the two seas. And when the evening clouds gathered in crimson over the purple mountains to the west, they saw the castle of Corinth towering above the yellow plain, where the great city spread out its streets, and white temples stood—not ragged and reeling pillars as they are to-day, but covered with a broad roof, under which priests walked with naked feet and smoking incense.

Riding through the low archway of the eastern gate, he was again in the gay, drunken city. He went to stay with Gaius, a well-to-do man, who had a large house; and the news of his arrival soon spread among the Christians. There would be a hurried saddling of asses, and a sudden departure of certain Jerusalem Jews, who had been boasting that this traveller in his brown cloak was no apostle, and a coward besides; for we do not read that they met him there. It suited them better to tell their lies in his absence, when they could live undisturbed upon the bread and honey, and milk and wine, of those they deceived.

The men who paid no heed to his letters, and caused divisions in the congregations, trembled when they heard his voice. We know what he would say, for we have it in his letters. Those who wished to blend the good of Christianity with the pleasures of idolatry had to be dealt with. What the women of the congregation thought of this combination we are not told, but their hearts would revolt against it, for it was not what the Jew in the brown cloak had taught.

Rooting out Falsehoods.

CORINTH : AGED 50-60.

THE large upper room of Gaius's house was filled with seated Christians, men and women, in the red and white dresses of Greeks. Others stood against the walls; others crowded at the door, keeping out the sunshine; and others sat in the windows, keeping out the light, as Paul rose and, with hand uplifted, gave the sign for silence. They saw that his hair was growing white, but his grey eyes were piercing as ever.

"I thank God always for you, because of the grace given you in Jesus; for you have been enriched in words and knowledge, so that His gospel has been confirmed in you. I beg of you, in His name, all to speak the same thing and be of the same mind, that there may be no more divisions. For I have heard that there are quarrels among you. One says, I follow Paul; another, Apollos; another, Peter; another, Jesus. Can Jesus be divided? was I crucified for you? or were you baptized in my name? I thank God that I only baptized Crispus and Gaius; lest it should be said that I baptized in my own name. I baptized also those in Stephen's house: but I do not think that I baptized any other. Jesus sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: and that not with words of worldly wisdom, lest His death should be thought of no avail.

"When first I came, I could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to worldly men. Like babes in Jesus, I fed you with milk, not with meat: for you were not able to bear my strong words, nor are you now. You are still worldly: having jealousy and strife among you, living after the ways of worldly men. One says, I follow Paul; another, I follow Apollos; and so you dispute. Who are Apollos and Paul, but only ministers, each as the Lord gave them power, and through whom you believed the gospel? I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the growth. So that neither he who planted, nor he who watered, is anything; but God is all. We are both God's gardeners, and you are His garden, and we shall be rewarded according to our work.

"O Corinthians, my mouth is open, my heart is large toward you. As children to a father, may your hearts be turned toward me. Be not mixed up with idolaters. What companionship has light with darkness? or Jesus with an idol? or a Christian with an unbeliever? What has a temple of God to do with an idol? You are living temples of the living God. For it is written

in the Bible, God will dwell in them, and live *in* them, and be their God, and they shall be His people. Therefore come out from among them, and be separate, and touch no unclean thing; and God will receive you, and be to you a Father, and you will be His sons and daughters. Having these promises, let us purify ourselves from all defilement, and perfect our holiness in the fear of God.

“Open your heart to me; for I have wronged, or corrupted, or taken advantage of no man. And you are in my heart to live and die together with me. I speak boldly to you, and glory in you: for I am filled with comfort, and overflow with joy in all my trials. When I came into Macedonia I had no relief, being afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, who comforts the lowly, comforted me by the coming of Titus; who told me of your longings, mournings, zeal for me. Though I made you sorry by my letter, I do not regret it; for you were only made sorry for a time, and your sorrow led to your repentance after a godly way. For godly sorrow brings about repentance unto a salvation which has no regret: but worldly sorrow brings death. What earnest care this sorrow caused in you, what indignation and clearing, what fear and longing, what zeal and avenging! In everything proving yourselves to be pure in this matter. Although I wrote so, it was not for him who did the wrong, nor for him who suffered, but that your care for us might be seen in the sight of God. And so I am comforted, rejoicing the more because of the joy of Titus, whose spirit was refreshed by you all.”

Thus Paul rooted out the false teaching that had been sown by his enemies, and found his friends ready to turn again to him and say that his was the only right way. He was no longer a poor man. It is thought that his father's death brought him money, and we know he had warm friends in Philippi and Antioch, who were determined he should not suffer from poverty on his journeys. We no more read of him toiling night and day at loom, knife, and needle to keep himself; and he would not allow the Christians to pay either for his food and lodging or for his teaching. Before, he lived at Corinth with the weaver Aquila, but now the city treasurer would have willingly received the man who first brought Christianity to the city. He had ordered his letters to be read to all the Christians in Achaia, and we may be sure he visited Lechæum, Cenchrea, and the other congregations round about, to encourage them to keep to the true way. And this is part of what he had to tell them:—

“Now I entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Jesus,

I Paul, who am said to be humble when present, but brave when away: I beg of you, that I may not have cause to show courage here against some, who treat me as though I lived a worldly life. Though I live in the world, I do not fight according to the way of the world: for our weapons are not worldly, but mighty before God to the casting down of forts. We overthrow all imaginations and high thoughts exalted against the knowledge of God, and bring every thought into obedience to Jesus, and are ready to punish the disobedient.

“Look at what is before you. If any one trusts that he is Christ’s servant, let him again consider that so are we. Though I might boast of my authority from God to build you up, I would not seem to frighten you. My enemies tell you that my letters are weighty and strong; but my appearance is weak, and my speaking of no account. But let them count on this, that what I am in letters when absent, I will be in deeds when present. I am not anxious to compare myself with these men who praise themselves to you. Measuring and comparing themselves with themselves only, they have no sense. I will not boast, except of the measure which God gave me, that I might reach you. I was the first to come to you with the gospel of Jesus, and am not boasting of other men’s work; but having a hope that as your faith grows, we shall be encouraged by you to preach the gospel in places beyond you, and not to boast merely of what we have already done. He that would glory, let him glory in the Lord. For not the man who praises himself is truly praised, but he whom God praises.”

If the gentle Gallio was still the Roman governor, it is likely that he would see Paul, for he would wish to meet again the Jew who introduced the new religion that had taken such a hold upon the city. But Paul would not see the streets crowded with riotous and drunken throngs, drawn from all countries to see the great Isthmian games, for he only stayed three months at this time, and the games were not until the spring.

On a Peak of Sunshine.

CORINTH: AGED 50—60.

THE cold winds of winter were blowing through the streets and markets of Corinth, for the hills beyond the great plain were white with snow, showing a line of peaks that flushed

with rose at dawn, and burned crimson when the sun set over them. On that narrow neck of land between the seas the winter was mild and the city quiet, for there were no ships upon the sea, and the roads were deserted by the strings of cargo-carrying animals, and the markets were not the crowded places of the spring and summer.

Paul and his friends, among whom were now Titus and Timothy, were wintering in Corinth; but where would he go next? He had long wished to go to Rome, and what he learned of the Christians there from Aquila and his wife greatly increased his desire, for a congregation had already been formed without his help. Dreaming of his future plans, Rome rose again in a fair vision before his eyes. Jesus bade His followers preach the gospel over all the world, and the saying sank deep into Paul's heart. There were Christians who went daily to the temple, and loved to hear the silver trumpets of the priests; but there was a higher trumpet-call to him, to carry the gospel of Jesus to the people who sat in darkness at the feet of dead idols. To him the Roman Empire was the world. He had travelled through many provinces, and crossed many seas, and visited more cities, towns, and villages of that empire than he could count, and the followers of Jesus were already of many nations and languages. With the light of the gospel spreading out from Rome, then truly would the ends of the earth hear the Saviour's name. He did not know of the teeming millions of China and of India who followed Confucius and Buddha five hundred years before Jesus was born.

He had met other Christians from Rome, who told him of the state of the congregation there, some of whom were Jews; and he knew of their difficulties and errors, their strength and weakness. Living in comfort in Gaius's house, surrounded by friends, he could look back and look forward, and as he did so he realized how much he had done. For indeed he was standing on a pinnacle of sunshine, and his feet were turning towards the shadows, and he knew it. As he sat in the winter sunshine on the flat house roof, he could see the blue sea, studded with islands. Beyond these hazy islands was Athens, beyond these white hills lay imperial Rome; but he had much yet to do before he would stand among her temples and palaces.

And so he resolved to write a letter to the Christians there—the first that he wrote to people who had never heard his voice. In other letters he reminded them of what he had said, but now he must write it all down. What would he say? He had been twenty-four years a Christian, thinking constantly of the Christ,

and teaching Christianity under many strange conditions, where God was unknown, and he had learned much; so that he was not the same man who rode down the road to Damascus blaspheming the name of Jesus and hating His followers. Nor was he the same as when he first stood up in the synagogue to publicly say he was a Christian. His mind had opened towards Jesus, as a flower to the sun. Things which troubled him at first troubled him no more, and what used to raise his anger did not disturb him now. The older he grew in this glorious gospel, the wider and higher it became, throbbing with thoughts and emotions that, like the heavens over him, moved round one golden centre, whose depths and glory he could not measure.

In this letter he sets forth, primarily for Jews, the gospel of Jesus as he knew and taught it. And yet he could not but feel, as he wrote, how far short was his presentation of Jesus and His gospel from the living Jesus and His sayings. High as is the record left us of Paul and his writings, they are but reflections from the face of the Holy One, and echoes of the voice of Him who knew no evil, neither was guile found in His mouth.

The composition would be slow. The number of his Bible references are signs of much care and forethought, although quoting the Bible was easy to him, for it was only repeating the lessons of his youth, and each fresh subject would suggest a train of passages which, he had been taught by the rabbis, surrounded that idea. Hence we find in this most laboured and most learned of his letters not only blazings forth of rich, inspired thoughts, but long arguments, in which the use of logic, metaphysics, and theology suggests his old skill and subtlety as a rabbinic controversialist.

Tertius, who wrote as Paul dictated, was proud to be his clerk, and put in that he was the writer; and he seems to have been a Roman, for he sent a greeting from himself. It was a letter to all the Christians at Rome, and Paul told them that their faith was known throughout all the Roman Empire, and it was his constant desire to preach the gospel in Rome also. Some of the letter has already been referred to, and more will be, so that I shall look now at the narrative. The whole you will read in your Bible.

He told them of the power of the gospel of Jesus, giving a passage from the Old Testament; and, like the rabbis, he was not particular about the exact words, if he gave the sense, quoting from memory; for if he had his rolls of books beside him, they were very troublesome to refer to. From the beginning of the world God made Himself known in the consciences of men; but instead of adoring Him, they had made idols of birds, beasts, and

snakes. There were Jews among these Roman Christians who still clung to the Jewish religious law, and he told them that the mark of circumcision was nothing, but the inward change was everything. The old way of trying to be righteous, by keeping the Jewish law, had passed away; the new way of righteousness, by faith in Jesus, had come. When they became good, their old life of badness died, and a new life of goodness rose in resurrection within them, just as Jesus died and rose again.

He told them that the Jewish religious law was dead, but faith was alive, in an argument hard to follow, and bringing out a conclusion which to plain minds is contrary to common sense, saying that in certain states he was not responsible for his bad actions, for it was not he who did them but evil in him. But the Spirit of Jesus delivered him from all that. And yet he could wish to be banished from Jesus for ever, if that could bring his countrymen to Him.

And so the composition of the great letter progressed from day to day under the pen of Tertius, who was most likely a trained scribe, and a faster writer than Timothy.

Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain.

CORINTH: AGED 50—60.

WITH his friends sitting by, listening to blazings forth of truth which astonished them, and to trains of subtle reasoning which they could not follow, Paul continued his letter.

In a long rabbinic argument about the Jewish law, he referred to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, Esau, Moses; and then came a rich opening of the very heart of the gospel, which he proclaimed wherever he went—that if they confessed that Jesus is Lord, and believed that God raised Him from the dead, they would be saved. In these great and simple words he showed his fellow-countrymen how easy was the way of Jesus compared with the endless laws and rules of the old Jewish way.

Turning from the Jews to all Christians, he admonished them, in a mass of golden thoughts, in which it is easy to recognize lights and flashes of the sayings of Jesus,—

“Bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not.

“Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.

“Be of the same mind one toward another.

“Set not your mind on high things, but on things lowly.

“Be not wise in your own eyes.

“Render not evil for evil.

“Revenge not yourselves, but give place to anger.

“Love to your neighbour is equal to the whole Jewish law.

“If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him to drink.

“Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.”

From these mountain-tops of Christianity he went down into the valleys of everyday conduct and business. They were to honour and obey their Roman rulers, and be good citizens, paying the taxes and the customs dues, and owe no man anything, and they need fear no one. Paul knew what it was to be befriended by a Roman judge and by the Roman law. Some of them would only eat herbs, others thought more of one day than another ; but eating or not eating certain foods could not make a man good or bad. Again he reflected the sayings of Jesus in these words,—

“The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, joy, and peace in God.”

From Jerusalem in Palestine to Illyricum beyond Macedonia he had taught the gospel of Jesus, going where His name was unknown, so that no man could say he had followed him. He had been hindered many times from coming to Rome ; but now, having no more places to visit, he would come, on his way to Spain. He would first go to Jerusalem, to deliver the money collected in Macedonia and Greece for the poor Christians, and then go on towards Spain, visiting Rome on the way ; and he hoped they would help him forward on this long journey. They were a congregation formed by somebody else, and he would not remain long with them. He had enemies in Jerusalem, and he asked them to pray for him, that he might be delivered from these disobedient men, and that his ministration which he had for the poor Christians of Jerusalem might be pleasing to them, so that he might come on to Rome, through the will of God, with joy, and find rest there.

The rest of the letter consists of salutations and messages. It is strange that he should ask these men of Rome to pray that he might be protected from the false Christians at Jerusalem, and that his gift should be received favourably. There were still men there who said he was perverting Christianity, wrenching it away from its Jewish foundations, and offering it to foreigners in a way that no Jew should do. He knew who was to carry this great letter to Rome—a thing of importance to him, and of danger to the messenger ; and, strange to say, the messenger was to be Phœbe, a woman of Cenchrea. They were to help her in her business, for she had been a helper of many. He had written

to the Corinthian Christians as if women were to take no part in their congregations, and yet Phœbe was an office-bearer in Cenchrea; and her name has come down to us in a halo of womanliness, as a helper of many.

Before writing, he must have made close inquiries about the Christians at Rome, for he sent greetings to twenty-six men and women by name, and to friends not named, and also to five small congregations that met in houses. Among these are the names of his old friends Aquila and his wife, who risked their lives for him. After six years the humble weaver and his wife were back again in the great city, and, as usual, with a congregation of Christians in their little house. They could say that they were the first to carry Christianity to Corinth, and had sheltered Paul there, and saved his life at Ephesus, and had taught Apollos, and gathered Christians into their house wherever they went.

In his greetings to women he singles out Mary, a Jewess, who had done much work. Two of the men, Andronicus and Junia, he calls apostles, saying that they were relations of his own, and Christians before he was. These Christians of Rome were Jews, Greeks, and Romans, some free and some slaves. They were to beware of the Pharisee Christians, if they should visit them; and his companions, Timothy, Lucien, Sospater, Jason, Gaius, with whom he was living, and Erastus, the city treasurer, and all the congregation at Corinth, sent their greetings.

And so this letter, the greatest he ever wrote, was drafted, corrected, copied out by Tertius, read over, perhaps, to the whole congregation at Corinth; and then, with his mark and seal upon it, the long paper roll would be sewn up in a haircloth cover, to preserve it from wet, and committed to the faithful and courageous woman, who was ready to face the wintry seas as the bearer of this veritable torch of light to Rome and the world. She did her work, but what became of her we do not know. Like Tertius, and Gaius, and the city treasurer, she appears for an instant shining in one line of this great letter, and we hear no more of her or of them, but their names are part of the world's treasures.

Hollows of Flowers.

CORINTH: AGED 50-60.

LIVING with Gaius, with the city treasurer, and perhaps the Roman governor, as friends, and surrounded by others who

equally loved and admired him, Paul spent the winter—of rain and wind, of black thunderstorms and bursts of sunshine—in comfort, but not in idleness. He worked among the Christians until he had removed all their divisions, and his voice would be frequently heard in their congregations. It is not difficult to know what he said as he stood, while they sat on mats on the floor. The women were unveiled and by themselves, but not hidden by any screen; for while the method of worship was after the pattern of the Jewish synagogue, the Greeks and foreigners had other customs and manners. In this part of his letter to them he stirs and touches them with his sarcasm and power:—

“I wish you could bear with me in a little foolishness: indeed you must. For I am jealous over you, that I may present you pure to Jesus; and I fear lest your minds should be corrupted by craft from the simplicity and purity that leads to Him. You did wrong to listen to another teacher, teaching a different gospel; for I consider that I am not a whit behind the chief apostles. Though rude in speech, I am not rude in knowledge, as I have shown to all men. Did I do wrong in preaching to you the gospel of God for nothing, when I might have lived upon you? I took help from other congregations, that I might minister to you free; and when I was in want among you, I was not a burden upon any man. The Christians from Macedonia supplied my wants, so that in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and so will I continue. No man shall stop my glorying in this. These men are false apostles, deceitful workers, trying to shape themselves into apostles of the Christ. And no wonder; for, as the rabbis say, the Devil shaped himself into an angel of light: and it was no great thing if the Devil’s servants try to appear ministers of righteousness, whose punishment shall be according to their works.

“Think me not foolish; but if you do, let it be that I may boast a little. What I say is not from God, but in foolishness. Seeing that these men boast about worldly things to you who are so wise, so will I. You can bear with men who would bring you into slavery, devour you, exalt themselves, and smite you on the face. If they are bold, so am I. Are they Hebrews, Israelites, children of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of the Christ? (speaking as if mad) I am more; in toils and in prisons more abundant, in scourgings above count, and often in danger of death. If I am foolish, you have compelled me. Working among you, I was not behind the chief apostles, though I am as nothing; but the true marks of an apostle were shown among you in all patience, in signs, wonders, and powers. In what did I make you

inferior to other congregations, except that I was not a burden to you? and you can forgive me for that. I seek not your money, but you; and I will most gladly spend and be spent out for your souls. And if I love you so much, am I therefore to be loved the less? They say I did not burden you myself, but caught you with cunning. Did any of them that I sent ever take advantage of you? Did not Titus walk in the same spirit, treading in the same steps as myself?

“This is the third time that I have come to you, and I will not spare you, seeing that you have asked a proof that Jesus speaks in me. He was crucified in weakness, but lives through the power of God; and we are weak with Him, and shall live with Him through the same power. Try yourselves, and prove yourselves whether you are in the faith. Do you not know that the Spirit of Jesus the Christ is in you unless you are unbelievers? But we are not now unbelievers. I pray God that you may do no evil, but ever that which is honourable. We can do nothing against the truth, but only for it; and I rejoice when I am weak and you are strong, and pray for your perfection. May the grace of Jesus, the love of God, and the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

By the end of February the plains were again deep with grass, hidden here and there in hollows of flowers, crimson and gold, white and blue, and the deep woods about the temple of Neptune were again covered with the light tints of spring, amid the dark-leaved evergreens. But the blue skies and steady winds were more noticed by sailors and travellers, and in the harbours of Lechæum and Cenchrea coasting-boats were having the figure-head coloured in fresh red and blue, and the great white eye repainted, in readiness for the summer. The time had come for Paul to carry out his great intention of going to Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain.

James and the apostles at Jerusalem asked him to collect for their poor, and he had gathered from all the congregations in the provinces of Syria, Asia, Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia, and some sent men to accompany him with their collection, so that there was a large sum in Corinth. He hoped to convey it safely to Jerusalem, but Jews who were the bearers of their temple money were often robbed. Although he was taking such a large offering, he was so doubtful how he would be received, and feared so much for his own safety, that he prayed daily to be preserved; and still the impression grew upon him that he was going into danger out of which he might never come.

But his first danger was to come from Jews nearer at hand. For some unknown reason he wished to reach Jerusalem in time

for the Passover festival, for he was still ready to take part in that supper in the Jewish fashion. The ship was fixed, and as the day of departure drew near, there would be farewell meetings with his many friends, all the more solemn and impressive because they knew of his fear that he was going to a prison in Jerusalem. Would they ever see him again? Who could tell? Nor would it be without tears and cries that they listened to his exhortations to goodness and his prayers for them. Again we turn to the letters for his thoughts at Corinth:—

“If, as men do, I fought with beasts at Ephesus, of what profit was it, if the dead rise not again? As condemned men say, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we are to die. Do not deceive yourselves: bad companions will make you bad. Wake up from drunkenness to righteousness, and sin not; for some of you do not know God. I say this to make you ashamed. But some one will ask me, How are the dead raised? and with what body will they come? O foolish one, the seed which is sown does not spring until it dies; and what is sown is not the body that will be, but a single grain of wheat or barley: and God gives the seed a body. All things are not made of the same matter, nor have they the same glory. The sun, moon, and stars are different, and one star differs from another in glory. So also is it in the resurrection. We are sown a perishable body, and raised imperishable; sown in dishonour, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in strength; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. Adam became a living soul, Jesus a life-giving spirit. As we have borne an earthly shape, so shall we bear a heavenly one.

“But flesh and blood cannot come into the kingdom of God; neither does the perishable come into the imperishable. I now tell you a mystery: We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body put on immortality, and then shall be what is written in the Bible, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O grave, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus the Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast and immovable, always excelling in the work of Jesus, for you know that your labour is not useless in Him.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, and be strong; and let all that you do be done in love. If any man loves not Jesus, let him be an outcast. The grace of Jesus be with you, and my love be with you in Him.”

Returning with Dread to Jerusalem.

CORINTH : AGED 50-60.

IT was known to the Jews of the city that Paul was going in the ship that was taking pilgrims to Jerusalem, calling at ports on the way. Whether it was that they did not wish to have him with them, or that some men were going to seize the money he was taking, we do not know, but there was a Jewish plot to kill him if he went. It was discovered at the last moment, and he let the ship sail without him, and escaped the danger.

His plans were then changed, and instead of going in a pilgrimage direct to Palestine, he joined with Sopater, Aristarchus, and Secundus (from the province of Macedonia), Tychicus and Trophimus (from the province of Asia), Gaius and Timothy (from Galatia), to go to Philippi and hold the Passover there. When he bade farewell to Corinth, with its castle on the rock, and far-reaching plains, its winding rivers and green woods, it was for the last time. At Cenchrea he would also hold a last meeting with the Christians, in which he would speak long, and his words would be as nails fastened in their memory.

“If I preach that Jesus has been raised from the dead, how do some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is none, then Jesus has not been raised: and if He has not, then my preaching and your faith are of no use. We also would be false witnesses of God; for we have said that He raised up Jesus the Christ: which would not be true, if the dead are not raised. If they are not raised, neither has Jesus been raised: and if so, your faith is useless, and you are not saved, and they who have died trusting in Him have perished. If we hope in Jesus for this life only, then of all men we are most to be pitied. But Jesus has risen from the grave, the first of the fruits of them that are dead: for as by a man death came, so by a man comes the resurrection of the dead.”

There would be a good company, with men from the province of Achaia also, as they stood in the boat, under the great peaked sail, gazing silently at the figures of their friends on the stone quay, who watched them sailing out of the bay of Cenchrea towards the tossing sea and the blue islands. Before the sun rested in gold and crimson on the hills of the Morea, they had passed Athens, flying before the north wind. For the last time he saw the white temple on the heights as he sailed round Cape Sunium, which he had passed only a few months before, in hot autumn weather.

But now the days were cool and windy, and the nights very cold ; for the year was young—a year laden with great changes for the earnest, fearless traveller. As usual, they would set sail at the first ray of dawn, and anchor again, at the setting of the sun, in some sheltered bay. Instead of coasting up inside the island of Negropont, they sailed out into the blue *Ægean* Sea, heading towards far-off Mount Athos, the sailors' landmark, for the coast of Macedonia.

What he said to his companions on these long sunny days and starry nights we are not told, but this is from one of his letters :—

“I would not have you to be ignorant of the different ways of serving in the congregation of Christians. Before you became Christians, you were led away hither and thither after dumb idols. You must know that no man can be inspired with the Spirit of God who cries out, Cursed be Jesus, as unbelievers say. But any man who says that Jesus is Lord speaks by the Holy Spirit of God. There are different ways of speaking in the congregation, and of ministering and working, by the help of God's Spirit. To one is given words of wisdom and knowledge ; to another, faith, and healing power, and preaching ; and through all these God works, giving to each man what He will. As we have hearing, smelling, seeing, walking, all belonging to the one body, and no one part of the body can do without the other, so are we in Jesus. For we were all baptized into one Spirit ; whether Jews or foreigners, slaves or freemen, we all share in the one Spirit of God. In the congregation you are all joined to Jesus. But God has given you different gifts. You are not all apostles, prophets, or teachers. Earnestly try to have the greater gifts.”

In about ten days' time they would sail past Mount Athos, a strange cone of hoary white that rises to a height greater than any English mountain, a hill that is now looked upon as holy by thousands of monks who have their homes among its cliffs and gorges. Two days more and they sailed into the bay of Neapolis, with its bronze Neptune standing above the busy harbour, and its three white temples amid their groves on the hillside. The ship went on to Troy with Tychicus and Trophimus, but Paul and the others came on shore, and rode up over the Pangean Hills to the familiar city of Philippi.

There he found an important friend—none other than Luke, the beloved physician, who brought him to Philippi. Almost six years had passed since they first met in Troy. They may have met again in the interval, but we have no sign that they travelled together. But henceforth Luke would be the sharer of his trials

and adventures, and would write the book without which we would know very little of Paul's life and journeys.

Paul and his friends were in time for the Jewish Passover in April, but whether he joined in that festival with his fellow-countrymen we do not know. If he did eat of the roast lamb, the unleavened cake, and the bitter herbs, it would not be with the Jews of the old religion, but with those who had become Christians. In Lydia's house, which was their meeting-place, he would speak to them of the glorious gospel of the higher life in Jesus, as he had often done before. But they did not know that his farewell words were to be farewell for ever, although they heard him say that he had warnings of danger in Jerusalem.

"Since the day that I heard of your love in the Spirit, I have not ceased to pray that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding; living worthy of Jesus, and well-pleasing to God; bearing fruit in every good deed, growing in the knowledge of Him, and strengthened with His power, by the might of His glory, unto patience, long-suffering, and joy. Give thanks to God the Father, who has made us fit to share the rewards of the children of light. He has delivered us out of the power of darkness, and put us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of our sins. In past times you were enemies to God in your thoughts and deeds; but you have been reconciled to Him through the death of Jesus, that you may be presented holy and without fault before Him. But you must continue fixed and steadfast in the faith, not to be moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, and which has been preached everywhere, of which I Paul am a minister. I rejoice in all my sufferings for your sake. I am a minister of Jesus, the hope of glory in you. Him I proclaim, advising and teaching every man in all wisdom, that I may present you perfect. To that end I toil, striving according to His will, who works with power through me."

The Lad in the Window.

PHILIPPI: AGED 50-60.

THEY spent the Passover week at Philippi, "the place of fountains," whose rivers braided the plains with silver, and then rode down to Neapolis again. There they found a ship to take them over to Troy, on the coast of Asia, about a hundred

miles distant, taking Luke with them, who will henceforth give us fuller details of what Paul said and did. Sailing out of the harbour in a little coasting-boat, the wind changed, and they had to seek the shelter of islands, taking five days to sail a distance usually done in two. They were glad when the boat entered the wide sandy mouth of the river, and was rowed up to the stone quay of Troy harbour, where they were met by Tychicus and Trophimus, who had been there for some weeks; and they all went up to the city on the side of the hill, where there were now many Christians.

While the ship waited for fine weather in the harbour, Paul and his friends lived with the Christians in the city; and as they were a week there, we get a vivid glimpse from Luke of one of their strange Sunday meetings. The first day of the week was not known as Sunday, or the Sabbath, but as the day on which the Lord rose; and the Christians met at the dawn of that day in memory of His rising, singing together, and admonishing each other to good deeds. It was no holiday, for the city worshipped idols, and paid no heed to the Jewish idea of resting every seventh day. They met again throughout the day, but their most important meeting was at sunset, when they spoke, and sang, and prayed, and their leader broke bread at supper, as Jesus used to do with His disciples. This meal they ate lovingly together, calling it their "love-feast"—a name which is still kept up by some Christians. It was at these meals, under the dim, smoky lamps, that those who had been accustomed to the feasting and drinking of the idols' temples confused the two things, and caused disorder and disgrace.

The city had good streets and fine houses, and the one in which they met was three stories high, the lower flats being used for living in, while the top flat was the large upper room for meetings, reached by an outside stone stair. It would not likely hold more than a hundred people, but it was crowded on that Sunday evening; for Paul, the great teacher of whom wonders were freely told, had arrived in a ship from Macedonia, and would be there. The doors were shut, for they were careful that outsiders should not hear what was said; but the place was lighted, in the Eastern fashion, with many hanging lamps, some bright, some smoky; and as the night was hot, the little slit windows high up were wide open. By this time Paul's friends were nearly all in the ship again, sailing round a cape of land to wait for him, while he held a farewell meeting with the Christians. Knowing he would leave next morning, and having a feeling that he would never see them again, he spoke long. We

can easily gather what he would say from his letters, for he had but one gospel for all.

“Let not sin have power over your bodies, but present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and instruments of His righteousness. Sin shall not have power over you: for you are not under the Jewish law, but under the grace of God. You know that whom you offer to obey as slaves, his slaves you are, either of sin unto death, or righteousness unto life. But God be thanked, whereas you were once slaves of sin, you have become obedient from the heart to the teaching by which you were delivered. Made free from sin, you have become servants of righteousness.”

The red sun sank over the isles of purple and crimson out among the rippling waves, and the stars hung their silver lamps in the violet sky, but Paul still spoke on, and the people listened as to the voice of an angel in their midst; and the bread had not yet been broken among them. It was past midnight when a sharp cry arose, and there was immediate confusion. A lad had fallen out of one of the windows. He had climbed up to a seat where he could see the night outside, and the smoky lamps within; and overcome with heat, lateness, and Paul's long speaking, he fell asleep, and overbalancing, fell out of the window with a cry. Paul stopped. The door was quickly unfastened. Those who found the lad on the ground said he was dead. Paul went down by the outside stair, and kneeling by the body, stretched himself upon him, as the prophets of old did, and kissed him, saying to those who were wailing round him, “Make no ado. His life is in him.” These were joyful words to the lad's friends; and leaving him in their care, the people returned upstairs to the meeting. Then Paul, standing up before them, solemnly blessed the bread, and broke it, and handed it to them, as Jesus used to do, and they ate their love meal together for the last time. After that he resumed speaking.

“I speak as men speak, so to reach you; for as you have once been the slaves of uncleanness and badness, so now you must be the servants of righteousness. When you were the slaves of wickedness, you served not righteousness. What fruit was there for you, in things of which you are now ashamed? for they end in death. Being freed from the slavery of wickedness, and having entered the service of God, you have now your fruit in holiness, ending in life for evermore. For the wages of sin is death; but God's free gift is life for ever in Jesus the Christ, our Lord.”

The night wore on; the stars grew dim and ceased to sparkle as the golden day broke over the pine trees on Mount Ida. He told

them that his work was done in that part of the world, that he was going away to the west—to Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain—and that his fears were greatest for Jerusalem, where chains and a prison awaited him ; and he asked them to pray for him, that he might be delivered from bad men. As the red flush of the dawn stole up the sky, filling the windows with slits of blue and rose, the lamps hanging from the roof smoked and looked yellow, and with earnest prayers for them all, the long meeting came to an end.

Out into the sweet morning air the Christians came, and down the narrow stair, excited, enthusiastic, going to see him off upon his ride of twenty miles over the dewy hills to Assos. And among those who saw him mount and start was the lad who fell from the window, and his friends rejoiced that he was alive and well.

A Sorrowful Farewell.

MILETUS : AGED 50-60.

GOING out by the south gate, like a tunnel through the thick city wall, the Christians accompanied Paul as he rode along the paved Roman road towards Assos. The bushes by the little streams were covered with blossoms of red and white, and the dew of the morning drew out their fragrance upon the cool air. The note of the turtle-dove came from the green woods, for it was the month of all the year for brightest flowers and sweet bird-calls. He rode past the famous hot springs where fine gentlemen of the city went to bathe and have themselves rubbed with sweet-smelling oils by slaves—a different life from that of the Jew in the brown cloak, whom they passed, with friends about him, on the road that like a white band wound up and down along the hillside.

The ship was waiting round Cape Lectum while they were toiling over the hills, to come down at the town of Assos, and go on for a mile farther of steep, rough road to the port at the rocky shore. His friends came twenty miles, and waited until he was taken up by the ship, weeping as they turned away ; for at that time, and in these lands, men were not ashamed to be seen weeping as they are with us, and he had told them of his fears of imprisonment. With the rustling north wind blowing steadily behind them from dawn to sunset, and the great peaked sail bulging from the single mast, they sailed on to the harbour of the large city of Mitylene, on the island of Lesbos. It was the

birthplace of Sappho, the greatest woman poet of the Greeks, and whose poems have come down to us, but who was dead six hundred years before Paul sailed into the harbour. There they sheltered behind the stone breakwater, for the moon was dark, and the wind changed each evening at sunset, so that they had to reach a place of shelter and anchor every night.

With the first gleam of morning on the sea the sail was shaken out, and again the boat swept on its way towards the Gulf of Smyrna. Before the skies were red that evening they were sixty miles farther on their way, with isles of purple and crimson flushed with the sun, as they dropped anchor in the narrow strait opposite the yellow hills of the isle of Chios, where citrons and almond trees were then in white bloom about the small houses. Again the ruddy dawn found them sailing among small islands clad with trees, with larger islands like clouds of blue mist on the horizon, as they swept on towards the mountains by the Gulf of Ephesus. Passing the cloud-capped island of Samos, they could see the white walls of towns on its hillsides; but they did not anchor there. Paul wished to reach Jerusalem by the time of the Pentecost festival at the end of May, and he had intentionally taken a passage in a ship that would not call at Ephesus; and so the shipmaster kept outside Samos, in the mouth of the gulf, and touching there, passed on to anchor at night behind Cape Trogyllium, a horn of the Bay of Ephesus, and about twenty-five miles from the great city. There, sheltered by a small island, they were safe from the open sea, having got sixty miles farther on their voyage.

Next morning the sail was again shaken out to make a short trip to a little bay at the mouth of the great river Meander, that flowed past Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colosse, and many other cities, bringing down so much earth and sand that it has gradually filled up the bay into which Paul's boat sailed on its way to the port of Miletus. There they found a walled city with four docks and many ships, but, strange to say, the small islands a little distance from the shore were in possession of pirates who could not be driven out. The ship had cargo to transfer that would take some days, and a messenger rode off to Ephesus to tell the Christians that Paul and his friends were there, and to come, as he was on his way to preach in the countries of the West, and might never return.

The quickest way for them to come was in a boat, sailing down the river, across the blue bay, and round Cape Trogyllium to Miletus harbour—half a day's sailing with a good wind; and there they found Paul's ship. He would tell them that he was

sailing past Ephesus, for he had intended to be at Jerusalem by this time with the large collection of money; and he would mention his fears about how he would be received, and say that having called at Miletus, he had sent for them. A year had gone quickly past since he hurriedly left their city after the riot of the silversmiths, and he wished to hear how they fared; and the elders who came had much to tell, as they waited there until the ship left. We do not read that he spoke to the people of Miletus, an ancient city famous for its beautiful cloths and carpets and clever house furniture, but which has sunk out of sight in a swamp of water and tall reeds.

But again he had to move on, for the ship was ready; and, as usual, he had a farewell meeting with the Christians in a large upper room, as at Troy. To these elderly men he spoke as one who had grown grey in the faith, in which he urged them to stand fast and be strong. Luke was there noting what he said; and we can see Paul, with his brown travelling cloak hanging open, and showing the grey tunic within, as with ever-moving hand he pleaded with them and prayed.

“You know that from the first day I set foot in Ephesus I served Jesus with a lowly mind, and tears, amid trials from plots of the synagogue Jews; and that I was never afraid to tell you whatever was good for you; teaching publicly, and going from house to house, telling both Jews and foreigners to repent towards God, and have faith in Jesus. Now I am going to Jerusalem, guided by God’s Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me, excepting that in every city I go to I have warnings that chains and punishments await me there. But I do not hold my life dear to myself, or of any value to others, if only I may run my course, and finish the work which Jesus gave me to do, to make known the gospel of the favour and kindness of God.”

He was reminding them of days of sunshine and of shadow, of danger and escape, spent among them in the city of the great white temple, mingled with strange forebodings and warnings that some dread thing was advancing to meet him, but that with his lion heart he would not flinch. Then came the saddest part of all—“And now I know that you, among whom I went speaking of the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.” A wail of grief would fill the room at these words, for had he not said that his forewarnings were from God?

“Therefore I tell you this day that I am blameless towards you, for I did not shrink from telling you the whole about God. Take care of yourselves, and of the flock over which the Spirit of God has made you overseers, to feed them that

are gathered together through the death of Jesus. I know that, after I am gone, furious wolves will rush in upon you, sparing not the flock; and bad men will rise even among yourselves, who will try with lies to lead others astray. Watch therefore, and remember how that for three years I did not cease to advise you by day and night with tears. Now I commend to you Jesus, and His words of grace, which are able to build you up, and give you a place among all good men." And as an accusation flashed across his mind, he exclaimed indignantly, "I envied no man's gold, or silver, or fine clothes. You yourselves know"—holding out his naked arms as he spoke—"that these hands have worked for all my wants, and for those of the men who were with me." Did he not spin and weave, shape and stitch, whittle, hammer, and toil, often all night long, rather than eat bread in Ephesus for nothing? "In all these things I have set you an example, how that by so working you ought to help the weak. Remember the saying of Jesus our Lord when He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

And so, with a saying of Jesus upon his lips, his voice ceased, his grey head drooped, and there was silence, for they saw he was deeply moved. This farewell had broken his strong spirit, and he made a sign for prayer. With them kneeling round him, some with shut eyes and bowed heads, some with upraised face and eyes gazing as if into heaven, he prayed with them all that they might hold fast to the faith which they had learned, and that he might be preserved from danger in Jerusalem. As he prayed tears ran down brown cheeks, and men sobbed. And when he rose, and they came one by one to bid him farewell, they wept aloud, taking him round the neck as children do, kissing him over and over again as mothers do, and gazing into his eyes as lovers do, for he had said they would never see him again. And they were a sad group, in their cloaks of different colours, some with bare Greek heads, some with striped Syrian kerchiefs hanging round their faces, as they walked with him down to the ship in the harbour.

Sailing from Island to Island.

MILETUS: AGED 50—60.

THE light of the rising sun glittered on the sea, as the ropes were unloosed, and Paul's ship passed out of the harbour of Miletus, and, with white sail outspread, turned southwards be-

fore the favouring breeze of morning, to resume the voyage along the coast of Asia. The ragged coast-line faded into deep, misty, sunny bays, and ran out into dark rocky points, wild and broken and mountainous, with snow lying in the clefts of the hills and in white patches on the distant mountains. Looking out to the sea, the blue water was studded with islands of grey and opal, purple and amethyst, near and far; and among the farthest out was the lonely barren island of Patmos, with its caves, to which ere long the gentle apostle John would be banished, to write his book of visions.

Again the drooping wind and the crimson of sunset upon isle and sea told the Greek captain that they had sailed their distance, and they turned into the harbour of a sheltered town on the island of Cos. It was only a little place, but famed for its delicate weaving, good wine, and a temple to Æsculapius; and there physicians were trained in a college with a well-filled museum, to which old students liked to send fresh specimens. And some of the passengers would land to sleep on shore rather than in the small crowded boat.

When the sail was shaken out to the morning breeze, they shaped their course to pass round Cape Crio on the mainland, and the large island of Rhodes came into view forty miles off. With wind and current in their favour, they sailed swiftly towards it, passing inside a broken chain of small dangerous islands. And in these long, sunny days they conversed together, with their striped kerchiefs shading their eyes; and Paul spoke of many things to these men, his helpers and companions. This is part of his advice to the young man Timothy:—

“It is a true saying, that if a man desires to be an overseer in the congregation, he desires a good thing. But overseers must be above reproach, having only one wife, and being temperate, sober-minded, orderly, hospitable, able to teach; not quarrelsome over wine, not lovers of money, or strikers, but gentle and peaceable. They must manage well their own house and children, or how shall they take care of the congregation of God? They must not be without experience, lest they be conceited and fall; and must be well spoken of among them also who are not Christians. Those who have care of the poor must be grave, not deceitful, or given to much wine, or greedy of money, but men who hold the faith with a pure conscience, and who should be first proved before they serve. If they serve well, they shall gain a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus. Women also must not speak ill of others, but be grave, temperate, and faithful in everything.”

Rhodes, with its high wooded hills, was called the queen of the *Ægean*, and when darkness came down they had turned the north end, and run their boat into the far-famed harbour where once stood a huge brass figure of a man with a foot on each side of the entrance, so that ships could sail under him—one of the wonders of the world. But earthquakes have no regard for such things, and the figure was years ago upset and toppled into the sea, so that only the brass legs were standing for Paul to sail between. It was a city famous for shipbuilding, and for such lovely gardens sheltered by high surrounding hills that a rose was stamped upon their pennies as their emblem, and "The sun shines every day here" was a proverb of the place.

When the morning brightened upon the grey walls of the forts at the harbour, and on the white temple of the sun amid the green trees, the sail was spread, and the ship moved out into the blue bay. Afar off was the mainland of Lycia, with the Taurus Mountains crowding in fantastic shapes to the edge of the sea. As the morning sun streamed over them they seemed not of earth and rock, but peaks and ranges of every hue and shade of marble, from delicate rose to deepest crimson, changing swiftly, as the sun rose, from red to purple and blue, for they were covered with snow as pure and lustrous as the sky above.

They were now sailing through sheets of deep-blue sea, broken under the wind with jets and feathers of white, towards Patara, on the mainland, at the mouth of the Yellow River, the seaport of the large city of Xanthus, the capital of Lycia. The sandbanks at the entrance were dangerous even then, and the river has since brought down such floods of earth that the port into which they sailed is now a waste of dry sand-hills. But they found a thriving city there with thick stone walls, guarded by a strong castle, a theatre for the people, a temple of Apollo in a grove, and a triple arch over the main city gate. The ruins are still standing, but are being slowly swallowed up by waves of sand, over which the palm trees spread their leaves of brilliant green.

The ship was not going any farther, and they had all to leave it; but they found a large one sailing for a port in Palestine, and they went into it. While the first boat was good enough for sailing among islands, it was not large enough to face a night-and-day voyage across the Mediterranean. If they spent a Lord's Day in this port or on the sea, they would spend it in conversation together, in which the man in the brown cloak round whom they moved would have much to say.

"Be careful how you live, not foolishly, but wisely, using well your time, because the days are evil. Be not foolish, but

understand well what is the will of God. Be not drunken with wine, which brings riot, but be filled with the Spirit of Jesus; speaking in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to God. Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus the Christ, and give way one to another in the fear of Him."

And that night they had to sleep under the creaking sail, with the sound of beating, hissing water in their ears, as the boat rose and fell on the dark waves of the sea. Passing in daylight the south end of Cyprus, the home of Barnabas, they saw the white walls of Paphos, and the temple of Venus on the hill. The wind was favourable, and they swept on before it; and as the mountain ranges, the snow-white crests, the belts of dark trees grew blurred and hazy behind them, the long coast-line of Syria and the snow peaks of Lebanon rose from the tossing sea, shaping into bare hills and wooded valleys, blue with distance.

But it took a day of sunshine, and a night with the full moon upon the sea, before they had crossed over from Cyprus to the Syrian coast and the bold headland of Carmel.

"Why Weep and Break My Heart?"

TYRE: AGED 50-60.

THE port towards which the ship with the single mast and broad white sail was carrying them was Tyre in Phœnicia, north of Palestine, upon an island very near the land. When Alexander the Great could not capture it, he put stones into the sea, and built a wall on it a mile long, and so took the town. The wall was made wider and covered with flat stones, and formed a wharf; and Paul's ship would come slowly up to it, and land the passengers and put out the cargo of grain and oil, wine and wood, while other ships were landing hides, bales, and bags for the merchants of the rich city. Paul knew it well, and easily found the Christians.

He told them of his long journeys since they last saw him, seven years ago, and that he was going to Jerusalem, and of his fears of capture. They knew of the feeling in Jerusalem against him, and told him solemnly that the Spirit of God bade them warn him not to set foot in that city. But Paul had his own guiding star, and told them that he knew great danger lay before him, but he would not go back because of it. He conversed with them while he waited

for a ship to take him on, and his words were of strengthening and encouragement.

“By revelation was this mystery made known to me, and to the holy apostles of Jesus, and inspired speakers, that foreigners are fellow-heirs, members, and sharers with Jews in the promise of Jesus the Christ in the Bible; of which I was made a teacher, as God has given me grace and power. It was given to me, who am as the least among Christians, to preach to foreigners the boundless riches of Jesus, and make all men understand the mystery that was hid from all time in God, the creator of all things. To princes and powers in high places is made known through us the wisdom of God, according to His everlasting purpose in Jesus the Christ, through whom we have a bold and confident way to God, by our faith in Him. Therefore I ask that I may faint not at my trials for you, which are your glory.”

It was now the beginning of May, with wild-flowers withering in the grass, and the blossom of the olive and the pomegranate trees falling in showers of crimson and white, for the sun was hot; and he spent a week there, breaking bread at their solemn Sabbath love meal, and speaking and praying with them.

“We are God’s ambassadors for Jesus, and as if God were persuading you through us, we beseech you on behalf of Jesus to be reconciled to Him. Jesus, who did no sin, was made to bear sin for us, that we might receive the righteousness of God in Him. I entreat you not to reject the favour of God. Isaiah said, At an acceptable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I saved you: now is that acceptable time, and now is that day of salvation.

“Do not offend others in anything, that our teaching may not be blamed. In everything we make ourselves liked as teachers of God, by our much patience, in afflictions, scourgings, imprisonments, riots, watchings, fastings; and in pureness, knowledge, and forbearance, and in kindness in the Holy Spirit, and love of the word of truth, through the power of God. For we have the armour of righteousness on our right hand and on our left, by glory and dishonour, by good and ill report. We are called deceivers, yet are we true; unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and yet alive; punished, but not killed; sorrowful, but always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet we possess all things.”

When the time came for his departure, like the elders of Ephesus, his friends were so grieved and touched with his sorrowful words that with their wives and little children they

accompanied him from their meeting-place through the city gate and down to the shore; and there, kneeling down on the sand, they all prayed together that he might be kept from harm in Jerusalem, and then Paul and his friends went into the ship.

The white sail was shaken out, and they were soon in the open sea, with the ship's head turned southwards along the coast of Palestine, with the fir-clad ranges of Lebanon rising to the snowy peak of Hermon. In half a day they were in the port of Ptolemais, now called Acre, at a beautiful sandy bay, overshadowed by the wooded headland of Carmel; and while the sailors put out the cargo, Paul spent the day with the Christians on shore, conversing with them and strengthening them.

"You are not ignorant, brothers, (for I speak to men who know the Jewish religious law,) that a man is bound by it as long as he lives. But by the death of Jesus you are as dead to this law, that you may be joined to Him who was raised from the dead, and bear fruits to God. For when we were under the law we brought forth fruits unto death. But now we have been set free from the law, and serve not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit."

Next morning they were sailing round the head of Carmel and along the straight coast; and as they kept out, the hills rose, wooded and dark green, towards Samaria, with rocky clefts, and white streams coming down to the sea. And the hearts of the voyagers warmed at the sight, for there were no greater patriots than the Jewish pilgrims. The hills receded, and the beautiful plain of Sharon spread along the shore, with reapers in the sunshine of the yellow fields cutting down the wheat and barley, and carrying it away on heavily-laden beasts to the thrashing-floors.

At the Roman harbour of Cæsarea, so well known to Paul, they all left the ship. Carrying their sacks of clothing, rolls of books, and the leather bags of money, they went to Philip's house, the teacher who for twenty years had been living there with his wife and grown-up daughters, who all helped him. Paul was now at the end of his long voyage, but the pilgrim ship which left Corinth before him had arrived a month ago, in time for the Passover. It had brought the men to Jerusalem who plotted at Corinth to kill him, and they spread the news of what he was saying and doing in foreign cities, and that he was coming to Jerusalem and the temple. But he was too soon for the festival of Pentecost, and stayed with Philip for some days, meeting the Christians there; and he had a wonderful story to tell them of wanderings and adventures, and of open doors in strange lands.

“By the Jews I was five times scourged. I was three times beaten with Roman rods, once stoned, three times shipwrecked, floating for a night and a day in the sea. I have been often in journeyings, and often in perils from rioters, robbers, my own countrymen, and foreigners, in the city, in the lonely country, and on the sea, and among false Christians; often in toil and travel and watching, in hunger and thirst, in fasting and cold and nakedness. And besides all these there is that which presses daily upon me, anxiety for all the congregations. Who is weak, and I am not? who stumbles, and I am not sorry? If I must glory, let it be of my weakness; but I speak the truth. At Damascus the city governor under King Aretas guarded the gates in order to take me; but through a window in the wall I was let down in a basket, and escaped.”

When his friends heard that he had come to attend the festival in Jerusalem, knowing the feeling against him there, they begged him not to go. There were people coming and going every day with fresh news; and one day Agabus, a leading Christian, came from Jerusalem—perhaps the same man who knew Paul in Antioch. He knew what was the feeling about Paul in the city, and he said that the Spirit of God sent him to warn Paul not to go. And to make his warning impressive, unloosing the long linen girdle from Paul’s waist, he bent down and tied his own feet and hands, and while their friends looked on in silence at this strange act, he solemnly said,—

“Thus says the Holy Spirit of God, Thus shall the Jews of Jerusalem bind the man who owns this girdle, and give him up to the Romans.”

And when they heard it, not only they of Cæsarea, but Timothy and Luke, and all who sailed with him, besought Paul not to go any farther. But their words only grieved him, for nothing would turn him from his purpose. Prophets might speak, women might pray, men might warn, but a voice within bade him go.

“Why do you weep,” he exclaimed in a sorrowful voice, “and break my heart? I am ready, not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem, for Jesus’ sake.”

But this fervent reply did not at once silence his friends. It was not until they found that all their words and tears were as waves upon the rock that they said to one another, “The will of God be done.”

Zealots and Dagger Men.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

WHY were the good Christians of Cæsarea afraid to let Paul go inside the walls of Jerusalem? Why was he also so afraid that he asked the prayers of congregations for his safety?

He had many enemies in that city—the priests of the temple, the rabbis of the porches, the members of the Sanhedrim, and the Zealots of the old religion, who thought he deserved death for leaving them and offering the kingdom of God to foreigners. There were also the Jewish Christians, who thought that all Christians should keep the traditions and customs of the old Jewish law, and that he was a traitor for teaching foreigners that they did not need to be circumcised, and that he deserved to be put out of the congregation. There were thousands of such Christians in Jerusalem, and many of them were Zealots; but of men like Peter, who believed Paul was right, there were not many. He would thus be surrounded with enemies.

The city was also in a very disturbed state. Felix, the wicked Roman governor of Judea, had been a slave, and was a cruel man. His return to the high priest Jonathan for getting him made governor was to bribe Doras and his conspirators to murder him with concealed daggers. Bands of Zealots roamed about the country, fighting with the Roman soldiers, and their secret society of dagger men stabbed their victims, so that murder in the streets was not uncommon. An Egyptian led some thousands to the top of Olivet, saying he was the Messiah, and would take the city, and live in the temple; but Felix had soldiers in the Kedron vale, who stormed the hill, and the prisoners were crucified on crosses along the sides of the roads into the city, as a warning. These desperate dagger men, zealous for the law, sold their services sometimes to the high priest, sometimes to Felix, killing for pay; and Paul knew that they would turn their daggers on him if roused. And as the city was crowded for the festival at the close of the barley harvest, the danger of lawlessness and bloodshed was very great.

His friends would not desert him, and horses were got for the travellers' baggage, and they started to climb the hills by the soldiers' paved road. There was a pretty large company, counting the foreign-looking men with the money from the provinces, Luke and Timothy, and the friends from Cæsarea. And an old

man of Cyprus, called Mnason, went up with them, saying they must stay in his house. Each evening would find the open door of some Christian, glad to take them in; and after three days Paul rode once more through the dark arch of the city gate which he had been so often warned not to enter, and through the familiar streets, where every door and window had its spray of bright palm or pale willow, with flowers of yellow and white, crimson and blue, tied in fading garlands round bundles of ripe grain, in token of the harvest festival. The streets were crowded with people keeping holiday. On such a day, and amid such scenes, his Master rode in by Stephen's gate, now almost thirty years ago. Did he think of Jesus as he rode under that dark archway? For he also was riding into danger in Jerusalem, perhaps to death, and he knew it.

He sought no Jews' quarter of the great city, for all were Jews, and every house a Jew's home. Mnason was well off, and received them all, so that we must not think of Paul as living in a small room, but in a house surrounded with a high wall, entered by a low door that looked into a sunny court shaded with green trees, and bright with creeping flowers that hung from the balconies of the low vine-covered houses; and when the outer door to the street was shut, all would be quiet and private within. Surrounded by true friends, who had come up with him, and others gathered in from the city without, who rejoiced to see him back again, there was peace within these walls, but beyond was doubt.

The next day would be one of trial. The lion-hearted traveller, the tender teacher, whose hand had knocked at so many doors, who had carried the torch of Jesus into so many homes, cities, and lands, was to appear before the elders of the Christians of Jerusalem, to tell them what he had been doing since last they saw him, and learn if they were satisfied. Men had followed him out from Jerusalem, seeking to spoil his life-work, and he had whipped them back like curs. He had promised to gather money, and had brought a large sum; yet he did not know how he would be welcomed, and was keenly anxious to be received well. Would James the elder kiss him on each cheek, and weep tears of joy on his neck? Would Peter the warm-hearted be there, and Barnabas, his old friend? He dreaded the meeting, but not for his own sake.

White sunshine filled the quiet courtyard of Mnason's house, where children ran and doves fluttered, as Paul and his friends, sitting in the shadow of the trees, ate their morning meal of cakes and sweet goats' milk before going to the meeting with

the leading Christians, where they were to present the money, and he was to tell the story of his four years' work. When they went to the meeting-place, James, the brother of Jesus, was there in his spotless white robe, with the long, grey hair of a Nazarite curling on his shoulders, and with other elders round him who had been gathered together, but none of the apostles. We do not know the names of these elders, but Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas would be there, for they had charge of the poor. When Paul and his friends came in, there would be a goodly number—Luke of Philippi, Timothy of Lystra, Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Tychicus and Trophimus of Ephesus, all foreigners and all Christians from far-off cities, the fruit of his toil in many lands and under many skies—bringing money to the Christians of Jerusalem.

The Money He Gathered.

JERUSALEM : AGED 50—60.

PAUL saluted James and the elders in grave Jewish fashion, and told them his wonderful story. Sailing to Antioch four years ago, he had travelled over the Syrian gates to Tarsus; and again over the Taurus Mountains into Galatia, visiting the towns of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch; thence through the wild highlands of Asia to Ephesus, and on to Troy. From Troy in Asia he had sailed to Neapolis in Macedonia, and on to Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica, and thence to far Illyricum. Next came Berea and Dium in Greece, whence he went by ship to Corinth, returning thence by Philippi, Ephesus, Troy, Miletus, Rhodes, and many other towns and islands.

Like God's husbandman, he had sown the seed of the gospel over five vast Roman provinces—the whole of Judea could go into one of their valleys—and over more cities and towns than he had time to name; he had found these foreign peoples willing to listen to the gospel, and leave their idols, and turn to the living God, through faith in Jesus. Of his dangers and adventures he would not say much, but would tell of the kind feeling which all these foreign Christians had towards them at Jerusalem; and in proof of the sincerity of these men of strange lands, he would present the money that had been gathered week by week for

years, and which he promised to collect. Then would come a proud moment for the men of Asia, Macedonia, and Galatia, as they brought forward their leather money-bags, and Paul explained that they had been sent all the way to present these collections to the poor brothers of Jerusalem.

He told how he taught these foreigners that to worship the living God and have faith in Jesus was all that was required of them, and that they must change, and live the higher life as seen in Jesus. He must have spoken for a long time; but we have no record of what he said, although we would like to read his very words at this great meeting, which was to be the close of all his free journeyings. When he ended his wonderful narrative, the like of which had never been heard before—Corinth, Ephesus, Troy, Philippi receiving the gospel with joy—it was almost beyond belief to elders who had never been out of Judea; and they exclaimed, "Glory be to God." But they did not weep or fall upon the neck of the man in the brown cloak, who stood anxiously and even humbly before them. And he had said he was going next to Rome and then to Spain!

Glorious as was his report, there was something in it that roused the slumbering difference between his broad, free mind and the narrow spirit of the Jerusalem Christians, of whom James was the head. Strange stories had reached the ears of the elders, as they went through the narrow streets of Jerusalem from their homes to the temple and back again every day, while he was crossing seas and mountains, and going from door to door in the streets of foreign cities—strange stories of what he taught. It was with some uneasiness that they heard from his own lips that there was no difference in the sight of God between a Jew and a foreigner, and that a foreign Christian who kept not the Jewish law was as good as a Jewish Christian who did.

James, as chairman, had to speak the mind of the elders upon Paul's report, and to acknowledge the money from the far-away foreign Christians, and what he said reads as if there had been a discussion, of which it is only a part. There had been some remonstrance with Paul, in which his and their position had been explained.

"You see, brother," James said, "how many thousands there are of Christian Jews in this city, and they are all zealous for the religious law." It must have startled Paul to learn that almost all the Jewish converts to Christianity about Jerusalem had become Zealots, growing narrower as he grew broader. He had next to learn that there were spies at work, and that he was marked. The pilgrim ship of enemies from Corinth had not arrived in vain.

“They have been told about you, that you teach all the Jews who live in foreign cities to forsake the commands of Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, and not to keep the religious customs of our people.” But the informers had not kept to the truth, for we have not seen him teaching his countrymen to give up their own religious customs. They could keep them if they liked. What he said was that they could never become righteous by these things alone. They must believe in Jesus and follow Him. But to foreigners, who knew nothing of Moses or of the religious customs of the Jews, he said that they need not learn them. God and Jesus were enough for them. James also explained to him the great danger he was in from these Christian Zealots.

“What then is the position? They will certainly hear that you are in the city.” That was all he needed to say. Paul knew the rest. To be accused to these men of speaking against the laws and customs of Moses meant violence, and perhaps death. What should he do? James had a proposal to make,—

“Do, therefore, this that we say to you. We have four poor men amongst us who have taken the vow of Nazarites. Take them and go with them to the temple, and purify yourself as the law requires, and pay their expenses of sacrifices and gifts to the priests, so that they may be allowed to keep their vows and get their heads shaven. And so all the Zealots will know that there is no truth in the things which they have been told about you, for they will see that you live orderly, and keep the religious law.”

This was proposed for Paul's safety, but it was also a test. Was he willing to make a public show before the Christian Zealots of his obedience to the traditions and customs which he knew so well? Paul knew that he would have to live for a week in a room of the temple, with these four men in rags, and pay for the four rams, the eight lambs, the cakes, the oil, for sacrifices, and give gifts of money to the priests, and stand beside them while their long hair was cut off and burned. Would he do it? It would be looked upon as a specially religious and good thing to help these poor men to keep their vow. While Paul thought, James continued to speak,—

“About foreigners who become Christians we wrote before, deciding that all they need do about our Jewish customs was not to eat anything that had been offered before an idol, nor any meat that had been strangled or had blood in it, and as to their marriages.”

Paul listened with mingled feelings, for he himself had also

written letters to foreign Christians, in which he told them they could eat or not as they pleased, for meat could do no one any harm. Jesus said so. But he wished to avoid disputes with the elders. They had their Jewish ideas of Christianity. He had the mind of Jesus, and until they visited foreign cities, as he had done, they would never understand it. These rules and customs were barriers to a foreigner, but to a Jew they were only harassing and troublesome, and if he had faith in Jesus and not in them, they would do him no harm. To him they were not religion, but only the peculiar forms and customs of the people. To keep them would not matter; to break them in Jerusalem would enrage the Zealots: and if it would reconcile thousands of Christians to him, keep them he would while there. We cannot but pity Paul, coming like an eagle from the heights of freedom, to sit cooped in a chamber of the temple, bound with useless ceremonial bands, and we might have wished that the elders had not put him to this trial. It went against his feelings, but it did not touch his conscience, for it did not affect the truth that faith in Jesus was the only way to salvation. And so he agreed. But, alas for the plans of the elders, the very thing which was intended for Paul's safety was what brought him into danger.

“Men of Israel, help!”

JERUSALEM: AGED 50—60.

THE olive trees on Olivet had blossomed into fragrance, to fade and cover the ground thick as snow with falling white; the oleander bushes by the brook Kedron had burned with crimson, to dazzle in the sunshine and vanish away; but in the king's gardens lilies of pale white and gold gleamed in the sun, fed by the sweet waters of Siloam, as Paul looked down once more from the pillars of Solomon's porch, and across the valley to the ancient cedars on the top of the hill.

It was not without misgiving that he agreed to the proposal of James, but he lost no time in carrying it out on the very next day after the elders' meeting. The Nazarite vow was as old as the days of Samson. It meant separation to God, and a man might take it for any time by merely saying, “I will be one,” and only the priests could set him free. And the four poor men were very glad to hear that Paul would pay for them, and enable them to get out of their vow. But he had something else to do

first. Having eaten and lived with foreigners for years, according to the Jewish religious law he was impure, and had to go through certain ceremonies which he knew well, before he could join with the men in going into the temple. After this was over, he went with the four poor men to the priest at the corner of the women's court, and told him that he wished to join with them and pay their charges; and the priest would praise his goodness.

For seven days he was to attend at the temple, while the four men presented their offerings of ram, lamb, cakes, oil, and money. Not till the seventh and last day would they be allowed to go to the Nazarites' room at the corner of the women's court, cut off their long hair, burn it, and be free. But Paul would not see the end of the week in peace. His act of obedience was to be of no avail, for his frequent goings to the temple with strange men were noticed by the Jews from the synagogues of foreign cities in which he had disputed.

Four—perhaps six—days of the week had gone by, and Paul's ceremonial purity, which was intended to be known, seen, and talked about by the Zealots, had been well observed. But it had not the effect which James and the elders intended. These spies thought he had no business in the temple, and watched him there with the four poor Nazarites, and down in the narrow streets of the city with the foreigners whom he had brought with him. Trophimus, from Ephesus, they specially noted. His whole movements roused their keen suspicion. They did not believe he was zealous for the law, and watched him as he went about the outer court with the four poor Jews. Unconscious of danger, with naked feet on the hot, sunny pavements, Paul went through the opening in the white marble balustrade, past which it was death for any but Jews to go, and his enemies saw him going across the black and white pavement to the court above.

Their enemy was now in their power, and led on by Jews from Ephesus, they surrounded him, shouting in shrill, wild voices that could be heard over the courts, "Men of Israel, help! help! help!" The people came running down the white steps, and out from among the pillars, porches, and side arches, and soon there was a dense crowd as the men continued shouting, "This is the man who speaks everywhere to all men against the Jews, and against our law, and against this temple." That was enough to set all who heard it mad with rage, and ready to tear Paul in pieces, as a blasphemer.

"Besides," they continued, "he has brought Greeks into the temple, and polluted this holy place." They thought he had brought in Trophimus. The shrill cry of "The temple defiled!

the temple defiled!” was the best of all cries to rouse the people. It passed in screams of rage from court to court, out through the temple doors, into the streets of the city, and the people came running in. Paul resisted, telling them he was innocent; but the crowd increased, and many hands seized him. They would drag him out of the Jews’ court, for they must not stain its pavement with his blood, or the temple would be defiled indeed. He resisted, but they dragged him from the women’s court, through the coloured pillars and the gates of shining brass, and down the marble steps into the lower court. The Levites were ready, and as he passed, the rumble of the great gates told that they were being closed behind him. For the Romans had said that if there was rioting in the temple, they would shut it up.

Beating and buffeting him, he was thrust through the white marble screen, and dragged towards the outer gate at the north-west corner. “Death to him!” was the cry. But how? The Jews disliked killing criminals with swords. Hanging, stoning, beating to death with clubs was more to their mind. He was now in the hands of a mob, the most cruel of all hands. Some had no idea what it was all about; others knew, but would not say. Where, when, and how were they to kill him? And some thought that to kill a man without trial would bring terrible punishment from Lysias, the Roman captain.

But they were being watched. High up on the flat roof of the cloisters that went all round the outer temple court were figures standing motionless, with sunlight gleaming on their brass armour—the figures of Roman soldiers, set there to watch what went on in the courts below, and whose duty it was to give the alarm if there was any rioting amongst the Jews at the festival. The cries of the mob below were too shrill for them to hear the voices of these grim soldiers on the wall, calling from man to man, until word reached the castle of Antonia that a man was being killed below. The Roman guard was always ready, and at a word they were running, spear and sword in hand, along the dark passage, and down the steps into the outer court. A cry broke from the crowd that the soldiers were coming, and that was enough to scare the wildest, and stop the blows that were falling upon Paul.

Pushing the people aside with their pikes, and striking them on head and shoulders with the flat of their swords, the soldiers forced their way forward, and knocking aside his assailants, they cleared a space round Paul; and the captain, with embossed breastplate and fierce-looking helmet, went forward and laid his hand on Paul’s shoulder, which was the Roman sign that no other hand must touch him. In an instant Roman handcuffs were on his wrists,

fastened with light brass chains to the wrists of two soldiers, whose duty was to die rather than let him escape or be harmed, for he was a Roman prisoner. Turning to the surging crowd that pressed upon them, Lysias demanded,—

“Who is this?” A yell from hundreds of excited throats was the answer.

“What has he done?” he asked. Again there were fierce shrieks and yells of many things, but in the confusion he could not make out what they said. He hated their Jewish shrieks and despised their religious squabbles, which no Roman could understand. “To the castle”—with a sign of his hand to his men to take Paul away.

Forming a guard round him, they began to move leisurely towards the stairs. Seeing their backs turned, the crowd grew bolder, pressing upon them, shouting, jeering, yelling at Paul, until when they had got to the steps the soldiers had to lift him off his feet and carry him. From the cries as they went along, Lysias thought he had got the Egyptian rioter who pretended to be the Messiah and had escaped when his followers were slain.

The Hand of Lysias.

JERUSALEM : AGED 50—60.

DID Paul remember Jesus when the cry pierced his ears, “Away with him! away with him!” as his enraged countrymen saw him being helped up the open stair of the grey castle of Antonia? Lysias was astonished when the prisoner said to him in Greek,—

“May I say something to you?” They were about to go into the doorway.

“Do you know Greek?” he asked in astonishment. “Are you not the Egyptian who got up a sedition against Rome some time ago, and led out four thousand of the dagger men into the wild country?” He stopped the soldiers, and Paul replied,—

“I am a Jew of Tarsus, in Cilicia : a citizen of no mean city. I beg of you give me leave to speak to the people.”

Paul trusted in the fairness of this Roman officer, and believed he could quiet his countrymen. Lysias, thinking that the crowd, when they heard he was no rioter, but a brother Jew of good position, and in the temple on proper business, would go away quietly, gave him leave to speak from the stairs to the people who were standing below in the sunshine wondering why Paul was not being taken in. But they were soon to know.

With naked feet, his brown cloak torn from his shoulders, his kerchief snatched from his head, his grey hair disordered upon his brow, and in a tunic soiled and ragged with the wrenches of many angry hands, Paul stood with a background of Roman pikes and bucklers, beckoning with his hand to the people below. His eyes burned as he looked down on them, seeing here a rabbi in flowing robes, there a Pharisee in spotless white, there a well-fed Sadducee, and everywhere turbans and kerchiefs of red and yellow and green, cloaks of blue and brown and black, the robes and the rags of all kinds of men that made up a temple crowd. To many of them he was well known, although his face was swarthy with exposure, and his head bruised and perhaps bleeding; and he knew not a few of the scowling faces looking up at him. Gradually their shrieks and yells subsided as he kept his unchained hand upraised. They were curious to know what he wished to say. The silence came, and the practised speaker was ready.

“Brothers and fathers, listen to me.”

They were electrified. They expected Greek, and he spoke Hebrew. Now they were all eager to hear him, and became quieter.

“I am a Jew,” he continued, “born in Tarsus, of Cilicia. But I was brought up in this city, in the school of Gamaliel, in the strict manner of the religious law of our fathers, zealous for God, as you all are this day.” If they were zealous, so was he. He knew, as a skilful speaker, that if they were to listen, he must begin with things they liked to hear.

“I persecuted to death the followers of Jesus, who said His gospel was the true way, binding both men and women, and putting them into prison. The high priest and the Sanhedrim know that I speak the truth; for they gave me letters to our countrymen at Damascus, and I rode thither to bring Christians bound to Jerusalem to be punished.” He then told them of the light that shone round about him on the road, and of the voice and the vision, and of his meeting with Ananias, who, he explained, was “a good man according to their religious law, and well spoken of by all the Jews in Damascus,” who bade him go and tell all men what he had seen and heard.

The people continued listening, for his story was a stirring one, and they liked to hear of visions and voices from God. Passing over twelve years, he told them of his vision in the temple, and of Jesus telling him to leave Jerusalem and teach elsewhere. But he was touching on delicate ground, for the people hated him for preaching to foreigners. He was going to defend himself now.

“And I said, Lord, they know in Jerusalem how I went to every synagogue and sought out every one that believed in Jesus, and had them put into prison and beaten. When Stephen was stoned, I was standing by consenting, and holding the clothes of them who stoned him. And Jesus said to me, Go: for I will send you far out to foreign nations.”

Suddenly a shrill yell of rage came from the leaders below, followed by a volley from the crowd,—

“Away with such a fellow from the earth! Away with him! away with him! away with him!”

They had heard with growing impatience the story of his conversation with Jesus, and they would listen no longer. Jesus! There were men in the crowd who shouted to Pilate to crucify Jesus, and who saw Him hanging on a Roman cross, outside the city walls, with two robbers, twenty-five years ago. That a man of Tarsus should stand up there, and tell a Jerusalem crowd that Jesus the Galilean told him in a trance to go and preach to the unclean, idolatrous, Jew-hating foreigners was what they would not listen to. And every time Paul held up his hand and tried to speak, they met him with a fresh outburst of—

“Away with such a fellow from the earth! It is not fit that he should live. Away with him! away with him! away with him!”

Seeing him standing safe beyond their reach, they yelled with rage, and pulled off their outer cloaks, and threw them on the ground, as if they would climb the stairs and tear him down. Others snatched up handfuls of dust from the road, and flung them at him in hate, shrieking and yelling as the dust rained back in their faces. But dust would soon become stones, and with a sign to his men to bring the prisoner, Lysias went through the door, and Paul followed him, amid yells of triumph from the crowd.

Great heart! he had passed through the door of a Roman prison, and would never be free again. Like a chained lion, he would be led about from place to place, here to be made a show, there to be tried by a judge, and there to be seen by friends, sometimes in a damp dungeon, sometimes in a gilded palace, sometimes in a tossing ship, sometimes in a little house, but never free from the meshes of the net that had now been cast over him. It was well for his spirit, that soared and sank so freely, that he did not know what it meant when the Roman captain laid his hand on his shoulder.

A Freeborn Roman.

JERUSALEM: AGED 50-60.

THE riot was at an end. Paul had been taken by force out of his enemies' hands, who were in groups, talking excitedly together, and watching the castle; but most of the people streamed away down the sloping street into the city, to talk of the riot in their shops and homes, and guess at what would happen on the morrow. The Zealots ran into the dark courts with the news that Saul the Pharisee of Tarsus was a prisoner in the castle. And they plotted together how they would stab him if he ever came out from these thick stone walls.

Lysias did not understand what Paul had said to the people in Hebrew that put them into such fury. He was angry with the yelling crowd, and despised the prisoner in his soiled and torn tunic, and did not believe him. Going to his own room in the castle, he told one of his officers to find out the truth from the prisoner in the usual Roman way, by flogging him.

Paul was roughly ordered to prepare for it, and he well knew what that meant, for he was flogged at Philippi. He would be tied hand and foot to a post with leather thongs, and flogged on the naked back with knotted cords until the blood came. The careless soldiers paid no heed to what he said, and tied him tightly; and then an officer came to see the flogging, and hear him confess what he had done. When he came near, Paul exclaimed in indignant anger,—

“Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman citizen, and who has not been condemned?”

The officer looked at the grey-headed Jew bending at the post, and questioned him closely; and Paul's answers satisfied him that he was no common Jew, but a Roman citizen, shielded by the Roman law. Going to Lysias, he said, in a voice of anxiety, “Take care what you do in scourging this man, for he is a Roman citizen.” And he told him what Paul had said. These men knew that to scourge a Roman without trial was a high crime that would bring severe punishment on them. Going at once to Paul, Lysias ordered the thongs to be loosened.

“Tell me truly, are you a Roman citizen?” he asked in an earnest voice.

“Yes,” was the short, dignified answer.

Lysias then questioned him closely, for he had already done a serious wrong in binding him before slaves; and when he heard his clear answers he exclaimed,—

"I had to pay a large sum of money to be made a Roman citizen."

Men whose fathers were not citizens could only become one by paying a high price, and even then they were only second-rate citizens.

"But I am a Roman citizen by birth," was Paul's reply, for his father had been one before him.

That was enough for Lysias. It might not all be true, but he would not risk scourging such a man for all the Jews in Jerusalem, and he ordered the scourge to be put away.

The men standing round heard, and Paul's clothes were found and given to him, with water to wash away the stains of the day, and food to eat; for by the Roman law he must be well treated. They were afraid of what he might do to them for having been bound without inquiry, and so the soldiers put the scourge out of sight, and hid the thongs of leather. He was now a prisoner in Jerusalem, and part of his fears had come true. Sitting with a light chain on his hand, in a small stone room with a low roof, and only a slit for light to come in from the blue sky, he thought of his friends and of his enemies, and prayed to God. He had no doubt the Roman governor would set him at liberty. He also knew that his Jewish enemies would move every stone to have him punished. There was a struggle before him that would try all his strength.

Luke, Timothy, and his other friends heard with the greatest concern of the attack in the temple, and of his rescue and imprisonment, and they would hasten to the castle and try to obtain his release; but it was of no use. The man in the brown cloak had been the centre of a very serious riot at this festival time—Lysias knew not what about—and if set free, there might be another. He dared not let him disappear into that crowded and excited city; and being a Roman, he could not keep him a prisoner without trial. It appeared to him a religious quarrel, and he would inquire through the Jewish leaders what it was about.

Paul spent the night on a pallet of straw, none too clean. But he was accustomed to strange sleeping-places: a cave, a tent, the deck of a boat, all had served for him. In the morning Lysias sent a message to the head of the Jewish Sanhedrim that he wished a meeting held to inquire into yesterday's riot in the temple. He took off Paul's chain and allowed him to go about inside the castle, telling him that he was to go to the council meeting of the Jews.

They met in a hall at the temple gate, and, at the hour fixed,

a few soldiers brought Paul from the castle into the place which he knew so well, for he had sat there himself as a judge. He recognized many faces in the dim light from the little windows, as they sat barefooted and cross-legged on red cushions, their long white tunics girdled up with a band of leather, or sash of silk embroidery, or plain linen, the rich citizens distinguished by their cloaks of purple and blue, crimson and yellow, from the plainer-dressed priests and rabbis. They were ready to begin the inquiry.

"I am a Pharisee!"

JERUSALEM: AGED 50-60.

AS Paul stood, in the dim light of the council hall, looking at the circle of men, he knew that some of them, now frail and old, were present at the mock midnight trial twenty-five years before, when Jesus stood pale and calm, with bedraggled hair and soiled white tunic, under the guttering lamps and candles, His hands bound, answering their questions, until a slave's hand smote Him on the mouth. Others saw Peter and John standing there defiant, to be set free on the advice of Gamaliel. Others sat there, with Paul in their midst, when Stephen was sent to his death. Some were his old friends and fellow-students. Where was his accustomed seat when, as a Zealot, he used to attend every meeting, and vote against the Christians? And who was that now sitting in his place? There sat Simon and Joshua, sons of his old teacher Gamaliel; and there sat the sons of the great Sadducee Ananias, the hater of Jesus. And there, too, sat Ananias "the glutton" himself in their midst.

When he sat on one of these crimson cushions for the last time, his heart was on fire with war and hatred; but now it was filled with love and peace—the sunshine of heaven. He now knew whence came the light that shone in Stephen's face. When Jesus and Stephen stood there, it was as Jews in the hands of priests who sought their lives; but he was there as a Roman citizen, in the keeping of a Roman officer, who wished to inquire about the riot and report to his superior officer.

The council knew Paul's determination, his learning, and his cleverness. With head grown grey under his trials, his figure bent, and eyes that glowed on them like the eyes of a wild animal, the man in the brown cloak looked fearlessly at the faces of his countrymen. Lysias had told them what was wanted, and sat

with an air of indifference among his men of pike and short sword. Paul knew he would be asked if he had any confession to make, and he was ready. His hands were free, and, with the art of a great orator, he looked round upon the frowning circle of his judges for a time in silence before opening his lips.

"Brothers," he began slowly, "I have lived all my life with a good conscience before God until now."

"Guard, smite him on the mouth," screamed a shrill voice.

But the guard looked to Lysias and did nothing. He was a Roman soldier, not a Jewish slave. Paul was stung to the quick. Smite a Roman citizen on the mouth before he had begun his defence! The lion in him was roused, and his voice trembled with anger as he replied quickly,—

"God will smite thee, thou whited wall." There was shouting of many voices; but he continued, louder still: "You sit there to judge me according to the law, and command me to be struck, which is against all law!"

He got no farther. Amid the noise of voices, some one near him called,—

"Would you revile God's high priest?"

A change at once came over him. In his haste and anger he had made a blunder. The shrill voice was that of Ananias the high priest, and Paul did not know it. As a Jew, he had to apologize at once.

"Brothers," he said quietly, looking round upon the council, "I did not know that he was the high priest: for our law says, Thou shalt not speak ill of a ruler of the people."

There must have been a good excuse for his mistake—perhaps in the dim light, perhaps in the clashing of voices—for the apology was accepted, and nothing more was said, and he was allowed to go on with his speech. Strange to say, within a few years Ananias was stabbed in one of the city drains, hiding from dagger men.

We have not got the words of Paul's speech, but he spoke about his visions, perhaps repeating what he told the people from the castle steps; and his words caused a warm discussion to spring up between the Sadducees on one side of the chairman, and the Pharisees on the other, and he saw that the old hatred between them was as bitter as ever. Perhaps they interrupted his speech; for, in a loud voice, heard above their wrangling, he suddenly exclaimed, as he turned to the Pharisee side,—

"Brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; and it is about my belief in the rising of the dead and my hope of a future life that I am called to be questioned this day."

He knew who were his friends and who his enemies on this

question, for the Sadducees said that there was no rising from the dead, no angels, no immortal spirit in man; while the Pharisees believed in them all. And they hated each other for it—all the more that the rich and powerful Sadducees ridiculed the Pharisees, who were poor men. Ananias, who had ordered him to be struck on the mouth, was one of the worst of the Sadducees, and Paul knew it.

Paul had plenty of experience in turning the tide of a discussion or the feelings of a crowd, and his words kindled a fierce flame. The riot in the temple was forgotten in the fight of the Pharisees to get off their co-believer. From grave, cutting remarks they passed to heated speeches and sharp assertions and denials, in which men sprang to their feet, the better to reply to their enemy, shaking fists and screaming across the room at each other.

“We find no harm in this man!” and with loud clamour the Pharisees wished to make that the finding of the council. “What if a spirit has spoken to him, or an angel?”—referring to Paul’s visions. This was like an insult to the Sadducees, and the noise increased.

Lysias was looking on at the scene in calm disgust. Those enraged Jews would tear him in pieces among them, and he ordered his men to go forward and bring Paul out from their midst, and take him back to the castle. If any one tried to stop them, they knew what to do.

And once more Paul was rescued from his angry countrymen by the strong arms and stronger pikes of Roman soldiers. When the councillors saw the grim-faced men with leather jerkins and brass-covered caps taking Paul away, the fire went out of the theological quarrel, and they broke up the meeting and went home, having settled nothing.

Saved by his Nephew.

JERUSALEM: AGED 50—60.

LYSIAS, the Roman captain, sat in his room in the castle, and he did not know what to make of the scene in the Jewish council, for he could not understand the subject of quarrel or their Hebrew talk. It made the riot in the temple seem darker. He talked with Paul, and liked him; and while he could not set him free, he allowed Luke, Timothy, and his friends to visit him, and bring him food and such little comforts as he wanted. It was

the custom for the friends of prisoners to attend to their wants ; and woe to the wretched prisoner who had no friends, for his lot was a hard one.

The exciting scene in the council room, and the gloomy walls of a prison, had the usual effect upon Paul's sensitive mind. His spirits drooped, he lost heart, and began to fear that he would never leave Jerusalem or see Rome. And one night as he lay in the dark, asleep on the rough straw scattered on the stone floor of his room, he was consoled, cheered, and strengthened, as many have been, by a dream. He thought he saw the figure of Jesus standing beside him. "Be of good cheer," He said ; "you have spoken for Me in Jerusalem, and you must speak for Me in Rome also." When the sun rose over the red hills of Moab, with fringes of gold on the clouds, and the blue sky of early morning shone through his prison window, Paul awoke cheered and comforted, and told his dream to his friends. But the soldiers could tell them nothing of what would happen next.

In the lowest depths of the city, his enemies, the dagger men, were plotting a move. Paul had been a rabbi, and had become a Christian, travelling far and wide, preaching to foreigners, and setting aside the Jewish law. He deserved sudden death. The crowd cried, "Away with such a fellow from the earth !" And they would see that it was done. There were forty men at the meeting, and they bound themselves together with an oath, swearing that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. But how? They knew Ananias "the glutton," and some of them went to the leaders of the Sanhedrim, perhaps in the golden temple after the evening sacrifice, when the work of the chief priests was over.

"We have bound ourselves under a great curse," the dagger men said, in low voices, "to taste nothing until we have killed Paul." Their dark words did not shock the white-robed priests. It was pleasant if unholy news, and they bowed their heads to listen.

"Now we wish you to send a message to Lysias the captain, asking him to bring Paul down to the council room again, saying that you wish to inquire into things more fully. And we, before he can get near the place, will kill him." The white-robed priests agreed, and the dagger men slunk out of the temple, and away down to report to their companions in the town ; and the priests, with clean-washed hands, chanted their prayers in booming voices, as if "Holiness to the Lord" were indeed written in their hearts as well as on their brow. These dagger men must have been a wicked, reckless set, or perhaps they

thought that the people were so much against Paul there was no need for great secrecy. They may even have boasted of their oath; for Paul's nephew, the son of his sister, married and living in Jerusalem, overheard some of them describing the plot, and shuddered when he heard the name of the victim.

Without delay he told his mother; and she, in fear for her brother's safety, sent him at once to the castle to tell Paul. There, in the privacy of his stone room, he told his uncle of the plot. Paul was accustomed to danger, and knowing that as Lysias was responsible for his safety, he must be convinced of the truth of the story; and as none could do it better than the lad himself, he called for the officer.

"Take this young man to the chief captain. He has something to tell him." That was all he said; for the fewer who knew of the plot the better. The lad was taken along narrow passages, and up dark stairs, till he came to the captain's room, who had friends with him, and there the soldier who brought him said,—

"Paul the prisoner called me, and asked me to bring this young man to you, for he has something to tell you." Lysias was not displeased, and seeing the youth hesitating to speak before others, he took him kindly by the hand and led him to a place where none could hear.

"What do you wish to tell me?" he asked; and a frown came over his face as he listened to the lad's whispers,—

"The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council room to-morrow, as if you wished to inquire more carefully about him. But do not agree to do so. For forty men have bound themselves under a curse, neither to eat nor drink until they have killed him, and they are going to watch for him on the way. They are ready, and expect a promise from you." This was another proof to Lysias of the contemptible villany of these Jews. He would never be able to find out who dealt the stabs, and punishment would fall on him. He questioned the lad and sent him away, telling him strictly that he was not to tell any man—a thing which he would take good care not to do, for his own safety as well as his uncle's. He told Paul, however, what Lysias said, and left the castle, disappearing in the dark streets of the town, to whisper to his mother what he had done.

A Night Ride to the Sea.

JERUSALEM : AGED 50—60.

LYSIAS, the Roman captain, was indignant and a little alarmed that these fierce Jews should think of killing a prisoner while in charge of a Roman guard, and he determined that it should not be done. There was no hope now of getting at the truth of the riot in the temple; and Felix, the governor of Judea, in his gilded palace by the cool sea at Cæsarea, alone could try the prisoner.

When a festival was over, the extra soldiers were sent back to the barracks at Cæsarea; and he made up his mind to send some that night, with Paul among them. It was no unusual thing for soldiers to march by moonlight in summer, when it was cooler than in the daytime. Sending for two of his officers, he told them that seventy horsemen and four hundred footmen were to start for Cæsarea at nine o'clock, with spare horses for Paul and others to ride on, and they were to see the prisoners taken safely to Governor Felix at the castle. He did not need to say any more, for a simple order to convey safely meant to these grim-faced men that they must answer for the prisoners with their lives.

Taking pen and paper, Lysias wrote the customary letter to go with the prisoner, and which would prove to be the foundation of Paul's safety and good treatment,—

“Claudius Lysias sends greeting to the excellent governor Felix. This man was seized by the Jews, and they were going to kill him, when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, having heard that he was a Roman. Wishing to find out why they had done this, I brought him down to their council, and then I saw that it was all about questions of their own religious law. But they had nothing to say against him which I thought deserved death, or even imprisonment. I was told, however, that there was a plot against him, and I have at once sent him to you to be tried; and I have told his accusers that they must speak against him before you. Farewell.”

He was friendly towards Paul, and in his anxiety to stand well with his superior officer he wrote as if he had rescued him because he was a Roman. He may have read the letter to Paul, to give him confidence before the governor. Taking a light from the fire, he ran wax upon the folded letter, and sealed it with his ring; and calling the officer in charge of the troop, he gave it to him to fasten inside his leather doublet. And Lysias would

smile to himself as he thought of the forty Jews who would starve with dry mouths for the next day or two, and of the reply he would give to the grave elders who were coming in the morning to invite him to bring Paul down to their council.

The sun went down in a haze of crimson behind the bare hills of Judea, and the stars came out round the white moon that shone on the castle walls. Paul was told to prepare for the journey, and the spare horses may have been for some of his faithful friends. At nine o'clock there was a shuffling of leather-cased feet, a trampling of horses' hoofs, and shouting of men's voices at the castle stables, as the well-fed soldiers tied on their armour and prepared for the journey. It was only another band of wild foreigners going down by night to the garrison town. All was ready, and the men thronged out through the low archway and down the narrow street; and Paul, mounted and with his head muffled in his brown cloak, rode with the horsemen, a strong man riding on each side, with a light chain fastening his wrist to one of theirs. As they rode through the narrow streets, dark save for gleams of moonlight, and out through the darker tunnel of the city gate, he had no fear; for were all Jerusalem to rise against them, these men of pike, sword, and shield would not yield up their prisoner. Again he was outside the gates of Jerusalem. Within these walls he would never be again; for, although not free, he was leaving for ever the city of his boyish dreams.

With the moonlight glancing on helmet and spear-point, on breastplate, shield, and sword, with horses' heads tossing in the cool night air, and the steady tramp of four hundred booted feet in front and rear, they marched past the tombs of the Jewish kings, along the paved road out into the hills, and down towards the sea—the road up which Paul had ridden with dread and misgiving not many days before. Hour after hour, and mile after mile, they kept steadily on their way, stopping only for a brief pause, or to give their horses a drink as they passed through a stream. The rattle of their armour and the noise of their feet roused the yellow dogs of the hamlets; sleepers awoke in their little houses, but they knew as they listened that it was only another band of passing soldiers.

When the light of morning came over the dark hills of Gilead, and the white mists rolled upward from the woods of Samaria, they were still marching on, for the two officers would not stop until they had gone the usual distance of a forced march. By ten o'clock in the morning the sun was burning hot, and they had reached the soldiers' resting-place of Antipatris,

on the plain of Sharon, between the hills and the sea, with refreshing streams, and here they rested and had food. The foot-soldiers went no farther, but, after resting, marched back towards the hills and Jerusalem; while the horsemen, with Paul in their midst, trotted off for a hot ride of twenty miles, through woodland and harvest field, towards the city of Cæsarea, where they would not arrive until the afternoon. The soldiers were mostly young, hardened men, who would not think much of what they had done; but to Paul it would be very tiring to ride all night and all day with little rest. But men can endure a good deal when their lives are in danger.

The sun burned on the golden roof of the temple at Jerusalem, and the blue sky gleamed over the open courts, where the priests were cleansing the white altar for the morning sacrifice, and filling the air with the smoke of fragrant incense. Having said their morning prayers, the deputation of rulers went to the castle to inquire for Lysias. They were too pure to go into the house of a foreigner, so he came out to them, with short, black hair and clean-shaven face, wearing a soft cloak thrown over his shoulder, that partly hid his embossed breastplate and purple tunic, but left his bare brown arms uncovered; and he smiled to himself as he saw how the Jews kept at a distance from him. With mock voices they asked that the prisoner Paul should be brought down again to the council that day, that his matter might be further inquired into; and he watched their faces as he questioned them. Perhaps he tried how many lies these holy men from the Jews' temple would tell, by seeking particulars of why they wished to ask more questions of Paul, and whether the day after to-morrow or next week would not do as well. And he would frown at their answers, and perhaps smile at the thought of their friends, the forty hungry and thirsty dagger men, down in the dens of the city. At length he told them that Paul was near Cæsarea by this time, having gone down in the night with a troop of soldiers; and that if they had anything more to say against the man, they must say it in open court before Felix, the governor there.

They would not know whether to doubt or believe; but they dared not question him, for Roman officers had a knack of keeping silent when they had crafty Jews to deal with, and of handling them somewhat roughly. Turning on his heel, Lysias left them to carry their perplexing message to their white-robed friends and to the villanous dagger men, whose oaths and curses were most likely only so much empty boasting, to make the people think how terrible they were, but which they never intended to keep if it meant no more wine and meat.

Tertullus the Advocate.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

ALTHOUGH Felix was the Roman governor of Judea, and bound to do justice as a Roman judge, he was a very different man from Lysias, his chief captain. When he was still a Roman slave, Pallas, his brother, was in high favour with the emperor, and got him made governor of Samaria. The Judeans hated him, and when he became their governor also, he cordially returned their hatred, putting down the risings of the Zealots with terrible cruelty, and yet he employed the dagger men for his own dark deeds. He hated Ananias the high priest, and looked on nothing with favour that came from him; and he despised the whole Jewish people, from the high priest to the lowest dagger man. The Roman emperor was the only man he feared, and this made him behave with a certain decency, for he was liable at any time to be recalled to Rome and punished. But he lived like a prince in Herod's large castle at Cæsarea, surrounded by Roman officers and Roman ladies, who enjoyed the Roman games and prize fights in the circus, and the chariot and horse races. His wife Drusilla, whom he got to desert her husband and marry him, was a beautiful Jewish princess, the sister of Herod Agrippa.

Paul was kept in the soldiers' barracks at the castle, chained to his companion soldier by the light chain, until Felix cared to see him, which may not have been for some days. Then the officer of the troop of horse, taking Paul with him, crossed the courtyard and went up the white steps into the part where the governor lived, and over the tessellated passages, until he came to the large room, with shaded openings for windows, through which the cool wind came from the sea, where he received his officers. Going forward slowly, and touching his knee on the pavement, the officer handed him Lysias's letter. As Felix read it he glanced from under his frowning brows at the Jew in the brown cloak, who stood at the door, with the chain of a prisoner on his wrist. And he wondered if he came from Judea.

"What province do you come from?" he asked.

"From Tarsus of Cilicia," Paul replied.

Folding up the letter, Felix asked some more questions, although he would not listen to explanations now. He was favourably inclined towards this Roman citizen, and despised the Jews and all their priests and councillors.

"I will hear your case when your accusers also come to

Cæsarea." And turning to the officer, he gave orders that, as the prisoner was uncondemned, he was not to be put into the prison, a loathsome place, but was to remain in the soldiers' barracks, and his friends were to be allowed to see him. This was a great favour, and meant that Luke, Timothy, Philip, and others would bring him in food, bedding, books, dishes, and other comforts, to make his confinement tolerable within the castle walls.

Days passed, and his friends heard that Ananias the glutton and some of the Jerusalem council were coming down to accuse him, and Paul thought of his defence. When they came, he went in charge of a soldier to the seat of justice, outside the castle, where Felix sat in a chair of white ivory, placed upon a raised pavement, to hear all cases. Pillars and arches surrounded him, with no roof, but only a yellow awning casting a cool shade, as he sat in his white cloak with the purple border, the sea and sky gleaming through the arches. Round the pavement stood soldiers with bronze-headed pikes, and behind him were the men of the rods and axe. It was a Roman court, free to all. The Jews from Jerusalem were there, with Tertullus the advocate, whom they had engaged to plead their case in Greek, standing apart by themselves, for they did not care to rub clothes with foreigners. There too stood Luke, Timothy, and the friends of Paul, who trusted to his innocence and eloquence. Beyond them were Jews, Syrians, Greeks, traders, idlers, beggars, curious to hear what was being done.

The business of the court went on, with disputes, wrangling, and sharp judgments, while the crowd of idlers of the city looked on, indifferent to who won; and then came Paul's case. He was brought forward, to stand in his brown cloak and striped kerchief beside a soldier, but with his hands freed from the chain. Felix asked if his accusers were present, and Tertullus answered for his clients—Ananias the glutton and others. When asked of what they accused the prisoner, Tertullus went to the accuser's place, and, speaking in flowing Greek, praised Felix.

"Seeing that through you we enjoy much peace, and that by your care mischievous things are corrected for this nation, we acknowledge it in all ways, and at all places, with all thankfulness, most excellent Felix. But I do not wish to weary you with these things, and entreat you to hear a few words in your kindness. We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a stirrer-up of insurrections among all the Jews throughout all the world, and a ringleader of the sect called the Nazarenes. He also tried to profane our temple; but we laid hold of him, and would have

judged him by our own law. But Lysias the chief captain came, and with great violence took him out of our hands, ordering his accusers to come before you. Examine him yourself, and you will see the truth of all the things of which we accuse him.” Turning to his clients—Ananias the glutton and his friends—he asked them if it was not so. And one after another they rose and joined in the charge made by their advocate, affirming that what he said was true.

Felix had the Roman gift of silence. The Greek advocate’s remark about the violence of Lysias, his captain, did his case no good. The governor had the captain’s own version of the rescue in the letter in his hand, and Paul had good reason to be grateful to Lysias for his favourable report, which would stand his friend through long years of inquiry and delay. Turning his glance from the faces of the excited Jews, and his hated enemy Ananias, to the earnest face of the prisoner, Felix beckoned with his hand, as he asked him for his defence. He knew that this wonderful Jew would be ready. As Roman governor, he had heard something of Paul, and knew of the new gospel of Jesus which so earned the hatred of the priests, and he prepared to listen to an interesting speech.

“When Lysias Comes.”

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

PAUL had heard the men of Athens, and knew more about Greek oratory than Tertullus, who made his living by it. As was his manner, before opening his lips he looked earnestly at the face of the Roman governor with those wonderful grey eyes that kindled when his voice rose into eloquence.

“Since I know,” he began, “that for many years you have been a judge among Jews, I cheerfully make my defence before you. Take note that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem. And neither in the temple, in the synagogues, or in the city did they find me disputing with any man, or stirring up a crowd: neither can they prove to you the things of which they accuse me.” This was a challenge to the lying Jews to prove their case with witnesses in the usual way. He then went on to tell Felix the true reason of their bitter hatred.

“But this I confess to you, I belong to those who speak of the way of God, whom these men call a false sect, and after their manner I worship the God of our fathers. I believe all things which are according to our Jewish religious law, and are

written in the books of our prophets ; and like these men," pointing to his accusers, " I hope and look for the rising of all men, good and bad, from the dead." And he repeated the words which aroused the anger of Ananias, who heard them now in gloomy silence, and did not suggest that he should be struck on the mouth : " Herein I strive to keep a clear conscience toward God and men.

" I was away from Jerusalem for some years, and came back to bring money to my poor countrymen, and offerings ; amidst which these men," pointing again to his accusers, " found me in the temple, having purified myself before going in. I was there with no crowd and no disorder. But some Jews were there from Ephesus, who made a riot ; and they should have been here to-day to accuse me, if they have anything they can say. Or else," and again he pointed with a sweep of his arm to Ananias and his friends, " let these men tell you what wrong-doing they found in me, when I stood before their council, excepting this one thing, that I called loudly as I stood among them, It is about the resurrection of the dead that I am being called in question before you this day."

He paused, and Ananias and his advocate made no sign of answering him, for he spoke the truth. But they kept to their accusation that he was a ringleader of the Nazarenes, who stirred up the Jews everywhere against the Roman rule. Felix knew better. A glance at the letter of Lysias, and he saw these words : " I brought him down to their council, and then I saw that it was all about questions of their own religious law." Ananias and his advocate did not know what the Roman captain had written. Felix had not hunted Zealots among the caves and mountains of Judea without knowing that neither Jesus the gentle Galilean, nor His followers of the way of God, were plotters against the Roman rule. If this Paul of Tarsus were one, why should the dagger men wish to murder him ? He might have dismissed the case there and then, and set him free, but he granted the accusers' request for delay, for some reason of his own, putting it off to another day. Perhaps what Paul said about the sum of money he brought had something to do with it, for Felix loved a bribe. Holding up his hand for silence, he said gravely to Paul,—

" When Lysias, the chief captain, comes down to Cæsarea, I will decide your matter ;" and, with the air of an impartial judge, he turned to the next case. That was the sign for Ananias and his advocate to go out and discuss the position with their friends. They had no great reason to be displeased with the result. If they could persuade Felix to delay the case from time to time, it would keep Paul out of the way. A bribe might do it.

Felix believed he was innocent, and commanded the officer of the garrison that he was to be allowed indulgence, and his friends permitted to come and go as they liked, and do whatever they wished to make him comfortable. The result of the trial was a disappointment to Paul and his friends, who expected he would have been set free; but it had ended, as many another trial has done, in a postponement to another day, and his sensitive mind began to droop with anxiety.

A Lovely Jewish Princess.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

ANANIAS the glutton, the men from the council, and their lawyer rode their slow-footed asses, in the melting heat, back to Jerusalem. They had failed to get Paul punished—indeed, Felix the slave seemed disposed to set him free—and they must get the case held over, if possible, for years. And this they did with such success—for Felix loved a bribe—that, to please them, he let the matter stand over indefinitely. Lysias came and went between Jerusalem and Cæsarea, but the case was not heard of again. And Paul remained a prisoner, yet hardly in a prison, for he was in a good building, and could speak with his friends, and write letters to distant Christians; and while he might walk in the barrack grounds, he was not allowed outside the brick walls, and there was always a soldier near, whose duty it was to bring him if wanted.

Felix, with mounted soldiers round him, left Cæsarea for a time; and when he returned, his wife, the princess Drusilla, was with him. As a daughter of the Jewish royal family, she was much thought of, but more because she was so very beautiful, and not yet twenty. Felix told her about Paul, and being a Jewess, she understood the religious differences between Paul and the Jews' council, and may even have tried to explain them to the Roman governor. Jesus was crucified before she was born, but she knew about His followers the Nazarenes; and when Felix told her of Paul's strange speech, she also wished to hear this remarkable man, and he was sent for.

When Paul appeared in the palace, it was to stand with naked feet on the floor of coloured tiles, under a gilded roof that rested upon marble arches, while Felix and Drusilla reclined on silk couches, with their servants round them. He could see the

muscular arms and face of a slave in Felix; while in the deep red cheeks, the dark eyes, and the black hair of the princess he saw a true daughter of his own race, as she lay smiling, in pale-hued robes, with jewels at her throat and wrists, her slave-girls fanning her with feather fans. This was the sister of the princess whose statue he had seen among the idols of Athens. Wearing a girdled tunic, his grey hair covered with a traveller's striped kerchief that shaded his piercing eyes, Paul stood in the doorway. He was a prisoner, and did not know why he was brought into a palace to stand before a disgraced princess of his own race.

Felix bade him draw near, telling him that he wished to hear more about the faith of the Nazarenes in Jesus the Christ. Fixing his keen eyes on the face of the young princess, who, he knew, would understand him when Felix did not, Paul approached, and told once more the story of the hope of their race in a Messiah; of the coming of Jesus, His life, His death, His rising again, and the faith of the Nazarenes in Him as the Christ. Did he remember John the Baptist, in his camel-hair garment, standing before King Antipas in the black castle by the Dead Sea? His listeners must have spoken, for he paused to reason with them, and his eye kindled as he thought that perhaps some words of his might touch their hearts. What did he hold up before this whipped slave, who had come to be a governor, and this princess girl, who had deserted her husband? He spoke to them of doing right, and of self-control; that they should wrong no one, and keep a clear conscience toward God, which was the rule of life that Jesus taught; and that their passions and wishes should be kept under restraint.

A powerful ruler, as you know, is apt to think that he can do as he pleases; and a beautiful young princess is inclined to believe that she must have everything she wants. But Paul told them otherwise. He would also tell them of the higher life in Jesus, which was the way of God; and that Jesus said that all persons would be judged by what they did in this life; and that there was a living God, who would judge the good and the bad. And thus the orator, in the full strength of his great powers, who could hold thousands listening, addressed these two—a Jewish girl and her Roman master. To win either of them would mean to win hundreds in the city, and liberty!

Like most of his class, Felix had no religion, but only a superstitious dread of unknown and mysterious powers. And as he listened, he was fascinated by the piercing eyes, and fear took hold of him that perhaps Paul was speaking the truth, and that there was a future life, and a living God to punish the wicked.

Where then would he stand? The princess Drusilla was probably a Sadducee, and would smile behind her fan as she watched the grave and concerned looks of Felix, listening to the inspired man, until a feeling of terror seized him, and feigning pressing business, he hurriedly stopped the troubling voice, saying with a wave of his hand,—

“Go away for the present: I will send for you again at some more convenient time.” And as Paul retired from the room, and the crimson curtain fell over the doorway, he may have heard the light laugh of the young princess when Felix told her that the man with the piercing eyes had positively frightened him with what he said, and he may even have called for a cup of wine to make him feel brave again.

After a few days he sent for Paul again, but we do not read that the princess was there. The governor had got over his fright; for while he liked to converse with the wonderful man who was his prisoner, his inquiries were not so much about the faith in Jesus, as about whether Paul would not buy freedom with some of the money he brought to Jerusalem, for Felix loved a bribe. He was like one of the governors still common in Turkey, who think that their time of office is to be used in making themselves rich with bribes. But Felix found another surprise in this marvellous Jew; for however friendly he might be with him, and however plain he might speak about it, Paul would not pay for his freedom, and would only go out declared innocent. Ananias and his friends had no such scruples. As Felix asked bribes of Paul to let him out, we need not doubt that he asked and got bribes to keep him in; for he let the trial lie over for months and years, treating Paul in a friendly manner all the time—perhaps expecting that he would one day change his mind about the use of money.

Onesimus the Slave.

CÆSAREA: AGED 50—60.

AND so Paul went back to live among the Roman soldiers in the barracks of the castle—men of all kinds and nations; for they made up their armies from the people they conquered, and the fiercer and stronger they were the better. It did not matter whether they were Negroes, Egyptians, Italians, Greeks, or Asiatics: when they put on Roman armour, they were all alike soldiers of Rome.

Paul's friends went out and in as they pleased; and Aristarchus, who was dragged into the theatre at Ephesus, was also in the prison, perhaps as his servant. And there Paul lived, sometimes writing to distant friends, sometimes preaching to those near at hand, spreading the gospel in the great Roman garrison town, amid the tramp of armed men and the neighing of horses. Down on the rocky coast the ships sailed in from the blue sea, and out between the great stone horns of the harbour. The vast open theatre that looked over the city from the hillside above was crowded again and again with idle soldiers and pleasure-seeking sailors, who wanted amusement, and had no love for the fine temple which Herod the Great built, and which held the statue of the emperor Augustus, for those to worship who cared.

But there was bloodshed as well as amusement in this city, where men had knives at their belts. Greeks and Jews met in the large market, and as they were both very hard bargainers, and often cheats and liars, it is not strange that they hated each other and quarrelled. One day the Jews took one side, and the Greeks the other, and they fought so fiercely that Felix came out of the castle barracks with a band of soldiers to keep order; and his way of doing so was to fall on the Jews, and kill a great many, and give up their shops, stalls, booths, and houses to be plundered by their enemies. Felix hated Jews. And thus Paul, the minister of peace and brotherly-kindness, had to live on where the shouts of quarrelling and the shrieks of slaughter came over his prison walls, in a city ruled by the rough arm of an ex-slave. Chief among his faithful friends were Luke and Timothy, but he also frequently saw Philip and his daughters, and Aristarchus, Tychicus, Justus, Demas, Epaphras, and once more Mark of Jerusalem, with whom he was now on affectionate terms.

One day a slave called Onesimus came to him, who had run away from Philemon, a Christian of Colosse, whom Paul knew, for the Christians met in his house. The slave would come to Caesarea by ship, working as a sailor, with food for a wage. He had heard of Paul in his master's house, and hearing of him in Caesarea, sought him out, and so loved him that he wished to live in the barracks with him. Paul was deeply touched with the story of his escape, and told him of the gospel of Jesus; and Onesimus the slave became a Christian, and was like his servant.

Time passed; and although Onesimus was a great comfort, Paul thought that he should go back to his master; and if Philemon freed him, all would be well. We should not now send a slave back; but in these times all men had slaves who could afford to feed them, just as they had horses. Onesimus was willing to

go, and Paul sent a letter with him, in which he pleaded in his own way for his forgiveness and freedom, although we might think it was Philemon who required to be forgiven. He joins the youthful Timothy with him in the letter, and his would be the hand that wrote, while the elder man spoke, and the loving slave sat among the friends listening. He sent greetings from Timothy and himself to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and all who met at their house.

“I have had much joy and comfort in your love, because you have cheered the hearts of others. In the things of Jesus I could boldly tell you what to do; yet for love’s sake, being Paul the aged, once a messenger, now a prisoner for Jesus, I beseech you for my child Onesimus, whom I have made a Christian, while in my prison chains. He was little worth to you, but now he is of use to both of us. He is dear to me as my own heart, but I have sent him back to you, although I would fain have kept him, that on your behalf he might have attended on me, now in chains for the gospel. But without your leave I would not do it. Your goodness must not be forced, but of free will. Perhaps he has been parted from you for a time, that you may have him for ever; not as a slave, but as a brother, specially loved by me, and how much more by you, both as a man and a Christian. If you count me as a friend, receive Onesimus as if he were myself. If he has wronged you at all, or is owing you anything, charge it all to me.”

That was the end, and Timothy handed him the reed pen, as usual, to put the finishing words. His heart was hot about the man he was sending back to freedom or to slavery. If it is only a matter of money, he will guarantee it,—

“I Paul write it with my own hand, I will repay you. I need not remind you that you owe your faith to me. Brother, let me have joy in you: refresh my heart in Jesus. I write thus because I have confidence in your obedience, that you will do more even than I ask. Also prepare a lodging for me: for I hope your prayers may be granted, and that I may come to you. Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke send greetings.”

There are two touching things in this letter—where he calls himself Paul the aged, and speaks of his hopes of early freedom. Our public men are in their full vigour of intellect at sixty; and yet Paul, who was not yet that age, was feeling worn out by the rigour and stress of years, more than by their number. Hopes of freedom buoyed him up, but when these phantom clouds began to fade from the horizon, then his great spirit would sink within him.

And so Onesimus the slave, like many others, would pass

through that barrack-yard, finding Paul a prisoner, and leaving him one. Coming up from the sea, he was to disappear over it again, to the west, in the track of the sun. Like a ribbon of gold laid across the water, that little letter shines out towards us from the dark age and the dark world in which it was written. But the slave would not leave until Tychicus went with a formal letter to the Christians of Colosse.

Writing with a Chained Hand.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50-60.

A PRISONER in the barracks, Paul's thoughts winged themselves over the castle walls, and across seas and continents, to the congregations in distant cities ; and he sent messengers to them, and their messengers came to him. We need not doubt that some of his letters at this time have been lost ; and of those that bear his name, critics say that some may not be his. But that need not trouble us, for without doubt his heart beats and his fire burns in them, and the truth of God shines through them, making the matter of authorship a question of curious scholarship only. If the written word be truth, it matters little who penned it, or when it was penned.

His letter to the Christians at Colosse was perhaps written about this time. The city was in the province of Asia, in the wide valley of the Lycus River, under the shadow of the Cadmus Mountains, about half-way on the road from Pisidian Antioch to Ephesus. When Paul was at Ephesus two years before, he and his friends travelled up the wide valleys, spreading the gospel, and the congregation at Colosse would be started about that time by Epaphras, meeting in the house of his friend Philemon. Epaphras of Colosse was now with him, and Onesimus the slave, who could tell him about the people ; and as Tychicus was returning to Ephesus, he was to deliver the letter as he passed through Colosse on his way. In it he mentions the names of Christians in Laodicea, twenty miles farther down, and in Hierapolis, the largest of the three cities, on the other side of the river, and all in that vast valley of orchards, vineyards, and rich pastures.

Once more Timothy is his faithful clerk, and other friends would be there listening, and the soldiers passing to and fro would wonder what these Jews were about as they sat in silence together on their mats in the cool shade, while one

spoke and one wrote. If the officer of the guard passed, he would ask what was being written, and it would be read to him before he would allow it to go outside the walls. You have already had most of this letter, which you will read in full in your Bible, as I shall only now refer to the narrative parts.

He joins Timothy in it, calling him a brother, and tells them that he is thanking God because of their faith in Jesus, and praying for them. The gospel is bearing fruit all over the world, and he rejoiced from the first day he heard of them from Epaphras. They used to live bad lives, but the power of Jesus drew them near to God, and they were not to be moved away from the gospel which they heard. He wished them to know how he worked for them, and those at Laodicea, and all who had not seen him; for although his body was absent, his thoughts were with them. They were to beware of men who would try to spoil their faith with philosophy and rules of men and not of Jesus.

They were to put off their old life, and put on the new; and after referring to a number of the sayings of Jesus, he bade them keep the peace of Jesus in their hearts, and let His words dwell richly in them. And he sent special messages to wives and husbands, children and parents, slaves and masters, who were to treat their slaves justly. They were to pray for him in prison, that a door might be opened, and that he might preach the gospel as he ought. Tychicus, the bearer of the letter, and Onesimus the slave, would tell them all about his state, and what was being done. Aristarchus was in prison with him, and they might expect a visit from Mark and Justus, who were believers in circumcision, but had been a great comfort to him. Epaphras of their own city (who had worked hard for it, and Laodicea, and Hierapolis) and Luke and Demas sent greetings along with his.

The letter was to be read to the congregation at Colosse, and sent to Laodicea, to be read to the congregation in Nymphas's house, in exchange for the letter he had sent them, but which has been lost. With a friendly word to Archippus the letter ended. It would then be leisurely read over and corrected. When Timothy had copied it, this is how Paul signed it. Taking the reed pen in his hand, he wrote for a time, and when Timothy looked, this is what he had written at the end of the long yellow roll:—

“I Paul greet you with mine own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.” They would not forget that the living hand that wrote these few words had a brass chain hanging from it.

He had many friends about him, and the letter shows that he

was not cast down; and we note that the youthful Timothy is still with him, and also Mark, who would make up for the past by keeping by his side all through his coming trials. Luke, too, was there, making notes and gathering material for his life of Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, and for that greater book of the sayings and life of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke.

Sending out Messengers.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50-60.

FROM the castle walls at Cæsarea the blue Mediterranean could be seen stretching far away to the west, where the white clouds touched the horizon, and a purple island burned red in the setting sun, when the sky was filled with gold flakes and crimson leaves. Paul's heart went out from his barrack prison to the cities of Asia—Colosse, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Ephesus—when the sun dipped nightly into the western sea. The ships that crowded the harbour were from Corinth, Troy, Tyre, Ephesus, Cyprus, the isles of the Ægean, and a hundred other ports known to him. Heaping their food-stuffs and merchandise upon the wharfs, they spread their white sails and disappeared again over the pearly horizon. But they also brought passengers and pilgrims for the festivals in Jerusalem, and bands of soldiers for the Roman garrison, and some friends for Paul the prisoner, who brought him news of how his far-off congregations fared—sometimes good, sometimes bad news.

He could no longer travel over land and sea, but he could send letters and messengers. Having written to the Christians of Laodicea and Colosse, he wrote to his friends in Ephesus. The letter is the same in many places as that to Colosse, but that is not surprising. Writing two letters about the same time, and on the same subject, to different people, the strangeness would be if they were not similar. We do not know who was his clerk—perhaps Timothy again. And as I have already referred to most of this letter, I shall sketch it only lightly, leaving you to read it all in your Bible.

He rejoiced to hear of their faith in Jesus, and kindness to other Christians, and prayed that God would give them a spirit of wisdom, and reveal His will to them. The Christians of Jerusalem called all foreign Christians "the uncircumcised," and themselves "the circumcised;" but there was no reason for this

distinction, kept up like the white marble screen in the temple, past which none but Jews might go, for Jesus had broken it down, making all men alike.

At one time they worshipped idols, and were without God, but now they were brought near in Jesus. He was a prisoner for telling foreigners that God was not the God of Jews only, but of all men; but they were not to lose heart because of his trials. As a prisoner for Jesus' sake, he begged them to live worthy of their Master. And his eyes may have been looking thoughtfully upon the waves of the restless sea beyond the bay, as he bade them not be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of false teaching. He knew the people to whom he was writing, and bade them avoid anger, and bad talk, and drunkenness, and speak the truth, and steal no more, but work with their hands, for they were now children of the light.

Jesus proclaimed the truth that men and women, husband and wife, were equal in His eyes; but these men of Ephesus were accustomed to look upon their wives as their slaves and servants, and were not disposed to grant them the same religious rights which they took to themselves; and so they kept their women in the background, and Paul gave some countenance to this. Had he been married, he might possibly have written differently. Wives were to be in subjection to their husbands, as to God; and as Jesus is over all Christians, so was the husband to be over the wife in everything.

At the end of the letter he called upon them to be strong, and gave a description of a Roman soldier putting on his different pieces of armour—a thing which he saw every morning done by hundreds in the barracks, where the clash and rattle of brass armour, shields, pikes, swords, helmets, breastplates, and greaves was never out of his ears. It is a description that suited his fighting temper, but it differs from the spirit of his Master, who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." He asked their prayers for the man in a chain, that his mouth might be opened to speak the gospel boldly. His trial before a Roman judge was ever looming like a ball of fire in the sky, surrounded with uncertainty; and Tychicus, by whom he was sending the letter, would tell them all about his state and affairs, and comfort their hearts.

The letter would be read over to the friends who came to see him in the barracks, and copied out carefully, to be sealed in a strong cover, and given to Tychicus of Ephesus, who would carry it on his voyage home. And in the city of the great white temple it would be read in house and meeting, until it was torn

and tattered, and copied again and again, or it would never have come down to us.

A Welcome to the New Governor.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

TWICE Paul saw the feathery snows of winter powder the courtyard of Herod's castle, and sudden gales that lashed the sea until it was a whirl of smoking foam. Twice under blue skies he saw the blossom white upon the almond tree, red upon the apple, and the red-legged storks coming from the far south in a trail along the sky, to build their nests and rear their young on tree-tops and house corners. His friends told him of the intrigues of his enemies with Felix to keep him a prisoner, and his failure to bring up his case again told too plainly of their success. Two years had gone since that fateful day when he went up to the golden temple and was seized there. His friends asked Felix to set him free, but he would neither yield to them nor to his enemies, who wished him put to death. Like a careless, heartless man, he took a sort of middle course.

As time passed, Felix got into deeper conflict with the chief of the Jews, and the Zealots and dagger men kept Jerusalem and all Judea in a state of disorder, raiding and killing whoever they hated. Agrippa, the brother of the princess Drusilla, was empowered by the emperor to manage the temple and appoint the high priest; and he put down Ananias, and put up Ishmael in his place, another proud Sadducee.

We are not told what Paul said in his many conversations with the Christians who came to visit him in the castle during these two years, but we know what his advice was to the Christians of Rome, and it would be the same to those in the Roman garrison of Cæsarea.

“Let every one obey those in higher power: for there is no power without God, and these are appointed of God. Whoever resists them, resists the order of God; and they who do so shall be punished. Rulers are not feared by doers of good, but by the doers of ill. And if you wish to have no fear of the ruler, do what is good, and he will praise you: for he is a minister of God for good to you. But if you are doing what is bad, be afraid; for he does not bear a sword for nothing, but is a minister of God to punish them that do what is bad. Therefore you must obey, not only because of the punishment, but as a duty from your con-

science. For this reason you must also pay the taxes : for the collectors are ministers of God's service, attending always to this very thing. Give to all what is due : taxes and payments to some, and honour and respect to others."

After Felix had been governor for eight years, during which his disputes with the leading Jews were so frequent that they sent deputations to Rome to complain to the emperor, one day, to their great delight, the news came that they were to have another governor ; and then the leading Jews threatened Felix, saying that when he left they would send men to Rome to tell the emperor of his crimes and get him punished. This made him very angry, and somewhat afraid ; and he determined to try to please them before he sailed. One of the things he did was to leave Paul a prisoner for the next governor to deal with, and this pleased the Jewish leaders very well. Spreading white sails, he left Cæsarea with his beautiful princess ; and Portius Festus, the new governor, and a much better man, sailed in.

He also lived in Herod's castle, and was proclaimed governor of Judea as he sat in his chair of white ivory on the square of coloured pavement, overshadowed by the yellow awning, while Roman spears kept back the throng, and Roman helmets and breastplates gleamed behind him. Paul heard the shouting of the soldiers and the people in the streets when the new governor was proclaimed, for the pavement was a part of the castle buildings. And there were feasting and revelry in the gilded halls of the castle, and games in the racecourse and circus, and singing and drunkenness in the wine-shops and the barrack-yard, for every one hoped for better things from the new governor. And amongst those who hoped were Paul and his friends, who thought that his freedom was now near at hand.

After some inquiries into public affairs at Cæsarea, which would include the prisoners at the castle, Festus, with a large troop of horse and foot soldiers, rode up the paved way into the hills, that he might make an impressive entry into the turbulent city of Jerusalem. The shrill sound of brass trumpets would tell the people of his approach, and they would crowd their flat house-tops and narrow windows as he rode through the low arch in the city wall, and along the narrow streets, with fierce trumpets pealing before him, up to Herod's palace on the top of Mount Zion, there to receive the deputations of priests and leading citizens, who might wish to bring presents and secure his favour. Surrounded by his guards and officers, he appeared before the people, sitting in the white chair of justice, on the pavement of coloured tiles, where Pontius Pilate sat, now

almost thirty years ago. And Ishmael the high priest and the leading Jews had many complaints to make to the new governor, and favours to seek; and one was that Paul, a Jewish criminal in prison at Cæsarea, should be sent for to Jerusalem, and sentenced to death without delay.

“Away with him! away with him! He deserves not to live!” rose from the throng of temple guards and slaves of the priests in the background. The dagger men were again plotting, for they had resolved to watch for Paul, and stab him as he came up through the wild glens and hills. If Lysias the captain were there, he would warn the new governor of what happened two years ago. This rabble of fierce black-eyed Jews, calling out for a man’s blood without trial, was revolting to his sense of duty as a Roman judge, and Festus replied to their clamour with dignity.

“It is not the custom of Romans,” he said, “to give up any man for punishment before he has met his accusers face to face, and has had an opportunity to make his defence.” Festus had a wise way of asking advice of those who knew better than himself, and we can imagine him talking in low tones with the short-haired Lysias, for the chief captain himself could not have given a better answer.

“He is being kept a prisoner at Cæsarea, and I am about to return thither shortly. Let them that are of power amongst you come down with me, and accuse the man there, if there is anything wrong in him.”

Ishmael and his friends did not relish this courteous invitation to accompany him to the seaside and see justice done to Paul, but they had to express their thanks. To Cæsarea they must go, if they would taste Paul’s blood, although they urged Festus that the trial would be much better done in Jerusalem; but he would not yield.

After spending about ten days there, during which the governor would be taken to the roof of the temple cloisters, that he might look down into the wide courts, and see the worshippers crowding like bees about the large white altar, and moving across the coloured pavements in the sunshine, and hear the peals of the priests’ silver trumpets and the shouts of the Levite choir, he would go down and visit the barracks of the Roman soldiers, and the convenient passage by which they could run in a few seconds from the castle of Antonia into the very midst of the temple; and perhaps Lysias would show him where and how he had rescued Paul from the fury of his own countrymen.

Again the troop of horsemen clattered over the cobble-stones

of the streets, with arms gleaming in the sun, and little flags fluttering from poles; and again the footmen, with their leather-bound feet, shouldered their poles with little bronze images of the emperor, and eagles and balls, which they had left outside the city walls, and tramped with weary steps down the long miles of hill, gorge, and plain, towards Cæsarea by the sea. They were followed by a very different class of men—priests in their white robes; members of the council in their cloaks of blue and purple, with many a broad stripe; scribes with ink-bottle at girdle and roll of paper, the books of the law forming a load in themselves; and all riding upon thin-legged mules and long-eared asses, with an escort of temple guards with club and dagger, for the robbers did not love priests or reverence scribes.

An Arrow over their Heads.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

IN his white ivory chair, in the midst of the coloured pavement, raised above the people, and shaded by an awning from the hot sunshine, sat Festus in the early morning, outside the palace; for, true to his word, he was ready to hear Paul's case on the very next day after the leading Jews came down from Jerusalem. Wearing the white cloak with the deep purple border, his two rod and axe men standing behind him, his adviser near to advise him on the customs of the Jewish people and the Roman law, Festus was ready—a soldier, not a lawyer.

There, too, sat Ishmael and his friends, apart on their bright mats, with temple guards round them to keep off the touch of strangers, and a crowd of Jews gathered up from Cæsarea, ready to shout when they got the sign. For they expected to influence the new governor with shouts and noise, as they had done Felix; but they did not know the man who sat frowning upon them. There were faces, too, in that crowd that we know, some anxious, some eager and confident—Luke the physician; the young man Timothy, of Lystra; Mark, from Jerusalem; and Philip—hoping for great things from the new governor.

When the well-known figure of the grey-haired man in striped kerchief and brown cloak appeared, walking chained to his companion soldier, as he went forward to the place of the accused, there were prayers in the hearts of the Christians; but from the Jews came murmurs of suppressed hatred and disgust, as they called here and there, "Away with him! away with him!"

“What is your accusation?” asked Festus.

They had found an advocate a failure on the last occasion, and had taken the governor’s advice to bring men of power to speak; and one after another they stood up and spoke, accusing Paul of many false and grievous charges. When they were done, Festus told them to prove their charges in the usual way by witnesses; but they were not able to do so. Turning to Paul, he asked what he had to say to all that they had said about him; and his answer was ready,—

“Neither against the religious law of the Jews, nor against the temple rules, nor against the emperor Cæsar, have I done anything at all.” And then he went on to speak of the Christians and their faith in Jesus, who had died and risen again, and was alive.

“He is dead!” shouted a Jew excitedly.

“He is alive!” was Paul’s grave reply.

“Away with him! He ought not to live any longer!” came from Jewish voices in the close-packed crowd.

Festus was perplexed. The accusation of the talkative Jews was not what he had expected. There was nothing seriously urged about breaking the Roman law. It seemed to be a hot dispute about their religion which he could never settle. He might let these Jews settle it in their own council, for he had power to do that.

“This man has done nothing worthy of death,” he said in a loud voice; and the crowd became silent with expectation. The leading Jews may have said that in Jerusalem they could get plenty of witnesses; and Festus was willing to please them, although he would not trust Paul entirely into their power. An idea occurred to him. He would still keep the case in his own hands, and yet please them.

“Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged about these things before me?” he asked the prisoner.

Paul paused to think. For two years he had been looking forward to this day, when he would stand publicly before a Roman judge, to receive Roman justice, according to Roman law; and he knew—for he had been told by many—that by the Roman law he was entitled to preach Christianity anywhere and everywhere in the empire. He had hoped and longed for a judgment which would fix, once for all, that men had the right to be Christians in all parts of the Roman world. The sudden proposal of Festus was that he should go back to Jerusalem and be tried by the Jewish council, with Festus present. Tried by the Sanhedrim on a religious question, with the governor there to enforce their

sentence! Tried as Jesus and as Stephen were! If Festus would not try the cause of Christianity, a higher than he would do it. Long before that day he may have made up his mind on the course he would take if he did not get justice. He was excited when he began his reply to the governor's question, and his excitement grew with each word.

"I am standing before the judgment seat of Rome, where I ought to be judged. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you know very well. If I am a criminal, if I have done anything that deserves death, I am ready to die: but if none of these things are true of which they accuse me, no one can give me up to them. *I appeal to Cæsar.*"

The fateful words were uttered—noble words that, like a winged arrow, flew high over the head of the white-robed high priest and his frowning followers, hitting a mark above the head of even Festus himself. Well might Festus start, and the priests stare, for this oppressed and despised Jew had pronounced the greatest words known to the Roman law—words that could raise the poorest Roman citizen to a level with the best. As the American President is open to the approach of every American citizen, so the emperor of Rome was open to the cry of every Roman who called for his protection through the law.

"*I appeal to Cæsar!*" Festus had not had many such appeals in his day. This cultured Jew knew his rights as a Roman citizen; and turning to his advisers, Festus talked with them, while silence fell on the crowd of upturned faces beneath him. Turning again to Paul, with a firm-set mouth, for his challenge, "No man can give me up to them," had rung sharp upon his ear, and as if to tell Paul that he had made a great mistake, he delivered what sounded like a sentence,—

"You have appealed to Cæsar. To Cæsar you shall go."

The appeal was granted, the die cast. The cause of Christianity was to go before the highest court in the world. But Paul's friends did not know whether he had triumphed or failed. His enemies thought his appeal was a farce, and would end in nothing. His friends did not know what it would end in. Paul believed the emperor would not go against the open laws of Rome, and that he could not fail to succeed in securing liberty for all Christians. He looked forward to Rome and freedom. Again the Roman judge gave orders that he was to be indulgently treated until he could be sent to Rome, for he was a Roman citizen, and as far as Festus saw, he was guilty of no breach of the law.

But what troubled the governor was, that in his report to

Rome he would be quite unable to say what ill this man had done, or even of what breach of the law he was accused.

The Last Jewish Kinglet.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50-60.

PAUL was a privileged prisoner in the castle, but his soul yearned for freedom, for there were many hands held out to him, and voices calling from the ends of the earth. By appealing to Rome, he believed he had cut the tangled knot of the law's delay; but the expense would be great. He would have to pay money to Festus for pledges and charges, and pay his own passage-money and food from Cæsarea to Rome, and also that of his soldier-guard. Poor men could appeal, but few could carry it out. Paul was not now poor. And some of his friends resolved to go with him, but it was not to be immediately.

For weeks after the return of Festus the castle and the city of Cæsarea were in a stir of rejoicing over the new governor. People of importance from all the towns up and down the country came to visit him, and say how glad they were, although it was seldom true. Among those who came and spent a holiday of feasting and games in the Roman capital was Agrippa, the brother of the beautiful princess Drusilla, who was a little king in the north, round about Gennesaret. And he brought his sister Bernice, a clever, beautiful woman, who had great power over him, but who hated Drusilla for being so young and charming. They lived in Cæsarea Philippi, at the end of the blue lake, to which Roman officers and Jewish nobles came when they wished hot baths and a gay holiday, for it was a very fashionable place.

With much pomp and show, riding on richly-harnessed horses, and accompanied by a number of their chiefs and slaves, armed, and dressed in tunics of red, and yellow, and green, with noise of cow-horns, hand-drums, and clashing cymbals, bearing little flags on thin long spears, and bringing a present on a decorated camel, they had come over the mountains of Galilee, and along the Roman road by the edge of the sea, to Cæsarea. Agrippa was the only remaining Jewish king, and a very small one; but he was the great-grandson of the great Herod, ruling by Roman favour till his death, when they would allow no more Jewish kinglets. And Festus ordered out his foreign soldiers

with gleaming helmets, his officers in purple tunics and breast-plates of bronze, with eagles and emperors on staffs, to receive with great ceremony this Jewish kinglet. And Bernice, dressed in her richest dress, with jewelled arms, would be carried into the city, on a shaded couch, by black slaves, as if she were too fine a thing to walk or feel the sun.

They were the governor's guests in the castle—entertained with games and public shows in the day, and with feasting in the golden halls of Herod at night. And in the course of their talking of public affairs, the governor told the king and the princess the curious case of the prisoner left on his hands by Felix, their own brother-in-law. When he went up to Jerusalem, the chief Jews disgusted him by shouting for his death. He told them, too, of the strange scene at Cæsarea, when they again clamoured for his death; and that the prisoner had defended himself ably, and appealed to Cæsar, although the dispute was all about their religion, and one called Jesus, who had been put to death by Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem, but whom the prisoner said was alive. He granted the appeal, and would have to send him to Rome; but he did not know what to say in his report about him, for he was guilty of no crime. The story interested Agrippa so much that he said he would like to hear this man speak.

"To-morrow you will hear him," Festus answered; for he wished to please his guests, and the Jewish prince might be able to help him with his knowledge of Jewish affairs. Next day Agrippa came with a show of royal splendour, bringing the princess Bernice, borne by her slaves, and his chief officers, escorted by their own followers, and they went into one of the large rooms of the castle. It was an entertainment, and, to please the king and his sister, Festus invited all the officers of his different regiments who cared to come, and the chief men of the city, to hear the Jew in the brown cloak.

The governor entered the hall, accompanied by the king and his sister, bowing them to luxurious cushioned couches on his right hand, as he took his place upon the judge's ivory seat and ordered the prisoner to be brought. Paul would receive warning of this meeting with Agrippa and Bernice, so that when he came in, chained to his familiar soldier, he was not unprepared. Standing in his Jewish dress of loose woollen tunic bound with a soft girdle, his arms and feet bare, his grey hair covered with a bright kerchief that fell backward over his shoulders, it was as if he were again on his trial. When he raised his bright grey eyes, he saw above him no king in scarlet with a gold crown, but only what might have been two Roman nobles, in flowing robes, with

close-clipped hair, and a Roman lady, unveiled and jewelled, reclining among cushions—the famous Jewish princess herself, whose statue he saw in Athens.

"King Agrippa, and all who are here," said Festus, as he pointed in a not unfriendly way to Paul, whose enemies had not been invited, "this is the man about whom the crowd of Jews came to me, both here and at Jerusalem, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. And I found that he had done nothing worthy of death. But he himself appealed to the emperor Cæsar; and I granted his appeal, and will send him to Rome. But I have no sure thing that I can put into my written report about him to the emperor. And so I have brought him before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, that, after examining him to-day, I may have something to write." And he added these very common-sense words: "For it seems unreasonable to me, in sending a prisoner to Rome for trial, not to be able to say what charges are made against him."

There was nothing unkind in these words, for Paul had secured a friend in this Roman governor, as he did in Lysias, and to a certain extent also in greedy Felix. The meeting was arranged for Agrippa, and he now spoke. With the air of a great king, who was conferring a favour on the humble man before him, he said solemnly,—

"Paul, you are permitted to speak for yourself." He sank back to listen, while Festus buried his chin in his hand as he watched Paul's face.

"Paul, are you Mad?"

CÆSAREA: AGED 50—60.

PAUL was about to address the head of the Jewish race, who knew all their customs, and had lived much in Rome also. He could speak with confidence, for Agrippa was not a priest or rabbi—perhaps neither a Sadducee nor a Pharisee, but a worldly-wise prince, who might look impartially on a religious dispute. He was glad of this opportunity, and, as was his custom, he gravely held up his hand to secure attention, looking round on his own friends, and on the officers and citizens, before resting his piercing eyes on the face of the Jewish king.

"I think myself happy, King Agrippa, in that I am to make my defence before you to-day regarding all the things of which I am accused by my countrymen of Jerusalem, and especially be-

cause all our customs and questions are well known to you. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.

“My accusers know what has been my way of life from my youth up, for it was spent from the beginning among my own countrymen and in Jerusalem. If they were only willing to speak, they know well that I have lived a Pharisee, according to the rules of the strictest sect known to our religion. I stand here now to be judged for believing in the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers, and which, earnestly serving God night and day in the temple, our people hope to attain.” With flashing eyes and upraised hand he declared once more in a loud voice: “It is for believing in this hope that I am accused by them, O king. *Since when has it become an incredible thing that God should raise the dead?*” This was the secret of all their bitter hatred—his teaching that Jesus rose again, and that all men had hope of immortality. And again, while the beautiful Bernice played with her fan, he told to that audience of Romans and Jews the strange story of the change which Jesus wrought in his life.

“I used to think that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus: and in Jerusalem I shut up many of His followers in prison, having received power from the chiefs of the priests to do so. When they were tried before the council, and condemned to die, I gave my vote against them. I punished them often in the synagogues round about, trying to make them curse Jesus. Being exceedingly mad against His followers, I followed them into strange cities, and persecuted them there.” Thus, in no sparing terms, he told the lurid story of his fiendish days of bigotry, rage, and madness against Jesus and His trembling followers. That was proof enough of his being a zealous Pharisee. He then came to the story of his conversion—the glorious vision which altered his whole life, and bade him go to foreign nations.

“Wherefore, O King Agrippa, *I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision*: but declared first to my countrymen at Damascus, then in Jerusalem, then throughout all the country of Judea, then to strangers in foreign lands also, that they should *repent and turn to God, and live lives worthy of the great change*. And for doing this I was seized in the temple by my countrymen, who tried to kill me.”

It was not in being a follower of Jesus, but in carrying the gospel to strangers and foreigners, that he had roused the hatred of the priesthood; and King Agrippa quite understood it. Continuing, Paul said,—

“By the help of God, I stand firm to this day, speaking both to small and great, and saying nothing but what our

prophets and Moses said would happen : that the Christ should die, and, by rising from the dead, be the first to proclaim the light, both to our own people and to foreign nations."

"Paul, you are mad," exclaimed Festus the Roman, in a loud voice that rang through the gilded hall ; "much learning has made you mad." He had never heard such wild stories. A vision in which Paul saw Jesus, who was crucified by Roman soldiers, and was yet alive ; and that he had told this in foreign cities—it was too much for the rough soldier. He believed rather that this Jewish rabbi, with the glowing eyes, had deranged his mind with excessive study. Turning a calm gaze from the king to the governor, Paul answered in a lowered voice,—

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and soberness. The king, to whom I can speak freely, knows about these things. I am sure they are not hidden from him ; for they have not been done in a corner." Then turning his flashing eyes suddenly back upon the king's face, he asked, in a voice quivering with earnestness,—

"King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets?" He leaned forward for an answer ; for he was ready, with the quickness of a rabbi, to prove from these writings that what he said about the Christ was true. Agrippa hesitated. He did not like the question. Whichever way he answered he would be caught. Paul saw the hesitation, and fixed his wavering mind with these glittering words,—

"I know that you believe." He paused again. The king was deeply moved. Paul's words and eyes, so fixed and burning, made him feel embarrassed before the cool governor and smiling sister, and his answer showed the confusion of his mind.

"Paul," he replied, "with but little persuasion, you would fain make me a Christian." The reply was quick as a dagger, for Paul was skilled in such signs of yielding.

"I would to God," he exclaimed, "that, whether with little or with much, not only you, but all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these chains," holding up his hand, from which hung the light chain of brass. The king could not escape from a man so full of fire, but he had had enough of it, and the hearing was nearing an end.

Looking out for a Ship.

CÆSAREA : AGED 50—60.

PAUL had overwhelmed Agrippa, and he rose quickly, for he wished no more of these questions. The governor and Bernice rose too; and that was the sign for all their friends and officers to rise, for the entertainment was done. And as his companion soldier signed to him to come away, Paul, too, knew that the show was over. But he had not lost anything by pleading before the Jewish king and his clever sister. The governor withdrew with his guests to a private room to eat ripe fruit and fine bread, sip cool wine, and talk over Paul's strange case; and when he asked the king what he thought of the matter, his reply confirmed his own opinion.

"He has done nothing that deserves death or imprisonment," was the king's answer.

"He might have been set free if he had not appealed to Cæsar," was the governor's perplexed reply. And as they ate their purple grapes and sweet figs, their almonds and nuts, and drank their wine from Tyrian glasses, they continued to talk of Paul for a time, and then turned to their horses and their men, and what was to be next in the circus. And Paul went back to the soldiers' quarters with the little brass chain still on his wrist.

Did the governor ever tell him that he might have been set free but for his appeal to Cæsar? Perhaps, having once appealed, Paul could not withdraw, or perhaps he was determined to go to Rome and get the judgment of the highest court in all the world that men everywhere were free to be Christians. And what could the governor say in his report to Rome but that neither Agrippa, Felix, Lysias, nor himself thought that Paul had done anything wrong—which would be a strange report indeed.

King Agrippa and the princess Bernice, with all their train of bodyguards, ladies, women, soldiers, slaves, and officers, rode out of Cæsarea again, along the paved road by the blue sea, with horsemen bounding off the road to gallop across the plain and back again, to show off their speed, their little green and red flags fluttering, their horns blowing, on their way to the hills of Galilee. But when Festus rode up into the hills, it was at the head of grim armed men; for the Zealots and dagger men were still at work murdering travellers, burning houses and crops, and had to be punished. There were also frequent quarrels in Jeru-

salem, in which the high priest and he were mixed up; indeed, so troublesome to govern did Festus find these fierce and treacherous Jews, that they brought about his death in two years.

Paul saw the soldiers marching out of the barracks, and, after days spent in the hills, returning again worn out, distressed, wounded, with comrades left dead amongst the hot rocks, stabbed by the wild tribesmen. And he was not silent during these days when the barrack yard and castle gardens were his world, but spoke to his friends, and such of the soldiers and townspeople as were allowed to come and hear him. Two governors, two princesses, and a king had listened to him in the gilded hall near by, and surely the soldiers might listen as they polished their brass armour. He spoke to them as he wrote to others, of what he saw around him,—

“Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to resist temptation. Our wrestling is not against men, but against princes and powers, rulers of darkness, and wickedness in high places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the day of evil, and stand, having done everything. Stand therefore, having put on the belt of truth, and the breastplate of righteousness; and having shod your feet with the gospel of peace, take up the shield of faith, with which you shall be able to quench the darts of evil. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit of Jesus, which is the word of God, with prayer and pleading. Pray at all times in the Spirit of Jesus, and watch with perseverance, praying for all Christians, and for me, that words may be given to me, and that I may open my mouth with boldness to make known the mystery of the gospel of Jesus, for which I am an ambassador in a chain; that I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

After a time Governor Festus took Paul's case seriously in hand. The summer was passing, with hot blue skies quivering over calm blue seas, where on windless days white birds dipped wings into the glassy waves that sobbed and gurgled among the black rocks of the breakwater. Already many ships had taken in cargoes, and spread white sails for Rome, gliding out of sight into the pearly horizon, that glowed like the mouth of a furnace with crimson and gold flame at sunset. When at length he made up his mind to send off a batch of prisoners, there was no ship to be got going all the way to Rome. The best his officers could do was to secure a large vessel that was going along the Asian coast to Adramyttium, a port near Troy; and they could leave it at one of the ports on the way. When

the ship was fixed, Paul's friends came to the barracks, and arranged that Luke the physician and Aristarchus of Thessalonica should go with him, and passages were taken for them also.

Kind hands among the women of Cæsarea would make changes of clothing, cloaks, and mats for the men who were to face the bitter cold and danger of a long winter voyage; and dried fruits, fish, parched corn, oil, and wine would be given them, with money in their purses, and knives at their belts. We have no record of his farewell words at their last little meeting, but this is from one of his letters:—

“I beg of you, my brothers, by our Lord Jesus the Christ, and by the love of the Holy Spirit, that you plead in your prayers for me; that I may be with you again in joy through the will of God, and, together with you, find rest. Note the men who cause splits and obstructions among you contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them. For they do not serve our Lord, but their own greed; and by smooth and fair speaking deceive innocent hearts. The news of your obedience has spread abroad among all men, and I rejoice over you: but I would have you be wise toward all that is good, and simple toward all that is evil; and the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the God of peace be with you all.”

A Ship for Rome.

CÆSAREA: AGED 50—60.

CHRIMSON fires along the ranges of Samaria burned under crimson clouds at the dawning of the day when Paul left the castle yard, where he had been so long a prisoner; and his friends wept and lamented as he walked out of the barrack gate with a light chain binding his hand to his soldier companion. The ship was ready, and he went on board at the stone quay, crowded with their friends—Luke and Aristarchus going, perhaps, as his servants, so as to get in the same ship. Timothy, Tychicus, Onesiphorus, and Mark were away on journeys. Demas, Philip, and others were there; but we hear of no word of farewell from the elders at Jerusalem. The Christians of Ephesus and Tyre wept when he parted from them, and those of Cæsarea would kiss him, with tears and many cries; and there would not be lacking men like Agabus to say that they would never see his face again.

The captain had waited for a favourable west wind, and it was

blowing strong. Ropes were cast off, oars pushed out, and when the ship moved across the calm harbour the Christians would run along to the horns of the breakwater, to hold out their hands to the man in the brown cloak as the ship with the white eye passed; and then the yellow sail was shaken out, filling with the wind as the vessel moved out to sea, rising and falling, bursting the waves with its broad bows. Paul was a privileged prisoner—the only one who had appealed to the emperor, and perhaps the only Roman citizen. The others would be condemned criminals being taken to fight with wild beasts in the public shows at Rome. He was put under the special charge of Julius, an officer in the Augustine Band, one of the best Roman regiments. Again he was on the sea, and on his way to Rome—the dream of years—where he believed he would see the crowning of all his work. He did not doubt that the sealed report which Festus handed to Julius would be as favourable as his spoken words. It would repeat briefly what Lysias wrote—that Paul had not broken the Roman law, and that it was all a dispute about the Jewish religion.

By the light of early morning the ship sailed along the familiar Syrian coast, and Paul breathed free air again as he turned his eyes to the hills about Jerusalem, and the busy hive of the golden temple. And when the sun went down over the crimson waves, and night shrouded the hills of green Galilee, guided by the silver lamps of heaven and the dark coast-line, they held on their way, and Paul, wrapped in his thick cloak, was once more rocked to sleep in a ship. Next day they called at Sidon, where they were to take in goods for the ports of Asia; and as the governor's orders to Julius were of the most generous kind, Paul was allowed to go on shore and see friends in that town. And he would have a word for these Christians—the first spoken outside a Roman barracks for two years. What he said we are not told, but this is from his letters:—

“I have learned, in whatever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to be raised up, in every way, and in all things. I have learned the secret of how both to be filled and to be hungry, how both to have plenty and to be in want. I can do all things in the strength of God, who strengthens me. Howbeit you do well that you have sympathy with my sufferings. And God will fill any need of yours according to His riches and glory in Jesus the Christ. Now unto our God and Father be the glory, for evermore.”

Again the sail was spread, and they went right out to sea, making for the blue island of Cyprus, as their next shelter; and they were blown away to the low north end, which Paul had

often passed on his voyages to and from Tarsus. He was within eighty miles of his old home when the ship turned the peak of the island and began to sail away from the snow-white crests behind Tarsus, which he knew so well. After sheltering at Cyprus, they crossed to the Cilician coast, beyond Tarsus, and went along it westwards to Pamphylia, sailing and anchoring, battling against contrary winds, that sent the waves leaping into the ship, until they reached the port of Myra on the mainland, a regular calling-place for large ships. And then Julius ordered the men to leave the ship, hoping to get another going direct to Rome.

Inquiring among the large ships in the harbour, he found one employed in the Egyptian grain trade, and laden with grain for the Roman Government. It had a large number of passengers, but he soon caused room to be made for his men. When they all went into the ship, counting passengers, sailors, soldiers, and prisoners, there were two hundred and seventy-six people—too many for a rough voyage. It was so crowded that they would have to sleep on the deck and on the top of the cargo as best they could—a common thing in these days; and while the captain managed the sailing, Julius took the chief command.

It was now autumn, with stormy days, and only large ships were going out to sea; and the weather became so bad after leaving Myra that they could not keep straight on their voyage. They went to Rhodes, and after that were driven up and down the Ægean Sea, sheltering here and there at islands; drifting as far north as Cnidus, opposite the island of Cos, and back again to Crete. With difficulty they got round Cape Salmone, with high cliffs against which the white waves dashed, and passed into the Fair Havens, a bay of Crete, sheltered by several small islands, not far from the town of Lasea.

It was now October. They had been some weeks on the voyage, and were only about one-third of their way to Rome, and the time of the year had come when terrific gales sweep the seas. In a month's time sailing would be so dangerous that the sea would be cleared of ships, all lying in safe harbours until the month of March. These old wooden boats, with their high houses on bow and stern, a single mast and one huge sail, could not stand much straining in the waves. One winter storm, with the waves leaping over the sides, and leaks starting in the hull, was enough to send the best of them to the bottom of the sea. And so wise Greek captains did not risk their ships in winter, for they were never in a hurry, and two or three months more on a voyage was nothing to them. But Julius was a soldier, and he was in a hurry.

A Storm and a Dream.

FAIR HAVENS: AGED 50—60.

IT was with great difficulty that the sailors got the ship into the bay and safely anchored, and what were they to do next? Paul was a sailor as well as a traveller. He had sailed in many ships, in storms and calms, and on many seas, and had been shipwrecked three times, so that he knew something about the dangers of an autumn voyage. When the fasting days came for the festival of the Atonement in the middle of October, he kept the fast with the other Jews in the ship, and knew that it was dangerous for them to be far from land. The sail was down, for they were anchored in calm water, and Julius and the captain talked together with Paul about the voyage. He told them they should sail no farther, but stay in that bay for the winter, and go on when spring came; for he saw that if they went now, there would be loss and injury to ship, cargo, and passengers.

But the captain and owner of the ship told Julius it was not a safe bay to winter in, and that when the weather calmed they should try to reach Phœnix, a good harbour about sixty miles farther round the island, where they would be quite safe. The others agreed with this; and on an unfortunate day, when the south wind blew softly, they took up the anchor and sailed out towards Phœnix. But suddenly the wind changed, coming down furiously from the mountains, and the ship was caught, and had to turn and drive out to sea, making for the small island of Clauda, about twenty-five miles distant. There they got some shelter, but were unable to anchor, and hastily prepared for the coming struggle.

The small boat trailing behind, and filled with water, was with great difficulty hoisted on to the deck. The heavy mast had strained the bottom of the ship with swinging to and fro, and thick ropes were passed under and twisted tight with sticks, to hold the planks together. But soon they were blown off from their shelter, and as the sail could not be set, the long yard was lowered to the deck, and with a bare mast they drove before the gale. The passengers were in great distress, drenched with waves, and expecting the ship to go down in the darkness, when night came on.

Next morning the storm was no better, and the captain ordered cargo to be thrown over the side, Paul and Luke working for their lives with the rest. On the following day, to lighten the

ship, which was sinking lower in the water, the heavy yard and the large sail were pushed over the side, and all tackling and furnishings that could be spared. Then dark days and nights followed, during which they neither saw sun, moon, nor stars, but only black waves heaving and hissing round them, and all hope of being saved was given up. Sailors and passengers no longer did anything for the ship. Sheltering wherever they could, they held on to ropes and spars, expecting each time the ship sank between the seas that it would not rise again, while the waves broke over them, and no one thought of taking proper food, for death was so near.

But Paul never lost hope that he would live to see Rome. In one of those snatches of sleep which come to worn-out men, amid the noise of crashing waves, whistling ropes, and creaking wood, he had a dream—a gleam of heaven through the driving mists. The ship rolled from side to side, and Julius and the captain thought that in a few hours at most they would all be drowned. Paul said they should have listened to him, and remained at Fair Havens. But he bade them be of good heart, for no one would be drowned, but only the ship lost; and he told them of his dream, when an angel of God, whose he was, and whom he obeyed, bade him not fear, because he must stand before the Roman emperor, and He had granted him the lives of all in the ship. He believed God, and that they must be wrecked upon an island.

And thus, amid lashing waves, with a ship shuddering under them as it rose and fell, Paul, with his heart stayed upon God, put courage into despairing men, who knew little of him and the living God in whom he trusted. While they were flinging gifts into the boiling sea, and holding out hands towards temples on the far shore, as they called on Neptune, Venus, and Minerva to save them, this Jew in brown cloak and sandals bowed his grey head in prayer, and from a heart strengthened with the Spirit of God gave strength to all around him.

Shipwrecked at Malta.

THE STORM: AGED 50-60.

THEY were in the Adriatic, far from land, being blown in one direction, and, when the wind changed, driven in another, with white-topped waves surging round them, amid rain,

wind, and darkness, making no attempt to steer the ship. Only Paul and his friends had any hope left. When day dawned it brought no relief, and night made no change. Fourteen days had passed since that morning when, with sunshine on their decks, and the soft south wind in their sail, they sailed out of Fair Havens Bay.

About the middle of the night a cry arose from the sailors that added fresh terror to the storm. "Breakers! breakers!" was the cry. Listening with straining ears, they caught, in pauses of the wind and rain, the roar of waves on rocks. Soon they could all hear it, for the wind was driving them on. Quickly the sailors tried the depth of water, and found it forty yards, and again thirty yards. The ship must be checked if they were not to be dashed to pieces. They had ropes; and four anchors were quickly thrown out over the stern that stopped the ship. And as they hung there with the waves breaking over them, the wish of all was for daylight.

The gale was less, or the ship could not have stood the strain of the waves and the tugging of the anchors. And some of the sailors thought they would escape while there was a chance. They got the small boat over the side in the darkness, as if they were going to put out two more anchors from the bow, and were getting into it, when they were discovered. Perhaps they were fighting for who should go, as is often the way with cowards, when Paul called to the soldiers,—

"Unless these men stay, you cannot be saved." Then came a struggle, and with a flash of his sword a soldier cut the rope, and the boat disappeared in the darkness. It was a reckless thing to do, for without a boat they were more than ever helpless.

At last the wished-for dawn came, with pale light on the heaving waters, and they were able to make out the black rocks of a high island, with hardly any beach—a hopeless sight through leaping waves and rain-drift. The crisis had come, for they would certainly be driven on this island; and Paul determined to prepare them to fight for their lives in the sea, as he had done before. While the daylight was growing, he besought them to take food, saying that it was for their safety, and that no one would be drowned. To show his confidence—as if he had been on shore, instead of on a broken ship—he held up bread, and giving thanks to God, broke it, and began to eat. And they all ate, and felt stronger; and hope revived, with determination to fight for their lives. If the ship must go on the beach, let her go up as far as possible. They set to work again, pitching out the remainder of the wheat cargo, Paul and Luke toiling with the rest; and as

there were two hundred and seventy-six pairs of hands at work, they soon made a difference on the ship.

No one could tell what island it was, but it was not all rocks, for the captain saw a bay, with sand; and he asked Paul and Julius if they thought it possible to cast off the anchors and run the ship into that bay, and it was agreed to try it. Men were placed at the stern to cut the anchor ropes, others at the mast to hoist a sail, others to loosen the rudders at each side. A shout, and the ropes were cut, the small sail hoisted, the rudders untied, and at once the ship sped towards the shore, while the captain stood high up in the after part, directing the men at the rudders how to steer for the sand. Seeing a place where two seas met, they made for it, and, with a crash and grinding noise, the ship struck the ground and stuck fast. The shock would split the boards and send the thick mast crashing over the side, and the waves beating upon the stern soon began to break the ship into pieces.

Then arose a fierce fight. The prisoners wished to save their lives, the soldiers thought they would escape, and Julius heard them shouting the Roman cry when a convoy was in danger—"Kill the prisoners, lest they escape." But there was one who must not die. For Paul's sake, let them have their chance. Julius ordered the soldiers to loose the prisoners' chains, and let all who could swim leap over the side and make for the shore. Then there was a wild scene of men leaping, sliding, falling into the foaming waves, and battling through the surf, while others caught up planks and broken pieces of wood, as they sprang from the deck and were buffeted to the shore. Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus leapt with the rest; and before the ship was broken up, by one means or another, every man had reached the land—a miserable band of bruised and half-drowned men, and the rain was falling fast.

In the "Twin Brothers."

MALTA: AGED 50-60.

THE shipwreck had been seen by natives on the shore, who came down to help the crowd gathered there, shivering with cold in the pouring rain; and they treated them very kindly. Julius called them outlandish barbarians, because they were neither Greeks nor Romans; but he did not refuse to warm himself at the fires which they lighted in the caves.

While Paul was helping to gather sticks, a viper hung on his hand, and he shook it off into the fire. The islanders saw it, and thought he was some very bad prisoner, who, having escaped the sea, would die by a viper. They expected him to fall down dead, and watched him going about; but when nothing happened they changed their minds, and instead of thinking him a murderer, said he must have come down from heaven. But they were ignorant people, whose thoughts on such things were worth little. And thus Paul escaped from another shipwreck; and we have to thank his faithful companion Luke for the story of the storm.

They had landed on Malta, an island now belonging to England, which was then part of the Roman province of Sicily, and Publius was in charge of it. The islanders took the shipwrecked people to the governor; and when he heard who they were, he took care of them, and treated them with great kindness for three days. They were now into the wet and stormy months of winter. Hearing that the father of Publius was ill of fever, Paul went and prayed with his hands on him, and he became well. And we are told that others on the island came and were healed by him, so that he and his friends were honoured everywhere.

During the winter months no ship would venture out upon the sea, and although Julius found a large grain-ship of Alexandria in one of the harbours, he did not resume the voyage. They had all had enough of storms in a grain-ship, the wreck of which they could see sticking on the sands. And so they prepared to spend three months on this island of rocks, seventeen miles long by six broad.

Paul was treated with such honour and kindness by the people that we need not doubt he proclaimed to them and to the soldiers the gospel of Jesus, for which he was a prisoner. And while we do not know what he said, this is from one of his letters:—

“It is not wise to boast, but I will speak of visions and revelations. I know a man in Christ who was caught up, even to the third heaven, into paradise, where he heard unspeakable things which it is not right for a man to utter. I will boast of him, but not of myself. If I should wish to glory, I should speak the truth; but I refrain, lest any man should think more of me than he sees or hears from me. And because of my revelations, that I should not be too much exalted, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of evil to buffet me. I prayed to God three times, that it might leave me; and He said, My grace is sufficient for you: for God’s power is made perfect in weakness. Gladly therefore do I boast of my weakness, that the strength of

Jesus may cover me. I take pleasure in weakness, injuries, persecutions, distress, and want, for Jesus' sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong in Him."

They were now three-quarters of their way to Rome, and past the worst; and when February came, with its hot sunshine, and flowers springing upon the warm, rocky terraces, Julius began to think of continuing the voyage. The ship waiting in the harbour was called the *Twin Brothers*, and would have a wooden figure-head of Castor and Pollux looking from the bow into the water, and a large white eye on the side, to please the sailors.

When the time came for sailing, the islanders were so pleased with their friends that they gave them presents of food, oil, wine, and other things which they would need on the voyage, and were sorry to see them go away. With a fair wind they would reach in one day the ancient port of Syracuse, in a deep bay on the island of Sicily. There they remained for three days; and if Paul went on shore to buy food in the market, he would see pennies being handed about with a girl's head on one side, and on the other side a man driving a chariot and four horses, while angels crowned him with wreaths: for the people of the island were very proud of having won the chariot race. Outside the city walls he saw the white temple of Diana, and the great altar built three hundred years before, where priests burned four hundred oxen every year; but why they did it no one knew, not even the priests themselves. We do not read that Paul met with any Jews or Christians in that old and rich city during his visit.

Scylla and Charybdis.

SICILY: AGED 50-60.

ONE day more of sailing down the beautiful coast of Sicily, with Etna's burning mountain seen amongst the hills, with a small cloud over it, grey by day and glowing fire by night, and on towards the narrow Strait of Messina, where the ship came to another stop, in the harbour of Rhegium; for they were sailing very cautiously now. They were at the foot of bare hills, at the entrance to the narrow channel between Sicily and the mainland, and at last they had reached the magic shores of Italy. There they waited for a fair wind to carry them through the strait, and it came next morning—a soft south wind, filling out the huge square sail as they moved slowly forward, the hills getting closer

on each side. There seemed to be no way through for the ship, until a small opening gradually appeared to the right, with very high hills on each side, and black jagged rocks that came out into the blue water, as if hurled by giants' hands from the mountains above. They were approaching Scylla and Charybdis, the most famous narrows in the world, dreaded by sailors, and sung about by poets; for on one side were jagged rocks on which they might be driven, and on the other side a huge hissing whirlpool into which they might be drawn. The poets in their own fanciful way compared the noise of the waves there to dogs howling and barking at the sailors as they passed.

When they passed the narrows, the ship's head was pointed towards Rome, still three days distant; but they would not sail all the way. With the huge square sail set, they sailed among small islands, and then there was only blue sea before them. Far away on their right was the line of the Italian mountains—purple at evening, fringed with fire at the dawn; and guided by them during the day, and by the lamps of the stars by night, they sailed with a fair wind along the Italian coast. Passing between the charming island of Capri and Campanella Point, with all sail set, being one of the first grain-ships of spring, they sailed from point to point across the bay of Naples, the most beautiful bay in the world, with the burning mountain of Vesuvius rising from the level country and sending a trail of white smoke over the brilliant blue sky. At the foot of that mountain were the white houses of the wonderful city of Pompeii, in a few years to be overwhelmed with dust and ashes from the fiery volcano in which the beautiful Jewish princess Drusilla and her boy would perish.

A crowd of islands marked the farther horn of the gulf, where was the port of Puteoli, divided by a narrow peak of land from Naples, seven miles distant. Because of its charming climate, clear blue water, and lovely scenery, the bay of Puteoli was the favourite seaside resort of the nobles of Rome. The emperor had his villa at Baulos, across the bay, and of course his example was followed by his admiring nobles, who vied with each other in the taste and richness of their seaside villas and the beauty of their gardens.

Puteoli was a great seaport, for there the large grain-ships discharged their cargoes, to be taken on to Rome by small boats that could sail up the river Tiber. Here also passengers from far countries landed, going on to Rome either by the great paved highway up from the coast, or in small coasting-boats. It had double docks for ships, and a great pier of bricks built with lime from Mount Vesuvius, which sea-water could not wear away, stretching in twenty-four arches far out into the water, and some of it is stand-

ing still. Up to this pier of black bricks sailed the *Twin Brothers*, and over these brick arches passed Paul's feet, as he touched the soil of Italy for the first time. Their arrival would be greeted by a crowd of rejoicing townspeople, for only corn-ships from Egypt might carry full sail after passing Capri, and they would be welcomed as one of the first of the year.

In front of Paul as he came off the pier was the strange temple of Serapis, built upon a marble platform, and surrounded with forty-eight ornamented pillars of great height. Grouped at the low door were more pillars of granite and rare marbles from distant lands, the sign of that idol-worship which he had come to conquer. Almost of equal splendour were the open-air buildings of the town, where the emperor sometimes sat amongst yelling thousands to witness fights to the death between armed men and African lions.

But he turned away from these things to the broad paved road that led to Rome, up which emperors had ridden, queens had been carried, and conquerors driven their chariots, rolling on towards Rome, the heart of the world. From this pier of Puteoli, Caligula, mad with dominion, said he would ride to his villa across the shining bay; and he caused boats to be fastened together and a roadway of three miles made over them, that he might ride on his black horse across, and say, like a petted child, that he could ride on the sea.

Along the Appian Way.

PUTEOLI: AGED 50-60.

SHIPS were the bridges of the nations in these times; and although many leagues of sea separated the city and temple in which James the brother of Jesus was a daily worshipper from Italy and the beautiful bay of Puteoli, wherever there were buying and selling going on, there were Jews to be found.

As Paul and his friends went up from the harbour to the city, to seek their countrymen, they saw a square monument standing in the principal street, and which, worn and broken, is standing there still. It is a pillar put up in honour of the emperor Tiberius for his kindness to the cities of Asia after an earthquake which ruined many of them. Carved upon the square base are the figures of twelve beautiful women, each representing a city, Ephesus being in the middle. As Paul looked at this monument he may have counted in how many of the great cities represented there he had proclaimed the glorious gospel of Jesus.

Julius stayed for a week in this city with his soldiers and prisoners, and during that time Paul was allowed to see his friends freely. Luke and Aristarchus would go into the Jews' streets, and tell them of the man who had arrived in a ship, a prisoner on his way to Rome. And they found Christians among their countrymen who came gladly to see Paul, who spoke to them. Again we have to turn to his letters for his thoughts at this time:—

“I would like you to know how greatly I strive for you, and for all who have not seen my face; that your hearts may be comforted, and that you may be bound together in love, unto all richness and understanding; and that you may know the mystery of God, even the Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of riches and knowledge. I tell you this, so that no one may deceive you with persuasive speeches; for though I am not with you in body, my thoughts are with you, rejoicing to see your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in the Christ. As you have received the teaching of our Lord Jesus, and as you have been taught, so live in Him, rooted, built up, established in your faith, and full of thanksgiving in Him.”

It was in March, when the storms and rains were passing, and the Italian skies clearing of clouds, that Julius, wearing his burnished armour, his sword and dagger, and carrying his short vine-stick, the sign of his centurion rank, ordered out his soldiers, with their prisoners divided amongst them, to begin their long march to Rome. Julius was on horseback; and it is likely that Paul and his friends would ride also, for they could pay for horses, and there were plenty on hire at Puteoli.

Although the paved road was wide, it was not broad enough for the herds of cattle and sheep, the bands of slaves, prisoners, soldiers, and strings of pack-beasts and laden wagons, that crowded it in the springtime. There rode the nobles and officers of Rome on horseback, with mounted guards and household servants, going and coming from seaside villas with their wives and children, in covered coaches, curtained from the sun with silk of rose and pale gold. And when they came riding along at a sharp pace, baggage-horses, wagons, slaves, merchants, all had to scatter off to right and left, into the fields, to let the nobles pass; for whoever was not a soldier was of no account on that road. And postmen galloping between Rome and the sea-coast towns were so frequent that at every twenty miles there were post-houses where they could drink wine and change horses.

Amid the clatter of arms and the beat of soldiers' feet, Paul rode away from the city and the sea, towards the high ground and the Campanian Road. On each hand were dark pine-woods

and swelling hills of brilliant green, and by the wayside stood square-built monuments of different colours of marble, surrounded with trees, in memory of the dead; while at every mile a tall, black pillar told them the distance from Rome. And that night they would sleep in the city of Capua, on the river Vulturnus, that came down in cold flood from the distant blue hills. The Campania is still the loveliest part of Italy. In a month's time barley would be four feet high, and vines hanging from the trees in shady bowers for the field-workers. Here they joined the Appian Way, the most famous road in the world, which came in a straight line from Rome, and passed across Italy to Brundisium on the other side. It was four yards wide, and paved all the way with hard, black flagstones, polished smooth, and fitting closely together. Three hundred years before Paul came it was there, stretching for two hundred miles, with a pillar at every mile, a post-house at every twenty, and low stone benches at the wayside for weary travellers to rest and horsemen to mount their horses. It got its name from Appius Claudius, who made it and a market-place at great expense and labour, forming it along hill-sides, and carrying it on high arches over gorges, cutting away and filling up as he went along to keep it level, for the Romans were the best road-makers in the world; and parts of it can still be seen.

Leaving Capua, they crossed the Vulturnus by a broad bridge, and followed the river all day down towards the sea, and at evening they had crossed the Savo by the Campanian bridge, to rest for the night within sight of the islands, turned to crimson, and gold, and purple in the setting sun, over the water. At daybreak they were again on the paved way, passing through fields glittering with rain, from which the morning mists were rising to the hills, and soon they were among the vine-clad slopes of Maisicus, stretching from the sea to the darkly-wooded Apennines. From the hills they could see for a time the blue bay of Puteoli, and the smoky cone of Mount Vesuvius beyond. They were still near the sea, and as they rode over the bridge of the Liris, they saw willow trees springing from the bank, and dipping their light leaves in the water. Day after day they rode and rested, with the sea on one hand and hills on the other, passing the beautiful bay of Formiæ, where Cicero's villa stood, in which he was killed a hundred years before. At Terracina they came to the fountain praised by every traveller, and turned their backs upon the sunny sea, and their faces towards Rome, still seventy miles distant by the milestones.

The next part of the journey was very different. A forest of

trees hid the sea, stretching away for miles to the foot of the Volscian Hills and the Pontine Marshes, caused by the rivers from the hills getting blocked and spreading out at the rainy season. The Appian Way went straight through the marshes on a raised pavement; but there was also a canal for twenty miles, with boats going to and fro, dragged by slow mules. About thirty-seven years before Paul was there, Horace, the witty Roman poet, went by these boats to meet Virgil, the graver bard; and, as poets are apt to do, Horace wrote some verses containing a very lively description of slaves fighting to get into the boat, and of their masters whipping them out; of the time the boatman took to harness his mules and gather his fares; that the water was so bad he could not eat his supper, and the frogs croaked so loud he could not sleep.

Friends from Rome.

THE MARKET OF APPIUS: AGED 50-60.

IN springtime the marshes were much flooded with rivers flowing through them, and as Paul rode along the paved way, sometimes he saw a rippling lake in which light boats could float, and sometimes shallow pools choked with broad-leaved lilies, their flowers of white and yellow coming into bloom. At other parts, thickets of tufted grasses, quivering reeds, and thick canes hid the water; and there grey geese, swans, ducks, and water-fowl of every description were flying in flocks about their nests, for the Roman fowlers were constantly there.

With his brown cloak to shelter him from the rain, and his striped kerchief to shade his eyes from the sun, Paul rode among the soldiers and prisoners, his wrist still fastened by a long chain to his companion soldier. The company of wretched Jewish criminals, dragged from their beloved land, with despair in their looks, as they toiled on with weary steps to the terrible fate that awaited them, was enough to make any man sad; and Paul was depressed in spirit as he rode towards the town where the canal mules were kept, across the marshes.

But there were Jews of a different kind coming out from Rome to meet him, and they had already reached the mule town, although he did not know it. More than two years ago he sent a letter to the Christians at Rome, by Phœbe of Cenchrea, saying he was about to start on a journey to Spain, and would

stay some time with them as he passed through their city. Some friend from Puteoli brought the news to Rome of his arrival, and they were astonished and grieved to learn that he was a prisoner. His letter had been read and talked of in their meetings ever since it came, and his near presence stirred their hearts with pity, for they knew that the emperor Nero, to whom he had appealed, was a young fiend. Aquila the weaver and his wife, and Andronicus and Junius, relations of Paul's own, Christians before he was, were in Rome, and a number of them came out to meet him as far as the market of Appius, at the Rome end of the canal, for they did not know whether he would ride or sail through the marshes.

It would be with mingled tears and cries that Aquila recognized Paul in the brown cloak, riding among the soldiers in deep thought, with a bright chain to his wrist, unconscious that he had a single friend in the crowd of idlers at the canal end.

He was weary and depressed. Rome was very near now, but how differently would he enter it from what he had dreamed of for so long! Each hour brought fresh proof of the merciless strength of these giants of the world. A Roman's horse was treated better than his slave, and all foreigners were barbarians. Of what interest would questions of the Jews' religion or the death of Jesus be to an emperor who could any day sacrifice a hundred foreigners in his circus for the mere amusement of seeing them flying from tigers which they could not escape? Paul had a strong heart, but he had his times of fear, doubt, and despair; and at the end of the day's ride through these vapoury marshes, with the glitter of the sun on the water paining his eyes, and the steam from the stagnant pools turning him sick, he was in a despondent state as he rode on towards the soldiers' barracks. His friends from Rome hastened to make themselves known, and he was deeply touched with their kindness in coming so far to meet him. They told him of the other Christians in the great city, and, seeing his depression, strove to cheer him, until he became hopeful again, and thanked God, and took courage.

They were now at the forty-third milestone, and as they rode away from the end of the canal, with its mule stables, boatmen, labourers, tavern-keepers, they left the marsh lands behind them, and were soon amid fine scenery, with the blue sea in view about ten miles distant, and on their other hand hills, woods, and plains stretching away to the even more beautiful blue mountains. Just as on a busy English highway, there were plenty of taverns and wine-shops, where beer and wine, bread, meat, and fruit were sold to the travellers; and after riding about ten miles they came to a

place called the Three Taverns, where a road joined them from the sea, for there were three wine-shops there. Cicero, the great Roman orator, mentions that he stopped there on his way up from his seaside villa at Antium, to rest and taste the wine while his horses were being changed; and there Paul was met by more friends, who had come out from the great city. And while the soldiers refreshed themselves at the taverns, the Christians came and talked with him in low voices of their troubles in the city, where no one's life was safe from the emperor.

The Queen of Roads.

THREE TAVERNS: AGED 50—60.

DAY after day, in the sweet springtime, Paul had seen the wealth and nobility of Rome streaming up and down the great highway from the sea. He was now within driving distance of the vast city, and the traffic on the black pavement became greater every hour.

Roman ladies, in snow-white robes, with cloaks of rose and blue, were driven quickly past in open four-wheeled carriages, out into the country, lovely and fragrant with wild-flowers. Others preferred to be carried in little yellow-curtained houses of white and gold, swung on poles on the shoulders of strong, black slaves, who kept step as they ran; and often little children's faces looked out between the curtains. Faster still, young officers drove past, standing in small open chariots of scarlet and blue, bumping, rattling, clattering as they went; for they had no springs, and the horses took them easily and swiftly. Groups of Roman gentlemen went past, with closely-cut hair, riding glossy horses of black and brown, their long white tunics partly hidden by dark-hued riding-cloaks coming down to their feet, on which soft boots of crimson or yellow were laced with leather thongs—a cavalcade on their way out to the fields for sporting, hunting, or racing. A gilded carriage with six horses and post-boys, taking a noble lady to her coast villa, was no uncommon sight on that queen of roads.

But the constant traffic, that wore ruts in the black stones, was the straggling line of mules, horses, donkeys, laden with corn-sacks, wine-skins, baskets, and the wagons and sledges heaped up with every kind of provision for the vast city, and all to be hustled, dragged, whipped off the pavement into the fields when-

ever a great man came clattering up, with his slaves clearing the way.

Surrounded by the rattle of soldiers' armour, the tread and shuffle of prisoners' feet, the shaking of light brass chains, with his group of friends following in the rear, Paul rode slowly forward, the tide of Rome streaming past him, and the flickering shadows of trees thrown across his face. Passing along the Alban Hills, and the small lake of which they were so proud, he was already in a suburb, for the sunny slopes were covered with the country villas and shady gardens of rich citizens. But when the road rose to the shoulder of the hill, he saw what stirred his blood. A vast plain of meadow and vineyard, gentle hill and hollow, spread for ten miles before him; and beyond it was Rome, the capital of the world. "I must see Rome," had throbbed in the red blood of his heart, with ever-increasing longing as the years went by; and yonder, sleeping in a haze of sunbeams, lay the city of his dreams. Would he triumph or perish there?

His soldier companion would point to where the green fields stopped, and streets crossed thickly about the clustering temples, for the heart of Rome was there; but his arm would sweep over Rome, and more Rome, spreading out for miles in roads, houses, aqueducts, surging in waves of white masonry across the plain and up the hills on which they stood, while far on the left glittered the sunny sea, and far on the right rose the pale-blue Sabine Mountains.

The Appian Way went straight as an arrow across the beautiful plain to the city's heart, with walled gardens and secluded houses on each side, and behind them open country, where shepherds in ragged goat-skins tended their flocks of sheep, and piped them from place to place. Amid these fields the skylarks rose in hundreds at the dawn, while yet the great white daisies and the golden marigolds were rimmed with dew; and there, too, at the setting of the sun, when the heavens were a sea of crimson waves, and the first star flashed on the purple mountains, nightingales sang from cypress tree to cypress tree, until the darkening plain was flooded with song.

The monuments by the roadside were a constant wonder to travellers. During hundreds of years, as great men died, the rich and noble families of Rome had built and added to them, until both sides for miles were lined, with only little distances between them. Some were large as a house, with doors and windows; others were small and beautiful as an English tombstone: some were plain and square and solid; others round, and ornamented with sculptured figures. They were in many colours—

white, pink, green, and black marble, red and grey granite, black lava, grey slate, white limestone, and brown and red brick; and all had Latin words saying whose they were. The way is still lined with their ruins—some mere heaps of bricks, others worn and broken but beautiful still.

There Paul saw the villa of Gallienus, and his tomb of brick two stories high, with sculptured figures standing in their niches; and across the way he could read the name as he passed on the brick tomb of Veranius, who died in Britain. A little farther on, in a space amid trees, he saw the small temple of Hercules. And we need not doubt that when they reached the monument of the great Julian family, which Julius would not pass without turning his eyes that way, he would tell Paul that there rested the ashes of his ancestors. When they came to the spot where the six champions slew each other, he saw the splendid tower built to their memory. But they were still six miles from the heart of Rome, and the way was lined with more and yet more monuments, to poets, orators, historians, statesmen, soldiers; and if the villa of Seneca was pointed out to him as he passed, he would look with interest at the place where lived the greatest living statesman, the brother of the gentle Gallio, his friend. Passing through the arch of Drusus, which was then new, and is standing there still, with sides worn and ornaments broken, and whose roof once echoed to the sound of his horse's feet, they were yet a mile from the golden milestone.

There were no walls to this vast city, for the people said soldiers were their walls, and every man a brick. There had once been a wall, but so long ago that the most of the city was outside it now. The next arch was the low dark tunnel of the Capena gate, in the wall of the old city, used to bear up an aqueduct that could not be made water-tight, so that the water dripped and dribbled upon all who passed through, rich and poor, slave and emperor. Shaking the water from his brown cloak, Paul rode on into the heart of the ancient city.

The Golden Pillar.

ROME: AGED 50—60.

THE great Latin Way had now joined the Appian Way, adding another stream of traffic to the crowded pavement; and Paul rode up a street where the dwellings of the poor, some of

wood, some of brick, rose like black walls on each side—not unlike the old tenements of Edinburgh, but without windows, and so high that the sunshine could hardly reach the cobble-stones. When he passed a rich man's dwelling, a high brick wall kept the line of street, and within was a garden of trees and grass and flowers, and a house like a prince's palace. For in that great city there were only two classes of people, the rich and the poor, with no bridge between them.

In that street between the hills, sometimes overshadowed by gloomy, dirty tenements of poverty, sometimes fringed with flickering leaves of high trees, that leaned their green arms on the brown brick walls, he saw gates opened, and wealthy Romans riding out, in soft white robes, with slaves clad in yellow running behind. He saw fair-faced women—unveiled, with slippered feet, and robes like those of the men, a bright shawl of pale green, blue, or rose cast over their coiled hair to shelter them from the sun—being carried past, or standing at the booths and shops. But the mass of the people who crowded the street, the lanes, the squares, were working men and working women—joiners, masons, weavers, spinners, brick-makers, labourers, fruit-gatherers, flower-sellers—all poor, and almost all slaves. And the soldiers, mingling with the people, seemed to have been gathered up from every nation in the world.

The poets of Rome loved to sing that their city was built upon seven hills; but when Paul rode in, these hills were so covered with houses that, like the hills of London, they were not easily seen. There were no rocky heights of crag and cliff, crowned with white pillared temples, like the Parthenon of Athens; and yet there were many temples of dazzling marble, dark stone, and brown brick, but they did not stand out against the sky.

The main streets crept along the bottom of the hollows between the hills, lined with the houses of the poor, having wooden outside stairs from flat to flat, and passages leading off to the small rooms. But the size of the houses mattered little, for the people lived so much in the open air that they were only used for sleeping and being ill in. Higher up the hillsides were the houses and gardens, the palaces and parks, of the rich and noble citizens.

After the narrow, dripping Capena gate the street widened out, and in front of him, filling up the valley between the Aventine and Palatine hills, Paul saw the largest circus in the world, with rows of wooden seats upon the hillsides for one hundred and fifty thousand people. On one occasion, when the applause, like the roar of the sea, disturbed the repose of the emperor Caligula in his palace on the Palatine Hill, he sent

soldiers down to cudgel the people all out of it. And there, too, the present young emperor, Nero, would drive a four-horse chariot, that he might hear the sweet thunders of applause from so vast a throng.

At the Circus Maximus the queen of roads turned aside into the Road of Triumph, and on the top of the Palatine Hill Paul saw the white temple of Apollo, surrounded with palaces and kings' gardens. Along this Road of Triumph, for hundreds of years, had passed victorious emperors and generals, bringing in their captive kings and princes, with the choicest of their barbaric spoils of war, in triumphal procession into the heart of the city. Not ten years before, Caractacus, a king of Britain, and his wife and daughter, were led along that way among gazing thousands; and now Paul, unnoticed, came, whose name would outlive them all. Passing round the Palatine Hill, he entered the Sacred Way, between it and the Esquiline Hill, and in front of him rose the Capitoline Hill, the highest in Rome, and the temple of Jove, the greatest of their temples. But the heart of Rome throbbed in the hollow below, where the rulers of the empire and masters of the world gathered in the Forum. The road into it was lined with ancient and beautiful temples, among them Castor and Pollux, Minerva, Augustus, and, most prized of all, Vesta, in which young ladies, chosen from the highest families in the land, served as priestesses, and had kept a small fire burning for hundreds of years, which it would be death to let go out.

The vast floor of this public square was covered with coloured pavement, and down each side and across the end were temples and public buildings. There stood the marble pillar, plated with gold, that gave mileage to the world; and there stood the even greater rostrum, that gave the world its laws. From the green trees upon the Capitoline Hill magnificent buildings looked down upon this Parliament of Rome. Surrounded with temples, the city merchants came there to buy and sell, orators to speak, philosophers to teach, poets to recite, and nobles to discuss public affairs; for they liked to think that this was the centre of the universe, and that from yonder golden pillar, like arteries from a throbbing heart, roads, wide, smooth, paved, passed out through the city gates, out into the green country, over hill and over valley, to the ends of the earth. And "All roads lead to Rome" was their proud proverb.

For hundreds of years the kingdoms of the world were plundered to enrich this hollow among the hills. The loveliest statues of Athens, the richest gems of Ephesus, the treasures of nations

and kings, were in these temples, libraries, museums, courts of justice, palaces, mansions, crowded about this piece of pavement, and looking down upon it through the quivering trees of the surrounding hills.

Entering through these narrow valley streets, the surroundings of that single golden pillar would deeply move a Jew who knew something of the chain which Roman hands laid on other countries; and Paul would feel a sinking of heart as he looked round him upon these magnificent signs of idolatry—not in a city like Athens, whose strength had departed, but in a city in full power, where everything spoke of the triumph of force over right, and of the armies of Rome over the world. If he went with Julius to the camp of the prætorian guard, through the city to the north-west gate, where these favoured soldiers lived, within a wide square surrounded by thick walls, he would ride round the Quirinal Hill. There ten thousand picked men passed their days in idleness, excepting for occasional marchings for healthful exercise. For reasons of his own, the emperor liked to have them there, ready to draw their swords for him. He also kept a number in barracks nearer still at the back of the Palatine Hill, where his palace was; for the youthful Nero believed more in the swords of his soldiers than in the hearts of his people.

If Paul was given up by Julius to the chief in command there, it would be to Burrhus, a blunt old soldier with one hand, who, next to Seneca, was the emperor's chief adviser. He was head of the emperor's prætorian guards, but it is not likely that he would personally have to do with Paul, although he might hear of him. Paul had been the companion of soldiers for over two years, and was well treated among them, and now he was brought into the camp of the most splendidly armed men in the Roman service; for they were all picked men, many of them well-educated and of good families, and by them he was to be received with unexpected kindness.

The Oldest Bridge.

ROME: AGED 50-60.

THE written report from Festus, that Paul was innocent of any offence against the Roman law, and that his appeal was about a question of the Jews' religion, and the report of Julius of his conduct during the voyage and shipwreck, would be greatly in his favour with his new masters. It would no doubt be by the

advice of his friends in the city that, after living for a short time in the barracks, he asked and got leave to live in a hired house outside, where he would keep himself and his soldier guard until the day of trial. His friends may even have signed a bond, and given pledges that, if allowed this liberty, he would not try to escape. It was a glad day for him when he was allowed to go beyond the high barrack walls and live in his own house like a citizen, although under the supervision of a companion soldier, who would take care to have the small brass chain always fastening them together when his superior officer came.

There were many thousands of Jews in the city, living in streets of their own, in the very lowest part, near the river. They were poor and despised, and did not succeed in becoming rich merchants, as in other cities, but were the small stall-keepers, the dealers, peddlers, and hawkers, who went about selling their wares in baskets and sacks. Yet, strange to say, they often talked of their religion at the doors of the houses, and found the Roman women willing to listen.

Jews have always been oppressed in Rome; and down almost to our own time, their streets, called the Ghetto, were surrounded by walls, and the gates shut by the police every night at sunset, and opened by them every morning. Long before Paul came, the emperor Claudius ordered them all out of the city; and many fled, like Aquila the weaver, and, like him, returned again under the new emperor. They lived in the low-lying ground between the Capitoline Hill and the river, in dirty streets that were often flooded. A bridge crossed the Tiber at that part to an island about a quarter of a mile long in the middle, and another bridge stretched to the other bank; and there, on the low land along that river-side also, the Jews were crowded.

Paul wished to be near his friends, for although a prisoner, he could not be idle, and it is likely that his house would be near this part. It was a pretty large house, for meetings were held in it, and besides his soldier companion, Luke and Aristarchus, his faithful friends, would live with him; but it would not be a very nice or healthy spot, for when the Tiber overflowed its banks in winter it flooded all the houses at that part.

When Paul lived at the end of the narrow Fabrician bridge, its hard black stones had already been worn smooth with people's feet, for it was built more than a hundred years before, by Fabricius; and it stands there to this day, the oldest bridge in Rome, with the builder's name carved upon it—one of the very few places on which we can feel certain that Paul stood. The feet of two generations of laughing girls bearing their baskets of fruit and

flowers, of black-eyed Jews with their sacks of peddler's wares, had passed over it before Paul's eyes looked on that stream of city life. Two thousand years later, and the stream has not stopped, for human feet pass over it still. There was a temple on the island then ; there is an hospital now.

In his letter to the Christians of Rome, Paul said he would preach the gospel to them, and he had got leave to preach now. He first sent a message by his friends to the leading Jews of the synagogue that he would like to speak with them ; and some came to his house, and he told them how he came to be there a prisoner, with a chain on his wrist.

"Brothers, although I have done nothing against our people, or the religious customs of our fathers, I was taken a prisoner in Jerusalem, and delivered into the hands of the Romans. When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because they found I had done nothing that deserved death. But when the leaders of our people spoke against it, I was forced to appeal to Cæsar, but not because I had anything to say against our nation." He thus told them how he was in Rome, and next asked their sympathy in a way which shows us he considered that their common religious liberty was involved in his case,—

"I have asked you to come here for this reason, that I might see you, and speak with you : for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." And he held up his right hand with its light brass chain, which he had worn for two years. He was in chains for preaching the Jewish Messianic hope of the Christ, their Saviour.

They knew he was a follower of Jesus the Galilean ; and after talking with him in a friendly way, showing that although they saw him for the first time, they had heard of him, they mentioned that, as a synagogue, they had got no instructions from the council at Jerusalem about him,—

"We have not received any letters from Judea about you, nor have any of our countrymen who have come from there reported about you, or spoken any harm of you." They were thus without orders ; and before leaving, they expressed a friendly wish to hear for themselves what he taught, but coupled it with a doubtful shake of their heads. To these Jews of the old religion a Christian Jew was a perverse man who, in leaving the national church, had turned his back on Zion.

"We would like to hear from you what you think. As for the sect called Christians, we know that they are everywhere spoken against."

"Not everywhere," would leap to Paul's lips, as he thought

of Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi; but he held his peace. Some other day he would discuss it with them, and perhaps the man in the chain would throw some light into their dark minds. And so they left him, returning to their brethren of the synagogue across the river.

All Day Discussing Christianity.

ROME: AGED 50-60.

PAUL could not go about the city as he pleased, for while his soldier companion might loosen the small brass chain in the house, he would not let him go out into the street alone, or even without their being chained together like hunting dogs.

It soon became plain that his case would not come on quickly. No doubt there were many cases from all parts of the empire to be heard before his would be reached, and even then it would not go on until his enemies were present from Jerusalem to accuse him, and with their witnesses to prove what they said, if the court should ask for evidence. Neither could he tell when he might be wanted, nor when his liberty might be taken away. He had no time to lose. Once more he began work in a city with his own countrymen of the synagogue. Whereas he used in years gone by to smite sharply upon the differences between the old and the new religion, in these later days a quieter spirit prevailed, and he liked to dwell upon the things which all good Jews held in common—belief in the living God, in obeying His will, in a Saviour Messiah, and in a life beyond the grave.

The synagogue Jews kept their word, and sent a messenger naming the day when a number of them would come to his house to hear what he had to say for Christianity, of which they had heard such bad things. Some of the larger houses in that neighbourhood had an outer brick wall, with a door to the street. Within was a small courtyard, with wooden sleeping-rooms built round it, and trees for shade; and the people lived and took their food in the court, and only slept on cold nights in the wooden buildings round about. If Paul's house was of this kind, there would be room for a pretty large meeting of Jews in the court, under the blue skies and the lime trees. The synagogue Jews came, and many of his own friends, and sitting on their straw mats, in the sunshine of early morning, they listened with respect when he spoke, for he was known as a rabbi from Jerusalem.

They wished to know what he thought about Christianity.

He had not had such an opportunity for three years, for he was about to speak to the leaders of several thousands of Jews in the heart of Rome. With all his old skill he explained Christianity, telling what Jesus said about the kingdom of God—that it was not an outward kingdom of kings and soldiers, riches and honours, meat and drink, but an inward kingdom of the righteousness, goodness, and peace of God, in the hearts of men, women, and little children of all nations. He showed them from the Bible, and sought to persuade and convince them, that Jesus the Nazarene was the Christ who should come, repeating passages from the books of Moses, and the books of the prophets, with which they were all familiar.

As usual he was interrupted with remarks and questions, which led to long arguments; and so deeply in earnest were these Jews that they remained all day from morning to evening, sitting on their little carpets, gravely talking and discussing together, and partaking at intervals of the bread and fruit that would be handed to them—a strange congregation indeed. Paul was anxious that his countrymen should come to some agreement among themselves to become Jewish Christians, as so many had done in Jerusalem and elsewhere. But that was not to be.

Having argued long with him and with each other, a few were convinced of the truths of Christianity, and taking up Paul's cause, argued with their own friends until the evening; but they were unable to convince them. The stars in the sky brought the meeting to an end, and those who would not believe Paul's message rose to go, but not until he gave them a warning, in words which show that his temper had been roused by things that were said, for he chose a very cutting passage from the prophet Isaiah for his parting message:—

“It is indeed true what God said to your forefathers by the prophet Isaiah,—

Go to this people and say,
When they hear, they shall not understand;
When they see, they shall not know:
For their hearts are grown heavy,
Their ears are dull of hearing;
They have shut their eyes, lest they should see,
And should hear with their ears, and understand with their
hearts,
And God should turn again, and heal them.”

And he added these words of his own, which he knew would rouse them,—

“Know therefore that this salvation of God is also for foreigners, and that they will hear it.”

When his countrymen from the synagogue left the house, they did not go threatening to have him punished, for as they passed over the Tiber bridge and home through the river-side streets they continued their discussion, some saying that Paul was right, but the most of them saying he was quite wrong.

The Sign of the Fish.

ROME: AGED 50-60.

PAUL was not the only Jewish prisoner awaiting his trial in Rome. When Felix ceased to be governor, he sent some Jewish priests thither, and so slow was the process of the law that they were not set free for three years, and then only because Josephus, the great Jewish historian, got them liberated. Paul was more fortunate than they, for, instead of being kept in vaults beneath the palace buildings, or even in the soldiers' barracks, he was allowed to pay for a house of his own and live there.

In this vast city Jews were despised for their religion, but Christians were ridiculed. That people should worship a Jew who was crucified by Roman soldiers, and say that He was alive, was a thing at which the rich smiled and the poor jeered. As Paul said in one of his letters, they looked upon it as foolishness. Soldiers, work-people, and slaves had a coarse gibe which they flung at any companion who became a Christian. They said he worshipped an ass, and drew a figure of a man on a cross with an ass's head. But among themselves the Christians had another sign for their religion, that of a fish, because in Greek there were five letters in that word which stood for “Jesus,” “Christ,” “Son,” “God,” “Saviour.” And often when they dared not speak, they drew a fish in the dust, and quickly rubbed it out with their foot, and that was sign enough. It is not known who introduced Christianity to Rome, but it was done years before Paul came; and as in other cities, their meetings were at first small gatherings held in one another's houses. Aquila's house was one. When their numbers grew, and they wished a large meeting, it was held outside the city at night, for safety, in some hollow of the ground, a sand-pit, a quarry, or a cave, where they met together in silence in the dark, no one knowing their numbers or seeing their faces, while some one

addressed them, and then they sang hymns and prayed. Before Paul's letter was read by the light of a shaded lantern to these hushed crowds in their secret meetings, they had been visited by leading Christians, some of whom were relations of his own, whom he called apostles.

Long before there were any Christians in Rome, people here and there had been attracted by the Jews' religion, and their belief in a living God; and while they did not obey their religious rules, they believed in God, and worshipped Him. Women especially were thus attracted, and among the ladies of the city some became believers of this kind. When they came to hear about Christianity they were drawn to it, and a few openly and some secretly joined the Christians. So that when Paul came there were many secret Christians among the slaves and common people, and in the houses of the rich, and even in the palace itself. Their secrecy was not yet because they would be punished for being Christians, but because they would be ridiculed and laughed at for believing in a Jew who was crucified as a criminal within the recollection of living men. But before long they would be hunted through the streets of the city like wild animals for their faith in Him.

But Paul was no secret Christian. He was not ashamed of Jesus the crucified One, and he let it be known through his friends that he would teach the new gospel to all who cared to come to his house, and that was a bold thing. The officer in charge of the prisoners would know why he was in a chain, and must have had most indulgent orders about him, when he was allowed to teach and preach this new religion every day. He would know, too, that in Paul's letter to the Christians he had bade them obey their Roman rulers, pay the Roman taxes, and be careful not to break the Roman laws. This was only a proper return for the liberty which was allowed to the Christians to follow their own religion, and openly explain it. And as the officer listened to what Paul said to those who came to visit him, he saw that what he taught would make good men and law-abiding citizens.

Slaves from the docks, joiners from the saw-pits, shopkeepers from the markets came openly after the work of the day, to sit in the dusk, and listen and weep, brought thither by men who spoke secretly to them and bade them come. Ladies, too, came privately, leaving their houses, beautiful with coloured marbles, sweet with the perfume of fountains and flowers, rich with treasures of art, and lovely with gilding and painting. Cloaked in blue and purple, with soft hoods, shawls, and veils to hide their fair faces, they walked, accompanied by trusted slaves, in the

sweet morning sunshine, to the Jews' quarter by the river-side. They, too, had been bidden come by soft-voiced men, whispering to their slaves at the gate, who whispered in turn to them. And they, too, wept, not for lives spent in crime and wickedness, but for lives lived amid heartless luxury, wicked cruelty, and wild revelry. To them Paul spoke of the kingdom of God in this world, and of Jesus the Christ; and as they listened to the Jew in the brown cloak, with the chain on his wrist, they believed him, and resolved to live the higher life as seen in Jesus, who died for them.

His Chain and Guard.

ROME : AGED 50—60.

BUT there were other gatherings in his house, day by day, week by week, of the Christians of Rome, some of whom had been followers of the Nazarene for twenty-five years. We are not told what he said to these people at their meetings, and again we turn to his letter, as the only record of his thoughts towards them :—

“I Paul, the slave of Jesus the Christ, called by Him to be an apostle, and to teach the gospel of God, promised by the prophets in the Bible, who wrote about Him, who was descended from King David, shown to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead. The apostle of our Lord, through Him I have received grace and a ministry to preach obedience to the faith, for His sake, to all nations : of whom you are one, called with a voice to be Jesus the Christ's. May grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus, be upon you all, beloved of God, who have heard the voice calling you.

“I thank my God through Jesus that your faith in Him is known throughout the whole world. God knows, whom I serve in spirit according to the gospel of Jesus, how constantly I have mentioned you in my prayers; making request, if by any means at last I might be prospered by the will of God to come to you. I have longed to see you, that I might give you some spiritual gift, that you might be established, and that I might be comforted in you, and you in me, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. I would like you to know, brothers, that I often intended to come to you, that I might have the same fruit in you that I have had in other nations; but I have been hindered hitherto. For I felt bound to go both to Greeks and strangers,

to the wise and the foolish. And now, with all the power that is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also.

“I am satisfied, my brothers, that you are filled with goodness and knowledge, and able to advise one another. But I boldly put you in mind of these things, because God has given me grace to be the minister of Jesus to foreigners, preaching the gospel of God, that their offerings might be made acceptable, purified by the Holy Spirit.

“I will not speak of other things, but of those which Jesus did through me, in the power of God; so that from Jerusalem and the country round about, as far as Illyricum, I fully preached the gospel of Jesus: making it my aim not to preach where the name of Jesus was already known, so that I might not build upon a foundation laid by some one else. For Isaiah wrote, They shall see, to whom no tidings of Him hath come: and they who had not yet heard shall understand. And so I was hindered many times from coming to you; but having no more any abiding place in these regions, I resolved to come to Jerusalem, then to Rome, intending to go on to Spain.”

As months went past, instead of bringing discredit upon Christianity, Paul, being brought as a prisoner amongst the soldiers of the prætorian barracks, helped to spread the knowledge of it, not only through the soldiers, but also among their relations in the city. It won friends in the emperor's palace on the Palatine Hill, and it is said that even Poppæa, the emperor's favourite, who was one of the worst of women, secretly believed in the Jews' religion, and favoured Christians, but that is doubtful.

The Roman soldiers were friendly, and from the way Paul speaks of them putting on and off their helmets, shields, swords, and bucklers, he was deeply impressed with the obedience, valour, and power which he observed during his two years' life amongst these men, and which fitted in with something in his own nature. Many of them would come to hear him teaching, and he may have told them what John the Baptist said to the soldiers at the fords of Jordan, “Hurt no man, accuse no man wrongfully; be content with your wages.” We can imagine his conversation with the young, well-born soldier in purple tunic, leather jerkin, and embossed breastplate, as he sat burnishing his brass helmet, and listening to the gentle man to whom he was fastened, wrist to wrist, by a few feet of light chain. He would hear of the gentle Galilean who was taken captive in an olive garden, and whom Paul's countrymen forced Pilate to crucify after having declared His innocence. He would hear of His stainless life, terrible death, burial in the rose garden, and of the women who went thither and

found His grave empty, and of His appearing to them and many others who were still alive ; and that He was the Son of the living God, and Saviour of all who believed in Him and followed Him. And if the young soldier told what he heard to his sisters at home, we can see how the seed was blown over the city. It is not difficult to understand how Christianity spread through these prætorian soldiers, and into the Roman families and the palace, for Paul would speak to them of nothing else ; and we can understand how he came to write to the Christians of Philippi that his imprisonment had helped Christianity rather than hindered it.

If Paul's house was beside the river, he would see the crimson sunset dyeing the waves of the stream as it bent swiftly round the wide field where the soldiers took exercise, to broaden out before splitting upon the island of the two bridges. And he must have often stood, with his youthful guard for his sole companion, upon the steep, narrow Fabrician bridge, watching the tawny water as it shot under his feet through the narrow stone arch. Lifting up his eyes, he would see the evening clouds of red and gold quivering in heat above the tapering trees upon the hills across the river, where gentlemen had their country houses, their gardens, parks, and pleasure-grounds. And often his thoughts would follow the golden track of the setting sun to other lands and other cities, which he knew he was not likely to see soon, and perhaps might never see again.

Hopes and Fears.

ROME : AGED 50—60.

TIME was passing ; friends were coming and going about the man in the chain, patiently awaiting news of his trial, which never came. His faithful friend Timothy had followed him, coming in a later ship, and was now in Rome. His friends in Philippi, hearing of his appeal and voyage, sent Epaphroditus with money ; and we may be sure, knowing what money could do in a Roman law case, they would send a good sum ; and his heart was melted with their kindness and practical help.

Four years had gone by since he rode with Timothy up the valley and into the beautiful city of Philippi, overlooking the plain and the flashing river. There he first preached the gospel in Macedonia ; there he was publicly scourged in the market-

place; and there, on his last journey, he paused to eat the Pass-over with friends. The Christians of that city seemed to think they had a special charge over him, for they twice sent money to him at Thessalonica, and now they had sent a messenger all the way to Rome. Perhaps Lydia, the well-to-do purple cloth merchant, with whom they stayed, stirred up her friends to be generous to the wandering preacher without wife or child, who gave so much to others, and cared so little about himself.

He wrote them a letter from Rome. And we must praise the Roman indulgence which allowed him to teach so openly, and receive messengers from foreign cities, and send away others with letters in their hand. His guards saw all that he did. While Paul spoke, and Timothy wrote with slow pen upon his roll of papyrus paper, what is now read from our pulpits, there was ever a third man listening, a young soldier representing Rome, who would report to his officer that the letter was written, and what was in it, before it could be taken away. It is probable that it was written at a later period of his imprisonment, but we shall consider it now from the narrative point of view. The whole letter you will read in your Bible.

Once more he joins Timothy with himself in a letter. He tells them that he is a prisoner for the defence of the gospel, and to confirm it. The things which have happened to him have turned out for the good of the gospel; for through his being chained to a soldier, the notice of the prætorian soldiers and all about the barracks had been drawn to him; and also the other Christians in Rome, seeing him a prisoner, have become confident, and are not now afraid to speak boldly about Jesus. Some who preached Christianity had love and goodwill to him, but there were others who preached it out of enmity and mischief. They knew he was a prisoner in a chain in Rome to defend the gospel, and his enemies hoped, by so speaking, to raise up affliction against him in his imprisonment. But he was in good spirits, for the effect was that the name of Jesus was being made known everywhere; and he rejoiced, for he believed it would all help to save him, by the Spirit of Jesus and their prayers. For it was his earnest hope and expectation that he would not need to be ashamed of anything, but that with all boldness in Rome, as elsewhere, Jesus would be glorified through him, whether in his life or in his death.

These were strange words for the young soldier to hear and report, but stranger were to come. He was in doubt as to what would happen at his trial. No one could tell him, and lives were light things with the emperor. And so he had made up his mind for death, and yet he had gleams of hope that he would be set

at liberty. To live would mean more work for Jesus, to die would be a gain to himself; and he did not know which he would prefer. He would like to die and go to Jesus, but to live and work on would be better for others. He felt confident that he would live through it, and that they would yet rejoice together over a great victory, when he came back to them. But they were to live lives worthy of Jesus, so that whether he came or did not come he might hear good of them.

He told them of his hopes and fears, and gave them many warnings and advices. If his life was to be offered up, like a sacrifice upon the altar, for the cause of Jesus, he rejoiced, and hoped that they too would rejoice.

He hoped to send Timothy soon to them, that he might hear of their state; and a feeling of despondency swept over him as he thought of certain others who ought to have helped. He had no one else to send who would care for them like Timothy; for they all sought their own, and not the things of Jesus. But they knew the proof of Timothy that, as a child to his father, he had served with him in spreading the gospel; and he hoped to send him as soon as he saw how the trial was likely to go, and he trusted in God that he might soon be able to come himself.

Epaphroditus had reached him with their gifts, for which he was thankful. He almost died on the way, risking his life for him, but had recovered and been sent back, for he was longing to see them again, and was grieved that they had heard of his illness. They were to receive him with joy and honour.

In other letters he wrote some strange things about women, which seemed to debar them from equal rights with men in Christianity. But life broadens as men grow older, and now he sent a message to Euodias and Syntyche, and bade them help these two women, for they had worked with him. "Rejoice in the Lord, and let your gentleness be known unto all men."

At the end of the letter he spoke again of their kindness, and gave them a few more glimpses of his feelings, in prospect of his trial. He rejoices greatly that they had thought of him and helped him. He would not say that he was in want, for he had learned always to be contented. But they did well to have sympathy for his afflictions. When he first came to Macedonia, they were the only Christians who had a fellow-feeling with him in giving and receiving, for they twice sent gifts to him at Thessalonica. It was not the gifts he valued, but their kindness.

He had everything now that he required and more; for he was filled, having received from Epaphroditus what they sent, like sweet-smelling incense—a gift pleasing and acceptable to God.

And God would fulfil every need of theirs. The Christians with him sent greetings, especially the Christians of the emperor's household.

What would be the thoughts of the soldier standing by as he heard of Christians in the palace itself? And what did he think of words like these,—

“ Finally, brothers, whatever things are true and honourable, just and pure, lovely and gracious ; if there be any praise, think on these things. What you have learned, received, heard, and seen of me, that do : and the God of peace will be with you ” ?

And thus, though with chained hands, he still wove together the congregations he had formed, in all parts of the Roman Empire, with the heavenly bonds of love and sympathy, faith and hope—greater than the laws of kings, stronger than the armies of nations.

Nero the Monster.

ROME : AGED 60—64.

IN Paul's eyes the emperor Nero was a mere boy, for he was only twenty-five years old. He was not the son of the emperor Claudius ; but his widowed mother pushed him forward, and got him made emperor at seventeen, rather than his half-brother Britannicus, who was the rightful heir. Before he had been emperor one year he caused the other boy to be poisoned. As years passed he grew to hate his own mother, and ordered her to be put to death ; and his ruffians first tried to drown her, and then stabbed her.

He married the old emperor's gentle daughter Octavia, sister of Britannicus, but he never loved her ; and when Paul came to Rome she was degraded, and the young fiend was thinking how he could put her to death and marry Poppæa without rousing Rome. These are only a few of his crimes, given that you may know the fiend who ruled Rome, and to whom Paul had appealed in the name of Cæsar. A boy ruling the world, who could do as he pleased and kill whom he pleased, Nero rushed into all forms of unbridled wickedness, to which he was urged by bad companions, until his crimes and suspicions had the natural effect of weakening his mind, and turning him at times into a positive madman. This dissolute boy had been taught that the emperor was the god of the nation, and could do no wrong ; and that alone, if believed, is enough to turn any one into a lunatic. Besides getting the

people to worship them as gods in temples, the emperors of Rome had other ways of securing their support. They drew huge revenues from conquered countries, and with that they paid for soldiers, including the twenty thousand prætorian guards, with sharp swords, ready at trumpet-call. Countless cargoes of grain from Egypt and other lands were stored in huge stores behind the shipping wharfs at the river-side, and this they served out free to the people, until in Nero's time one half of the city lived on the emperor's corn!

When he became emperor, he had the sense to appoint Seneca, his old tutor, to take chief charge of public affairs, and Burrhus, a comparatively honest man, to be the head of the soldiers; and as long as he listened to these two the affairs of Rome went well. But soon they had to take a hand in his criminal acts, for to refuse meant death. Maddened with indulgence, intoxicated with power, the young emperor became filled with the demon of discontent. He said it was no pleasure to him to be worshipped as a god unless he was also praised as a man, for being the best poet, singer, actor, guitar player, dancer, and charioteer in the world. His counsellors were appalled, but he would listen to no advice; and Seneca, Burrhus, the gentle Gallio, the poet Lucan, and others equally cultured, had to be stage-managers to this fool. They packed the theatre in his vast gardens with people, arranging for them to cheer, and distributed soldiers to see that they did it, whenever the weak youth appeared in snow-white robes and sang with husky voice, or played the golden lyre with trembling hands, or danced with thin, shaky legs, or recited poetry of his own making. And like a spoiled child, he had always to get the first prize for all he did. But these were trifles compared with the feasting, drinking, revelry, and wickedness, on which he spent vast sums of money, forcing the nobles and their families to take a public part in them, before all the people, on pain of offending him, which might mean death and confiscation.

Paul would see none of these sights in the theatre, circus, and king's gardens, but would hear of them, and of other deeds of wickedness and folly that were constantly taking place in the city; and his heart must have despaired when he thought that he might have to plead the cause of Christianity before this dissolute youth, who would not give a cup of red wine for all the Christians in Rome. He may have seen him driving in the streets or riding in the prætorian barracks. And if he did, it would be to see a youth with a white face, long yellow hair, small cruel eyes, and a heavy chin, a cloak of amethyst hue hiding his stout body and spindle-legs, and round his neck a soft silk scarf, held close to his

throat with a hairy white hand, lest his cracked voice should suffer from the air.

And when Paul went into the street chained to his young soldier, he saw the palaces of the knights and nobles on the hills, but his sympathies were with the countless thousands who slept by night in those towers of flimsy wood reared on bricks that lined the narrow streets of the valleys. To a thorough-going Roman work was mean, and only fit for slaves. He would rather do nothing or fight than work, for he thought it unworthy of a free-man. And thus it was mainly slaves who built the houses, toiled at the ships, wharfs, stores, and granaries, and did all the useful work about the city. He saw the people busy at their trades in the streets and markets, and heard them calling their wares—wine, flour, oil, fruit, water, and a hundred other things; while ballad-mongers sang, and beggars craved alms. From dawn to noon was the time for business with shopkeepers and tradesmen, and among the rich merchants also, who walked gravely among the marble pillars of the colonnades at the Forum; and in the forenoon the women and children went to the temples and altars, to offer gifts and to pray.

At noon came a change. As soon as the sun's shadow passed a line on the pavement before the Hostilia Curia at the Forum, a man shouted in a loud voice to the crowds below, and the people began to melt away homewards for their mid-day meal, and shops were shut, and temples closed. In the afternoon came amusements in the vast field of Mars, at a bend of the river above Nero's bridge. Refreshed by a short sleep when the sun was hot, the men, women, and children came out in thousands to see the soldiers' sham fights, and the games of running, riding, spear-throwing, quoiting, jumping, ball play, and other exercises amongst the young men, who had the river near to rush into and cool themselves for the next game. A swimming match was enough to line the river on both sides with thousands of cheering and laughing people, for they loved fun.

Festivals and the Higher Life.

ROME: AGED 60-64.

THE Romans, like the Jews, had festivals throughout the year, but with less of religion and more of play about them. Their new-year festival was in March, when the sweet wild-flowers began to brighten the fields and hedges. May-day they kept with dance

and song, decking their houses with flowers of the fields, and especially the pretty statues of Flora, saying that they were indebted to her for all these sweet gifts. When the grapes were ripe, the first purple cluster was broken from the bough by a white-robed priest of Jupiter, and that was the signal for the vintage and the August festival all over the country. In autumn came the merry festival of harvest-home; and December brought the festival of Saturnus, so full of riotous, drunken crowds and licensed wickedness that if we wish to describe a disgraceful scene of drunkenness we call it still a saturnalia.

The priests had a share in all these festivals. At each of them the idols of one temple or another, and sometimes of all together, had to be remembered with gifts of money, clothing, food, or wine; and, of course, as the idols were of stone, the gifts were taken up by the living fingers of the priests, who gave the people smooth words in exchange. And when they carried their images through the principal streets in procession, some knelt as they passed, and some took off their caps and smiled, for the people were not religious.

They believed that the images in the temples were the shapes of unseen beings of very ancient origin, almost as numerous and varied as the stars in the sky, who, somehow or other, had an influence on men's lives. They attributed misfortune to one, and good-fortune to another; and their religion consisted greatly in seeking by gifts and prayers to secure the kindness of one idol and avoid the anger of others. And so it was not difficult for them to make an idol out of one who had so much power for good or evil as the young emperor.

Some of the best Romans, and among them Seneca, said they believed there was only one true God; but while the Jewish faith in the living God had won some believers, to the mass of the city it was unknown. They left religion to priests, women, and philosophers. Honesty, manliness, obedience, valour, cheerfulness, food, drink, shelter, clothing, and amusement were high enough for a Roman. In every house there was a figure of Vesta, kept behind a little curtained shrine, where women prayed to it, and to their Lares and Penates; for Vesta was supposed to take especial interest in the fire upon the family hearthstone, and all that surrounded it, so dear to housewives.

Paul would go into few houses and no temples. But amid the life in the streets he would not miss seeing when a house door was wreathed with green cypress branches, which meant death. He would see the body brought out upon a painted bier, dressed in the long white toga of every day, to be carried by

mourners in black and blue, while men played doleful airs on flutes, and paid actors, more like lunatics, imitated the dead man's words and actions, while his sons walked with downcast eyes, and his daughters shook out their hair and shrieked.

The palace of the young emperor was frequented by the cleverest dancers, singers, jokers, story-tellers, fencers, and verse-makers in the gay city, most of them young men, but some old. Ladies in rich embroidered dresses of rose and blue, wearing costly pearls, their hair powdered with gold-dust, reclined on silk couches at his banquets, and had to listen to low songs and jokes, and see his nobles drinking themselves stupid from gold and jewelled cups that sparkled under the brilliant lamps on the tables loaded with flowers. But some of them found their way to the house in the hollow by the river, where Paul received his friends and held forth the light of Christianity in a dark city. And whoever gave up their idols, whoever gave up their sinful lives, and turned their faces to the living God and Jesus, whether it was a slave with his back scored with whip-cuts, or a delicate lady whose hands were washed in goat's milk and clothes perfumed with violets, they came, and came again. And there they heard and believed that their bodies were the temples of the living God, and worshipped Him with silent prayers; and that they had one Master, Jesus the Christ, and Him they served in secret. We do not know what he said to them, but this is from his letter:—

“We who are strong ought to bear with those who are weak, and not to please ourselves, but our neighbour; for that is good, and does good. Jesus did not please Himself. We read in the Psalms, The taunts of them who reproached Thee fell upon Me.

“Whatever is written in the Bible is for our guidance, that through patience and comfort in them we might have hope. May the God of patience and of comfort grant that you may have the mind of Jesus, one with another; and that you may together glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Christ. Receive each other as Christians, as Jesus received you all, to the glory of God. For the Christ has been made a minister of the Jews for the truth of God, that He might confirm the promises made to their fathers, and that strangers might praise God for His mercy. It is written in the Psalms, I will give praise to Thee amongst strangers, and sing to Thy name. Rejoice, ye strangers, along with His people. Praise God, ye strangers; let all people praise Him. And Isaiah wrote, There shall be a root of David, and strangers shall hope in Him who rises to rule over them.

“And now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and

peace in believing these things, that you may have great hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit."

And in that city of wickedness men and women cherished these truths in their hearts, and strove to live the higher life of truth and holiness, as seen in Jesus, and as taught by Paul.

Weddings and Little Children.

ROME : AGED 60-64.

IT is doubtful if the young emperor ever heard Paul's name. He was not likely to seek the house by the river, to learn the truths of God and the wisdom of life. But often when the streets were dark he slipped out of his palace, with his young companions, all disguised for mischief, and some prize-fighters to see that they did not get hurt, as they frightened women and thrashed men for fun ; but if any one struck the emperor it would cost him his life.

As Paul and his soldier companion walked in the narrow streets in the daytime, he saw doors garlanded with roses, green leaves, and white lilies, that told of a marriage. And when the wedding party came out to walk in the sunshine to the temple, he saw the bride wearing a long white robe, with a purple fringe and girdle of red, her hair decked with coloured ribbons, and covered with a veil of bright yellow, down to her little shoes of the same gay colour. The bridegroom, with close-cut hair, walked there also, in a white robe ; and when they went into the temple, he took her hand and led her slowly round the altar, and then came a little play. The girl fled to her mother's arms, and the youth followed, pretending to take her away by force, and all to keep them in mind of something that happened to some Sabine women some hundreds of years before.

And Paul would see them returning home again, the bride carrying a bunch of wool in one hand and a spindle in the other, to show how busy she was going to be. At the house door the bridegroom went in first, while his young companions lifted the bride and carried her, lest her foot should trip at the threshold and bring ill luck. Then the bridegroom presented her with fire and water as a welcome, and the keys of the house, which needed no explanation. These Roman maidens made good wives, but, like some others we know of, they would not marry in May, or on the first, fifth, seventh, thirteenth, or fifteenth of any month,

or on a festival day, so that fixing the wedding day was not so easy then as it is now.

Paul saw children also in the sunny streets and courts, the loveliest things in Rome, with hardly any clothing, as they played at their childish games, the little boys with bouncing-balls, the little girls nursing wooden dolls, shaped even more beautifully than the dainty figures which charm our children. And sometimes they all joined in skipping the rope, or in holding five knuckle bones on their palm, and tossing them into the air, to see how many they could catch on the back of their hand; and women also sat in quiet corners practising this by the hour. But the men loved games of strength and skill, and shows in the circus and the racecourse; and when the young emperor passed they tossed their caps into the air and cried, "Give us bread for nothing, and games for ever!"

And so the common people were fed with the emperor's corn, amused with his games, and kept in awe by his soldiers. The nobles of the city were the priests and senators, many of whom were very rich, and they directed the movements of the distant armies of the empire, while the emperor played, danced, and sang like a buffoon amongst his low companions.

He had performed before these nobles with packed audiences in his own circus and theatre, within his beautiful gardens of the Vatican, across the Tiber; and even Lucan, the accomplished poet, was obliged to praise him in polished verses, only to be killed through envy. But the false praise of lying friends had the natural result. Nero wanted more applause, and thought he deserved it, and caused more theatres to be built, that he might show off in them to more crowds.

The people, too, who lived on shows and excitement, were hungry for more, and, like wild animals, they had to be fed. They had long been used to spectacles of trained gladiators, who fought and killed each other before the thousands in the circus, but that was too tame for them now. More frightful spectacles had to be devised, in the vain attempt to satisfy the thirst for more and yet more bloodshed. Wild animals—bears, panthers, and lions—were brought from foreign countries to fight with the gladiators; and in the night-time, when one lion woke another in the dens at the circus, the sound of their terrible roaring was heard in the still city as if in an African desert. Slaves were brought in gangs, and criminals from foreign countries, and made to fight in bands with the animals, and with each other and the gladiators, until there came to be a steady traffic in wild animals and wretched men, who were to be sacrificed to amuse

the people on their holidays. For the emperor with the ferocious temper had taught the people to think that cruelty and death were amusing. And it is not unlikely that many of the prisoners who came with Paul from Cæsarea were saved from drowning only to die in the circus.

But even this was not the lowest depth of horror to which the emperor fiend would drag the Roman people, for, in days that were fast approaching, he would cause Christians, men, women, children, to be seized and thrust into these vast public rings, and slain there by men and beasts, because they would not say six little words and curse Jesus. But that had not yet begun, although it was not far off.

A Mock Chariot Race.

ROME : AGED 60-64.

THE wretched and debased young emperor should have been full of vigorous, generous life; but instead of that he was a trembling, ferocious coward. He now feasted and banqueted in sight of the people, surrounded with nobles; but he wanted more and yet more praise, and resolved to perform before the thousands of the lowest class who crowded the Circus Maximus. His old friend Burrhus tried to restrain him, but one day he sickened and died, and it was whispered along the streets, and written in chalk upon the walls, that Burrhus was poisoned. His place was given to Nero's young favourite, Tigellinus, who set about inventing all kinds of infamous and debasing spectacles to please his master, and advised him to brook no remarks from any man. Then Seneca saw that the court was no place for him, and, on the plea of ill-health, retired from Rome to study philosophy.

With Tigellinus for counsellor, the young emperor sank deeper. Nobles of whom he was jealous or afraid, or whose wealth he envied, were put to death. And he killed the gentle Octavia, to make way for the beautiful tigress Poppæa. Paul would hear of Octavia's death, which everybody sorrowed for, but nobody dared to openly blame, even in whispers.

Tigellinus urged him to perform as a common charioteer, and the crowned fool consented, and ordered a proclamation that he would drive in the chariot race before the people in the Circus Maximus. The seats on each side of the valley were crowded before the dawn with men and women, slaves and freemen,

sailors, shepherds, labourers, tradesmen, in coarse tunics and kilts of brown and blue, and red and olive, that left their arms and feet bare. Under the yellow awnings, drawn over with cords from the tall masts, sat senators, knights, magistrates, and officers, with ladies in special seats, in spotless tunics and cloaks of soft colours. They dared not stay away, although they thought it was the most degrading sight that Rome had ever seen; but we think that killing people for sport was worse.

A friend was to drop a white handkerchief from the emperor's box as the sign to start, and another was to decide who had won. Never were seen such brilliant chariots of crimson and blue, of white and gold, of green and scarlet, or finer horses shining with oil, as the young men drove them rattling in from the stables, to take their places at the starting-post. But, of course, the emperor's chariot of white ivory and burnished metal, his four jet-black horses with tossing plumes, were the finest of all, as, with transparent robe of shimmering gold clasped on his shoulder with amethysts, he drove, smiling, to the first position. Each driver wore his racing colours—red, blue, green, yellow, pink—so that the people could make their bets, as if it were a real race. The emperor fool wore amethyst ribbons.

The white handkerchief fluttered, and with a yell from the drivers, and whirling of long whips that cracked like pistol-shots, the horses leapt forward, galloping at full speed down the long circus, the yellow sand flying from their beating hoofs and spraying from the chariot wheels. The men yelled and whipped, the emperor yelled and whipped, and it almost looked like a real race, as he thought it was. Wild with excitement, he glanced round to find his was the leading chariot; for if any horses came abreast of him, they quickly sank back again. With these strong young charioteers it was indeed a race, but only for who should be second, and all their skill was required to keep their furious horses from dashing past the emperor.

They had not galloped the length of the circus until the people saw what Nero could not see—the farce that was going on behind him. Yelling and flogging his horses, he did not hear the laughter of the multitude, but only their cheers and applause as he flogged and rattled on. Whether he went twice or thrice round the circus matters little: the result would have been the same if he had driven till midnight. When he galloped past the winning-post, whirling his whip over his head, and yelling like the madman he was, it did not need the waving hand of the judge, the applause of the knights and senators, or the hoarse sea-roar of two hundred thousand throats, led on by the soldiers, to convince him that he

had won in the greatest of all chariot races. He had indeed won the most enduring crown of folly that has ever been placed on an emperor's brow!

And when, bending on one knee, he blushed to feel the wreath of green leaves placed upon his tangled yellow curls, he did not know, but the lowest of the thousands knew, and were going home to tell it to hundreds of thousands more—what a fool Rome had for an emperor.

One more Letter.

ROME: AGED 60-64.

DID Paul hear the applause of the Circus Maximus that floated over Rome like the roar of the sea in a storm? And if he did, had his case been heard by that time? We know that Nero rode in that race, but we do not know that he ever heard Paul's case. He would leave such drudgery to others, while he twanged guitars and drove chariots.

Luke tells us that for two years Paul lived in his house, openly teaching all who came to him, no one forbidding him. Thus his trial did not come on for at least two years, which was not a long delay. In England, an appeal to the House of Lords sometimes takes as long. And when we consider the extent of the Roman Empire, the distance from Cæsarea, whence the accusers had also to come, and the state of their law courts, the time is easily accounted for. If the reports of Lysias, Felix, and Festus were lost in the shipwreck, fresh ones would have to be got. The Jewish Sanhedrim, as accusers, could easily get years of delay, on different pretexts, to bring witnesses to meet these reports of Paul's innocence by the Roman governors. The Jewish lawyers would have a difficult case to prove, but it must not be forgotten that there were Jews of position who would use their influence and their purses in Rome at the demand of the high priest; and that if the emperor or his judges took a dislike to a prisoner, they did not require witnesses or anything else in order to keep him in a dungeon or instruct his execution.

Paul's companions were coming and going round him in circuits to and from distant cities, like comets round a sun, and we cannot fix their positions. We have seen Timothy, holding his pen, and about to go to Philippi; and of all his companions he was the one who was most like a son to him. He became a teacher at Paul's request, travelled with him, wrote his letters, went his messages;

and now that the clouds were deepening, the old man yearned after him as a father for his child, and sent out his thoughts to him in a letter. Though written to Timothy, it is for all young men, and should be read in full. But few will read it with the tears that were in Timothy's eyes.

Timothy is his beloved child, whose tears he remembers, and night and day he prays for him, longing to see his face. His mother and grandmother were true Christians, and so is he; and he would have him remember the day in Lystra when he first called him to be a teacher, and bade him stir up his great gift. Timothy knew that Onesiphorus gave him many things when in Ephesus, but he did not know that he had come to Rome and searched until he found him, and was not ashamed to see him a prisoner with a chain on his wrist, but often came to visit him, refreshing him so much that he praised God for him and for all in his house. Timothy would remember how all the other men from Asia turned their backs on him, particularly Phygellus and Hermogenes. He bids him choose good men, and teach them what he learned from him, and warns him against Philetus and Hymeneus, who say that the resurrection is past. He would meet with difficulties, and should remember what Paul himself suffered in Antioch, Lystra, and Iconium.

He writes also of things that are happening around him, in words difficult to understand, but which show him suffering misfortune, and so deeply despondent that he thinks his death may be very close at hand. In his letter to the Christians at Philippi he said he was ready to be offered up like a sacrifice, upon an altar at Rome, for the cause of Jesus. He now tells Timothy, his dear son, in fragmentary phrases, something about the hearing of his case, and of his dread of what is coming. Death seems to be hanging over him.

Alexander the coppersmith did him much harm, and God will punish him for it—perhaps one of the Asian Jews come to Rome as a witness against him. Timothy is to beware of him, for he greatly withstood his words. At Paul's first defence no one took his part, but every one forsook him. May God forgive them! But God stood by him, and strengthened him, so that through him the gospel might be fully proclaimed, and all the foreign nations might hear. He was delivered as out of a lion's mouth, and God will still further deliver him from every evil work, and save him for His heavenly kingdom.

It is as if he had been threatened so terribly that his friends fled for their own safety, believing that nothing could save him; and yet he had been wonderfully delivered from the great danger.

He is already being offered like a sacrifice upon an altar, and the time of his death has come. Comparing himself to a gladiator in the circus, or a racer in the racecourse, he has fought a good fight, he has finished the race, he has kept the faith. But his prize would not be a wreath of fading leaves from the hand of a man, but a crown from God. And yet he does not expect death immediately, for he thinks there is time for the letter to reach Timothy, and for him to come to Rome.

He is to do his best to come to him before winter, for Demas has forsaken him and gone to Thessalonica, Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, Tychicus to Ephesus, and there is only Luke with him. He is to bring Mark, for he is useful, and the cloak, books, and parchments which he left at Troy. He sends greetings to Aquila the weaver and his wife, and the family of Onesiphorus. He left Trophimus ill at Miletus, Erastus stayed at Corinth, and Eubulus, Linus, Pudens, Claudia, and others sent their greetings. It is a letter difficult to follow, and hard to understand, as a record of what was happening.

Cloud Pictures.

ROME: AGED 60—64.

LUKE'S history of the life of Paul ends with the two whole years in his hired house, and after that all is driving mist and drifting cloud, with flashes of fire and openings of blue. What happened to him and his companions in the whirling vortex into which they were sucked is to be gathered more from the history of the doomed city than from any writings of his own or his friends. By that time the heavens were darkening down over Jews and Christians alike in Rome, soon to burst in the most terrible persecutions which men and women have ever suffered. Where Paul stood amid the battling clouds, and how long he fought the tempest, we do not know, for his trial and death are wrapped in obscurity. We have gleams of his figure, seen amid the flashes of lightning; but when the storm has passed he has disappeared.

In his letters all is cloudy uncertainty. Amid the clouds we seem to see the hall of justice beside the great Forum. Above the people sit judges in ivory chairs. Their robes are white, edged with broad purple. Ornamented walls of marble arch and pillar surround them. There is no roof. A yellow awning keeps off

the sunshine. On one side sit the jurymen. Behind stand the lictors, with axe and rods. The place is open to the public, and if all were known, the bulk of the crowd are Christians. We recognize the faces of some of Paul's companions, come to hear what is to happen to their friend. The accusation is that he deserves death for teaching Christianity; and he hopes to get a judgment that throughout the whole Roman Empire it is lawful for any one to be a Christian. There, with frowning faces, are the Jewish accusers, with a Roman advocate to put their accusation into fine language, as Tertullus did at Cæsarea. And there stands the bent figure of Paul, in his Jew's brown cloak and kerchief, old, but vigorous still. For years he has been longing for this glorious hour, when he would stand before the highest court in the world, and plead for the highest thing in the world. He has prepared his speech, and, inspired of God, he will deliver it. But the clouds close over the picture, and hide the judgment of the men in robes of white and purple; clouds, and yet more clouds, roll round the figure of the man in the brown cloak.

Again there is a shadowy outline amid the driving mist of a ship upon the sea, carrying him away from Rome to the west—Miletus, Crete, Ephesus, Troy. But when we inquire when he went, or how, there is no clear answer, as the clouds darken over the picture.

Again the gloom is smitten apart, not with golden bars of sunshine, but with lightning. He is a prisoner, closer kept, accused of some deadly thing. Onesiphorus finds him in chains. And as the light grows white upon his figure, he moves and is standing amid the marble arches of the law court, before judges. Many faces are there, of friends and foes. With chained hand upraised, he states his defence, and there is silence. Something has gone wrong. No one takes his side, judges or jury. His friends are forsaking him. But see! his face shines, for God strengthens him; and he speaks with his old gestures, fire, and eloquence, pleading for liberty, that the gospel of Jesus might be fully proclaimed, and that all nations might hear. The judges rise from their ivory seats, and in their purple-bordered robes fade away. The court dissolves. He is delivered from the mouth of the lion, but not set free. "What was the judgment?" we cry. But for answer, clouds and driving mist coil and darken about the figure of the man.

Once more the clouds are rent with blue, and we see him plainly, even with sunshine on his white hair. He is still a prisoner, chained, but his lion spirit can no man chain. He has

friends about him, and we know some faces. He is writing a letter to his child Timothy—now depressed, now hopeful. He hopes to be set free, for he is guiltless, but fears he will not escape. This is what we read, written with thick, black ink on the fibrous paper:—

“Be sober in all things; for I am already being offered up as a sacrifice, and the time of my death is come. I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith: and there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which God, the righteous judge, will give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all who love Jesus. Only Luke is with me.”

The clouds close, whirling and seething, clinging round the much-loved figure, and we see him again no more. We call into the silences, we listen amid the storm, but hear no voice; we probe the darkness, and through cloud rents gaze into slaughter pits, fiery gulfs, and on fleeing bands; but among the living or the dead there is no figure that answers to his. With reluctant hand we cover our eyes. We last see the heroic soul alone, his body chained, his mind free, burning with divine love and grandeur, but about to disappear amid the frightful holocaust kindled by the white hand of the Cæsar to whom he had appealed.

The Burning of Rome.

ROME: AGED 60—64.

WE now turn to the Rome that wept round the chained prisoner, soon to become a ring of fire. Between these two satyrs—the tigress Poppæa as his private adviser, and the vile Tigellinus as his public counsellor—Nero, the sandy-haired youth, capered down the path of infamy.

He tired of Rome, and longed to strut and sing in other lands. The cultured Greeks of Athens had never been thrilled with the sound of his cracked voice. The coppery Egyptians, in their ancient cities, with their dark and massive temples, on the banks of the Nile, had never looked upon the man-god, with his curled hair and mincing steps. But the Senate flattered him by saying that the people wished him to remain as the leader of their amusements, and he graciously consented to stay at home. They did wish him, that their regular supplies of corn might not be tampered with in his absence.

In his *rôle* of royal fool and people's favourite he devised

different forms of public entertainment, and almost daily dined publicly with his favourites, leading the way in gluttony and drunkenness. And the people, made familiar with such shameless wickedness, imitated the ways of their masters.

Near one of his palaces there was a large lake, planted round with beautiful trees; and on one occasion the grass under the trees was crowded, by his orders, with the wealthiest people of the city, ladies and gentlemen, dressed in fantastic dresses, feasting and drinking in silken tents, while he and his favourite men and women banqueted and went through a performance on a splendidly-decorated raft that was rowed with silver oars up and down the lake, to slow music. On one never-to-be-forgotten day they saw the youthful emperor, arrayed in a woman's clothing, and covered with a bride's saffron veil, go through a mock ceremony of marriage with one of his favourites, as a piece of amusement, out on that ribbon-decked raft.

But a dreadful calamity was swiftly approaching the city. Fire and destruction, to an extent unheard of before or since, were about to lay it in ruins. Who commanded the torch to be lit, and whose hand applied it, will never be known. London, sacked and burned three years before, by Queen Boadicea and the men of Surrey, was the destruction of a village compared to it.

On July 19, the hottest time of the year 63, when the wooden tenements of Rome were dry as tinder under the scorching sun, flames suddenly shot up from the sheds and stores filled with inflammable things built against the east end of the vast wood-seated Circus Maximus, where Nero played the fool. A strong east wind swept the sparks and flames with furnace draught through the main valleys, lined with houses, as the wooden terraces of the circus blazed up to the skies. The flames leaped from street to street, and valley to valley, consuming with frightful rapidity the wood tenements of the poor, springing up the slopes of trees, and attacking the stone houses of the rich. The fire swept right across the city, and only stopped at the river, but not until it had consumed the Jews' quarter at the Fabrician bridge, where we think Paul lived. Stopped there by water, the flames spread northward, and for six days the summer sun was darkened with a pall of smoke, that showed the onward march of destruction, while by night the ruddy glare in the heavens told where the fire fiend was at work.

As if to mock the frightful sufferings of the common people, the six days of burning had scarcely ceased when flames broke out again in the property of the demon Tigellinus, in a part of the city which had hitherto escaped. The wind changed, and for

three days more the flames of burning streets again licked the skies, and this time temples, halls, porches, theatres, and public buildings were consumed. We speak of the great fire of London which lasted four days! Rome burned for nine days, over three times the extent of city.

When at last the skies cleared and the sun shone upon the blackened ruins, the wretched, homeless people, in their despair, glared round them for some one to blame. They were accustomed to praise the emperor for all good things, and to blame him for misfortune; for was not he their god? When the fire began he was at Antium enjoying the sea-breezes, and when word came that Rome was burning he stayed on enjoying himself. It was not until he heard the flames were near his favourite gardens that he drove to the city.

The people were enraged with the emperor's callousness, and his conduct during the days following the fire filled their minds with suspicion. It was rumoured in the city, and soon every tongue was repeating it, that when the fire was raging with terrific grandeur, Nero watched it like a delighted child from his palace on the hill, and calling for his lyre, sang to a few choice friends the ballad of the burning of Troy. Another rumour was that he was once heard to say, "Perish the world in fire in my lifetime!" He had also caused extensive provision to be made for housing the common people in huts across the Tiber, and plans were ready for rebuilding Rome, with wide, straight streets, and splendid buildings, the chief of which was a palace for himself, more magnificent than had ever been built by man, to be called "The Golden Palace."

And the people whispered that Nero ordered Rome to be burned, and as time passed the belief spread and deepened, and whispers grew to murmurs, and it was chalked in white on the walls, and the emperor became alarmed. He had fed, amused, and degraded the people to win their support. What could he do? The wolves of Rome were ready to rend him. There was one move left for his fiendish brain: he could blame the innocent, and slay them with the utmost ferocity, and so turn the wolves' eyes away from himself. There was a Jewish religious sect who would not bow the knee to him nor worship him, but who worshipped an unseen God, and owned one Jesus the Christ as their Master. The Christians were disliked and despised everywhere, and his green eyes turned on them.

“To the Lions with the Christians!”

ROME: AGED 60—64.

IT was reported by spies and informers that the Christians held secret meetings at night, in lonely places outside the city, where, with darkened lanterns, they worshipped together, and performed horrid and unlawful rites which no one had ever seen. They avoided the city temples, and did not bow to idols, nor place gifts on the public altars, but served the unseen God and Jesus the Christ His Son, to whom they offered neither gifts nor incense. They had neither altar nor temple, but prayed on their knees with clasped hands, and exhorted each other, singing strange hymns together with words like these:—

“ O Christus, keep and guide
 Thy sheep on every side,
 By ways which Thou hast trod,
 And paths that lead to God.
 Out of this world’s deep sea
 We cry, O Lord, to Thee ;
 Take us, in Thy love,
 To fields of light above.
 O Christus, save and hear us,
 And be Thou ever near us.”

The spies also reported that they talked amongst themselves of a time to come, when He whom they called the Christ would return to the world, and would put down with fire and sword those who opposed Him, and punish all who were not Christians ; and that one day the world would be burnt up, and all who did not worship as they did would perish. It was said that men, who had seen and talked with the Christ, had visited the city, and spoken to them at those secret meetings ; and one, Paul of Tarsus, a great teacher, had been brought a prisoner from Jerusalem, having appealed for trial to Cæsar, and had lived in a house near the river, openly teaching this religion to all who came to him, and it had spread through the lowest of the people. And it was rumoured that some of the soldiers, and even some ladies of good Roman families, were Christians in secret. These Christians were so earnest and strict in their lives that they would not go to shameless feasts, or attend the dreadful shows of slaughter in the circus, or drink much wine. If one man wished to jeer at another in the city for being strict and good, he called him a Christian.

Informers said that the men who came to the city teaching this new religion were all Jews. The Christ was a Jew, and the Christians worshipped the God of the Jews. It all arose from these pests of the city, the Jews, who were twice banished, but had crept back again. The Jews had no right to be in Rome! They hated Rome and the emperor! The fire began amongst their wooden sheds and flimsy shops at the Circus Maximus, where so many of them sold their trashy stuff, as dealers and peddlers.

Fed with lies, the cowardly young emperor was advised to proclaim that they had set fire to the city as a part of their religion, and that every Christian—man, woman, or child—who would not give up their religion should be put to death, in order to stamp out Christianity as a public danger. The edict was duly proclaimed by criers in the Forum, and amid the seven green hills the doom of Christ's people was pronounced before the silent temples, and amid the hum of buying and selling.

Then began the first of these awful persecutions of Christians to the death of which the world has seen so many. The harrowing story has been written in many books. Debased and maddened with excesses, the young emperor caused his soldiers to hunt them out of their houses and through the streets, while the mobs jeered and shouted, "To the lions with the Christians!" and joined in the chase. Sparing neither age nor sex, he imprisoned, tortured, and put them to death with every form of cruelty, determined that not one should survive; while they, following the pattern of their dear Master, did not resist, and hardly even tried to escape. Many who were not put to death at once were reserved for the wild-beast shows in the circus. Tacitus, the Latin historian, tells us that only those were at first seized who acknowledged themselves Christians. Afterwards a vast number who were pointed out were condemned, not so much for burning the city as for being haters of mankind. Their death was accompanied by mockery. They were wrapped in skins, to be torn in pieces by dogs; they were crucified on crosses; they were set on fire, to serve as torches at night. Nero lent his own gardens for the sight, and gave a chariot race on the occasion, going about freely in the crowd dressed as a chariot driver.

And thus this fiend encouraged the people to come and look at the horrid spectacles of cruelty which he invented for them. But gradually they began to see that these unresisting Christians—men, women, and children—were being thrown to the lions with prayers upon their lips, not because they would not deny that they were Christians, but for some other reason lurking in the bosom of

the emperor. Tacitus says further that the people, with their usual changeableness, turned to pity for the sufferers, and while thinking they deserved punishment, felt that it was not for their guilt, nor for the good of the city, they were being slain, but only to feed the ferocity of a single man. Still the terrible killing went on, for the vile emperor had got such a taste for sights of slaughter in the public circus that nothing would stop him but the Hand that is over every one, from the beggar in rags to the emperor in purple.

Amid these flames and smoke, the crash of burning homes, the cries of terror-stricken people, bloodshed, the roar of lions, and the hoarse applause of ten thousand human voices, under the glittering eyes of a fiendish emperor, the figure of Paul the aged is lost. Whether he perished in the flames, or by the teeth of lions, or by the glittering axe of the headsman, who can tell? Known to the people, the soldiers, judges, and even in the palace, as the leading Christian in Rome, how could he escape? He would not hide his head who was a tower of strength to others. And when women and children, youths and trembling maidens, were taken, how could he be passed over? On one day the vast floor of the circus was planted so thick with crosses that there was scarce room to pass between. On one night Nero had his gardens lit up with human torches.

The manner of the ending of the long life that was worn out in self-denial and enthusiasm for others is hidden. But not so with Nero, whose life of selfishness was spent in the wildest forms of self-indulgence and ever-widening circles of evil. With shattered health, unsettled brain, and the increasing terrors of cowardice, he continued his career of evil, until even Rome could stand it no longer, and he was scared from the city, terrified with dreams and voices, riding like a madman to a villa in the country, and carrying secret poison in a gold box. And there, terrified by the sounds of horsemen coming to seize him, he placed a dagger to his breast, and a slave drove it home, perishing at the age of thirty.

Jesus and Paul.

IN Paul we are continually reminded of Jesus, and of where they touch and where they differ. Their childhood was different, their manhood not alike. Jesus was brought up amid the simplicities of village life, and the quiet companionship of hills, brooks, woods, clouds, winds, and stars of heaven, the beasts

of the field, the birds of the air, the glittering array of flowers and brilliant grass, so quickly spread, so soon withering. He had also that dearer companionship, so distinctively a feature of a village—the daily intercourse, in house and street, field, garden, and workshop, between children and grown-up people. These sweet influences marked with bright, strong touches the brief period of His public life. “You must become as little children,” Jesus said. “Put away childish things; be men,” said Paul.

If the influence of His early surroundings left such prints upon Jesus, we may expect to find the impressions of Paul’s early years even more deeply stamped. He was a town boy. The spreading flower, the tinted cloud, the purple hill, the bird in flight had no special word for him. Soldiers arming and disarming, the sign of force; trained athletes running, wrestling, boxing with mailed fists, the sign of skill; idols of wood and stone, the sign of darkness, early impressed him, and held sway to the end. Life was a fight in which strength, skill, caution, expediency—the pen as well as the tongue—were to be used.

His father was a Pharisee and a Roman citizen, and Paul was proud of it. He set religious learning before the boy as the chief thing to be desired, for by it he would reach holiness; and from a child until he was thirty he was a student, learning and repeating with grinding toil unknown to students of our day. As he advanced, and the hidden realms of study and speculation opened to his mind, the outer world of beauty and simplicity receded. Metaphysics, theology, and logic were the strings on which he played all tunes. “If this be so, then something else must be so,” was the way in which, as a student, he was taught to build towers of logic, brick upon brick, until they touched the skies, and forge chains of reasoning, link upon link, until they fathomed the seas. But after all they were only towers and chains which one false “if” would upset. Thus, while Jesus amazed His hearers by speaking with authority, Paul, until he was thirty, did nothing but argue with sophistical skill, and repeat the sayings of the rabbis. And this habit of thought became so much a part of him that we find it in his letters and speeches.

When the great change came, it was not his methods of thought and speech that were altered, but his central belief in the highest good—his heart—was changed. He always believed in God; but whereas from a child he thought that a good life and heaven were to be reached by learning and obeying the religious rules of the Jews, henceforth he knew that they could only be attained by believing in Jesus and obeying Him. The Jewish religious rules

were good, compared with the practices of heathenism ; but they came far short of that higher life, that perfection, which he saw in Jesus, and which alone could satisfy him.

And thus, while the light changed, the lamp was the same. His old knowledge was not forgotten, but set aside ; his old methods of thinking, speaking, writing, were not eradicated ; and hence in his after life we find, and should expect to find, marks of his long and grinding education. He was, as he says, "a man of like passions with yourselves." Paul was not Jesus ; and as the light takes colour from the glass, the message of Jesus passing through him was explained, illustrated, argued about, pressed home with an enthusiasm that carried with it something of the mind of the disciple along with the spirit of the Master. And so, if we find ourselves mystified by the logic of the rabbi, and surprised at the results reached through chains of theological and historical argument, the conclusion is to be submitted to the mind of Jesus ; for in His life and sayings we have the spring of living water into which Paul only dipped his cup, to carry it to others.

Remembering this, we become less critical of the rabbinic style in which he sometimes conveys the divine message, and have greater admiration for the bursts of inspiration in which, casting aside argument, he speaks in simple language, as one having authority. These are the veins of gold, in beds of crystal hard to be broken, which Peter calls "things hard to be understood." When he was followed from town to town by relentless countrymen from Jerusalem, the fighting man was roused, and he turned on them as rabbi upon rabbi. Hence we find that much in his letters to disturbed congregations had to do with questions which were burning then, but are cold now—whether foreigners must be circumcised before they could be Christians, whether Christians must not eat kinds of food offensive to Jews, whether they might buy cheap food from the temples, and whether they were bound to keep the religious customs of Jews. These questions are deeply interesting, as showing the extreme difficulties which Paul had to overcome ; and while of vital importance to the Christians to whom he wrote, are not so to us.

Another passing subject occupied a considerable part of his letters—that of urging, in the plainest terms, those foreigners who had become Christians to resist all enticements to relapse into the vicious practices connected with idolatry. It is difficult for us to conceive of the drunkenness and immorality which were encouraged by the temple priests in those old and crowded cities. His repeated references to these things give us but a slight

indication of the enormous barriers that met him when he asked foreigners to give up worshipping visible images of wood and stone, give up going to the temples and their feasts and orgies, give up the home customs and social habits of their daily life, and turn to the worship of an unseen God, the belief in the life of a sinless Jew not long since crucified, and the practice of those virtues of the higher life of self-denial, temperance, and humility, the opposite of all by which they were surrounded, and that were practised by their friends. And so, as we read these letters, we must not forget how much was written to converts long accustomed to the revolting customs of sometimes debased, sometimes refined idolatry.

The torch he carried into those crowded cities and populous countries was the tidings of the living, unseen God, shown forth in Jesus the perfect One, who, to his own personal knowledge, lived in Palestine and died at Jerusalem for all men—a torch to dispel the darkness of idolatry, and kindle thoughts of a higher life here and hereafter.

The Fight, the Faith, the Crown.

IN spreading this new gospel, Paul had not the help of the evangels of the life and sayings of Jesus which we possess. They were not written. He had not the benefit of daily intercourse with Him in Galilee, to hear how He spoke to the people, and in what words He clothed His thoughts. Can we doubt that such intercourse would have had its influence upon his scholastic nature? Would he not have had references in his letters to the holiness of childhood, and to little children as the first in His kingdom of heaven in the world? He did not see the light in children's faces which Jesus saw, nor feel the tenderness and pity of women which Jesus felt, or his command that in all things they were to be in subjection to men might have been different. The eyes of a rabbi were averted from women and turned upon men. Broken sayings of Jesus flash in his speeches and letters, and one burns ever in his heart and brain—Jesus said His gospel was to be preached in all the world. Paul found by bitter experience that the men of Jerusalem would not listen to him, that the people of Judea would not believe him. His heavenly message was to carry the gospel into other lands. He found the disciples living in Jerusalem, where an attempt was being made to strangle the gospel in the bonds of Judaism, and he roused them to a sense of the danger and the importance of

the last saying of their Master. And as the great idea possessed him, he seemed to stand amid the seven hills of Rome and see the whole powers of the empire, like mighty rivers, carrying the life-giving waters of Christianity throughout all the world.

Into whatever city he went, he appealed first to his own countrymen. They believed in God, a higher life, and a Messiah, and every one converted to Christianity would be a missionary for the conversion of others. To them he used the arguments of a rabbi, with which they were accustomed, appealing to the common history of their race, to the books of Moses, and the Messianic hope.

This was his message to them—that righteousness by keeping the Jewish religious law was impossible, and that they could only be saved from sin by becoming followers of Jesus the Christ. To foreigners his message was that they must believe in the living God, and Jesus His Son, and turn away from dead idols, and live the higher life as seen in Him.

The false Pharisees, whose secret purpose was to bind Christianity hand and foot to Judaism, he met on their own ground, arguing with them on the footing that the Jewish religious law was good so far as it went. He went so near to accepting the doctrine of obedience to their law that his fine distinctions confused and enraged them. *If* you can keep the whole law, you will be holy; but much hangs on that *if*, for you yourselves admit that righteousness by the law is impossible.

In facing the Sanhedrim, he did not denounce them, in the words of Jesus, as serpents, vipers, hypocrites. He argued with them, and set them warring against each other with their own theological weapons. With similar language he won admiration from the Jewish prince Agrippa. The Sanhedrim wished him killed for preaching Christianity, and accused him of breaking the Roman law. He answered that Christianity was a right development of the Jewish religion, and that he had broken no law; and two Roman judges, Felix and Festus, found him innocent. Why then did he appeal to Cæsar? Here begins the mystery of the end of his life. We are told that he might have been set free by Festus, and yet the appeal went on. Perhaps he wished to have the judgment of the highest court in Rome that Christianity was within the law, and that it might go forth through every law court of the empire that men were everywhere free to live and teach Christianity. And yet Christianity is out of place in a court of law, and matters of faith and belief are above judges. The final subject of appeal is uncertain, and the result is folded in deeper obscurity. Christianity was planted in Rome before his appeal, and after it the followers of Jesus were all but swept away in the

dreadful persecutions; so that while his case may have drawn attention to the Christians, it did not shield them.

That he stood, sooner or later, before the highest court in the world, perhaps before the vilest reprobate alive, to plead the cause of Christianity, there is no doubt. There is a glimpse of him alone, forsaken by all who might have befriended him, but strengthened by the God in whom he trusted, and pleading that the gospel might be declared free, and that all the world might hear. As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, did Nero tremble? If he did, it would not be with remorse, but with a fiendish resolve to cast to the lions the man who disturbed his blackened soul with those piercing eyes and that ringing voice.

The mystery surrounding the close of his life arises from Luke's history neither mentioning the result of his appeal nor his death. He wrote his gospel of the life of Jesus, and also his history of the Acts of the Apostles, after Paul had been two years at least in Rome; and if he lived for some years more, and particularly if his appeal resulted in freedom, and he travelled through distant lands for two more years, and was taken a prisoner and carried back to Rome to be tried again and beheaded, we should expect Luke to mention this. Some think Luke wrote a continuation of his history, containing Paul's later travels and death, and that it is lost. But that is only convenient surmise. Luke's silence leads us to think that the time and manner of Paul's death were uncertain, and that the great apostle and leader perished amid thousands of others whose death is alike unrecorded.

Great was the life-work of Paul in spreading Christianity. Inspired with devotion to the command of Jesus, obedient to his heavenly vision, he travelled far from Palestine, winning friends as he went, who kindled at his torch, until they too were willing to endure trials and brave death, if only the new gospel might be carried through new lands and preached in fresh cities. Along with this fiery enthusiasm he had the energy and perseverance of an intrepid traveller, when travelling was a continual exposure to robbers and wild beasts. And he had the rare gift of being able to start congregations, instruct them, and leave them filled with a determination and a faith which enabled them, in the face of ridicule and persecution, to build on the foundation which he had laid.

As a witness for Jesus, he is of the very greatest. No one doubts that he lived and spoke and wrote, and he tells us that Jesus was alive while he was alive, and was crucified to his certain knowledge. Amid all the opposition and persecutions of his own

countrymen, they never once denied this. They only denied that Jesus was the Messiah. Whoever would doubt Jesus must wipe out Paul, the Roman citizen of Tarsus,

And what is his short message for us? Be not disobedient unto your heavenly vision. You cannot be saved from sin by your own acts, but must turn to God and do His will, believing in Jesus. His life is the highest life, His death is for all men, and as He lives so will you live.

The public work of Jesus is spanned by three short years, that of Paul by at least thirty. No one knew better how far he fell short of that beautiful and ideal Life, for his constant prayer was that he might become more like Him. He was deeply conscious of the difference. But the measure of the spirit of Jesus given to him he used to the full—not like James, in daily attendance at the temple, wearing out his knees in prayer; but with soul on fire, and with a deeper feeling of the needs of humanity, he swung into a wider orbit. From the time of his conversion his life was full of struggle—assault and repulse, victory and defeat, and yet more victory; not in a vain attempt to atone for his past life—that could never be—but in a determination that what remained should be offered up to the service of Him whom he had persecuted. Through doubt and delay, trial and defeat, failure and success, he strove, looking to Jesus, trusting in God, inspired, but far from perfect; saying of himself, for he deserved it, “I am not fit to be called an apostle;” and saying also, for he had a right to say it, “*I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith, and there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which God, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all who love Jesus.*”

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