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J. W. Belmont

Jan'y 1902



THE
TEACHERS' COMMENTARY

Bible. N.T. Acts. English.
ON THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

BY

F. N. PELOUBET, D. D.

AUTHOR OF SELECT NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS
THE TEACHERS' COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW, ETC.

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"It is when
We gloriously forget ourselves, and plunge
Soul-forward, headlong, into a book's profound,
Impassioned for its beauty and salt of truth —
'Tis then we get the right good from a book."

Mrs. Browning.

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PREFACE.

THE purpose and methods of this commentary on the Acts are in the main the same as those of the previous volume on Matthew; while the different character of the history, and the suggestions of various friends who have kindly examined the former work with this end in view, have led to some minor modifications.

The great object, always before me, remains unchanged, — to present in the light of the latest and best scholarship, and in the side-lights of literature, the history of the Early Church as recorded in the Acts, so clearly, so simply, so practically, so suggestively, that persons of ordinary opportunity for Biblical study may possess, condensed from widely scattered sources, the substance of the best there is on the subject, with many references for those who desire further study and investigation. The goal is indeed far away. Every successive time I have been over this ground for the aid of Sunday-school teachers, new light from many and often unexpected sources has streamed upon it with fructifying power. And it will continue to do so in the future.

I agree with the sentiment so admirably expressed by Mr. Ruskin in his preface to the fifth volume of his *Modern Painters*, "that unless important changes are occurring in (one's) opinions continually, all his life long, not one of those opinions can be on any questionable subject true. All true opinions are living, and show their life by being capable of nourishment; therefore of change. But their change is that of a tree — not of a cloud. But in the main aim and principle of the book there is no variation, from its first syllable to its last."

So there is no change in the aim of this series to aid teachers of Bible classes, and of the Sunday-school, leaders of prayer meetings, ministers of the Gospel, heads of families, Christian workers of all denominations, as well as individual students of the Bible, in training themselves and others in the Christian life by means of the light that shines from God through the history of the Early Church.

The work is critical, but in results rather than in processes. Great pains are taken to get at the exact meaning both of words and events. Whatever light the Higher Criticism can throw upon these is utilized, to the best of our ability, for those who desire a brief but comprehensive view of the best scholarship.

At the same time, for those who wish to pursue such investigations in detail, the chief problems will be stated in the Introduction, with references to some of the latest books concerning them. And for all, help will be invoked from every source within my reach; from literature, scientific investigation, the Greek texts, history,

geography, travel, pictures, new points of view ; and from the many learned scholars who have written upon the book of the Acts.

Of the three most helpful tendencies of modern Bible study, perhaps the most helpful of all is that which, without neglecting any detail, sees the history as a whole, notes the progressive steps, looks at each statement and event in its relation to the others, and to the development and results of the entire period.

The individual events are like sentences written on the sky in letters so large that we can see but a sentence at a time, though full of meaning and blessing. But there come new visions, deeper meanings, and fuller blessing when we read them in a connected message from God.

There is something in a temple, which all the separate stones cannot convey ; something in a picture, which the several isolated forms and colors cannot impart.

For this purpose special attention is called to the Analysis of the Book of The Acts, on page xxv, to the Table of Chronology, and to the Titles and Analyses at the beginning of each chapter.

Within the last few years more books have been written upon the Acts than upon any other book of the New Testament. They are not chiefly commentaries, but histories of the Apostolic Age, books on the life of Paul, explorations in Oriental lands, and discussions of the difficult problems connected with the book. And one may easily agree with Professor Ramsay in his remark that "enormous difficulties beset the editor of the Acts at every step, in the present unsettled state of criticism and historical illustration ;" and that "Acts is at the present time the most difficult book of the New Testament to edit."

So far as any fact is proved or question settled, having a bearing upon the interpretation of the Acts, it will be used. The disputed questions, however interesting and profitable, affect the meaning and the practical teaching of only a small portion of the book ; just as we enjoy the literary beauty and power of Homer without regard to the disputed questions of the gradual growth of the Iliad, or whether it was the work of several authors, or of Homer, or "of another man by the name of Homer ;" and of Shakespeare without regard to the problem whether Shakespeare or Bacon wrote the plays, and without studying the great Variorum volumes written upon them. What Professor Moulton has said of his own work is true of this :— "I have made a point of excluding questions of historic controversy, in the belief that however important in their own sphere, historic discussions, unless in the simplest form, tend to detract from literary presentation."

Thus we shall try to understand the heart of this book, to learn the divine lessons unfolded in the founding of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and to come "into fresh and immediate contact with the most dynamic persons, incidents, and thoughts that history has produced."

The chronology followed is in the main that given in Dr. Hastings' Bible Dictionary, and very nearly the same as the chronology in the Oxford Helps. Several other schemes are given in the Chronological Tables on pp. xix-xxiv.

PREFACE.

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There are frequent quotations (1) when it is desirable to give some well-known authority for a statement ; and (2) when anything is said peculiarly well by another author, giving variety and flavor beyond what is possible to any one writer.

The Text will be the combined Authorized and Revised.

The References are the new ones lately prepared with great care and expense under the auspices of the University Presses for the Revised Version.

The pronunciation of proper names will be marked according to the decisions, and with the diacritical notation used in the Oxford Self-Pronouncing Bible, which are given on page xl.

AUBURNDALE, MASS.,
October, 1901.

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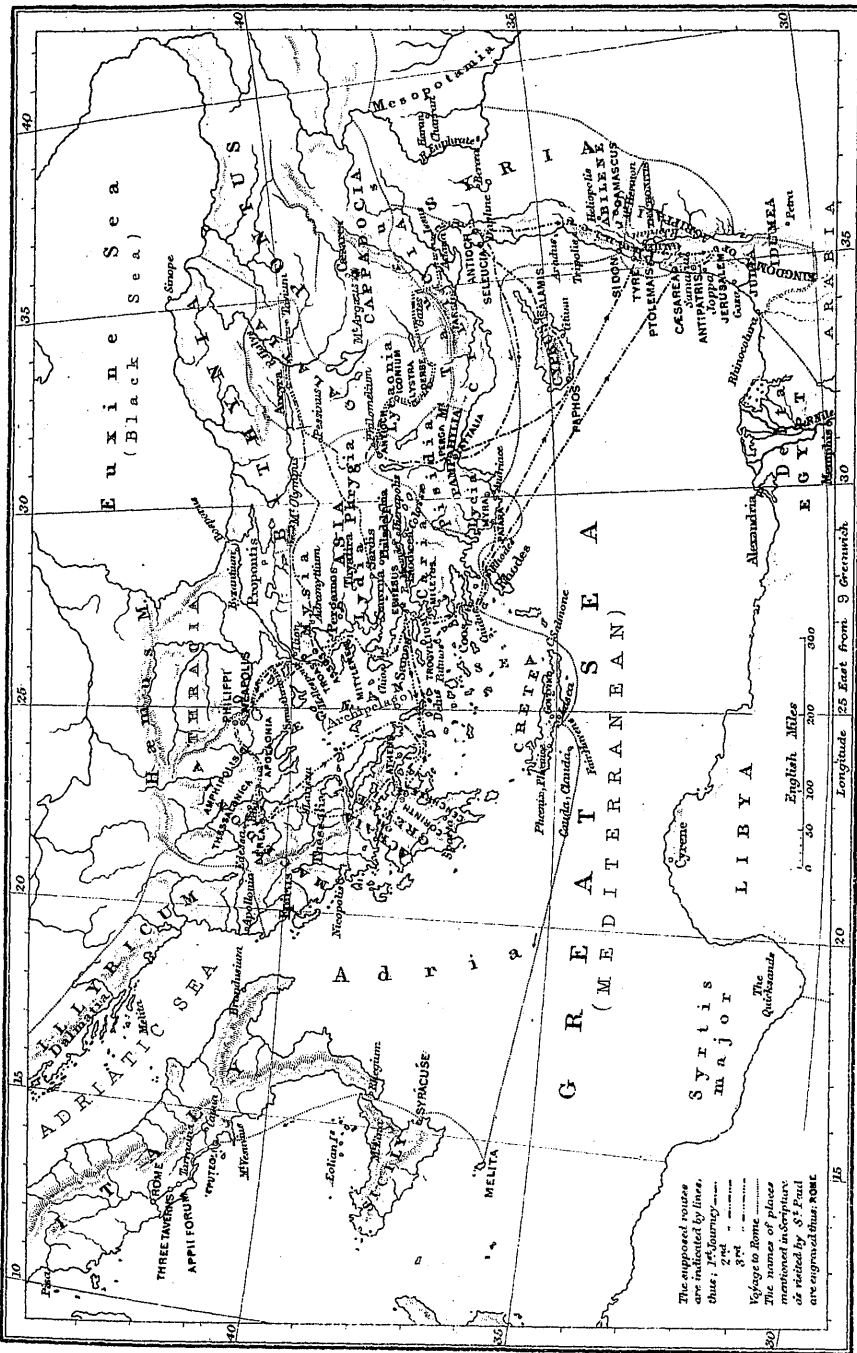
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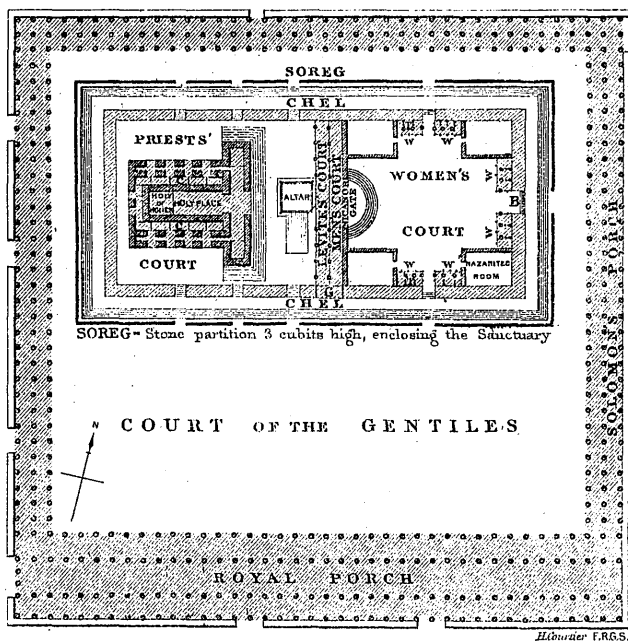
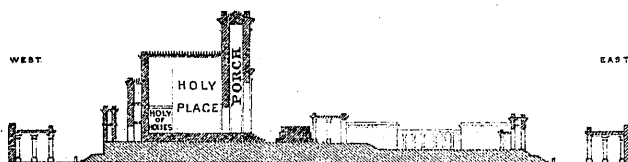
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THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

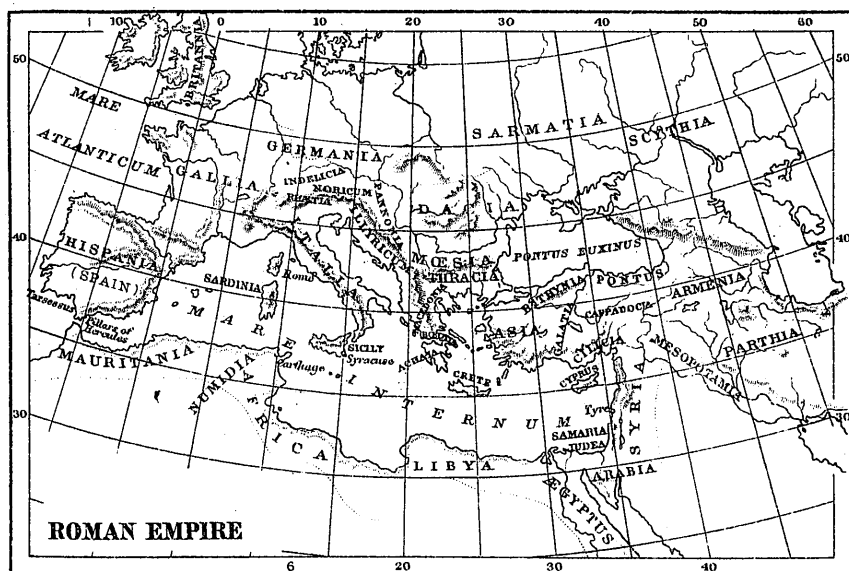
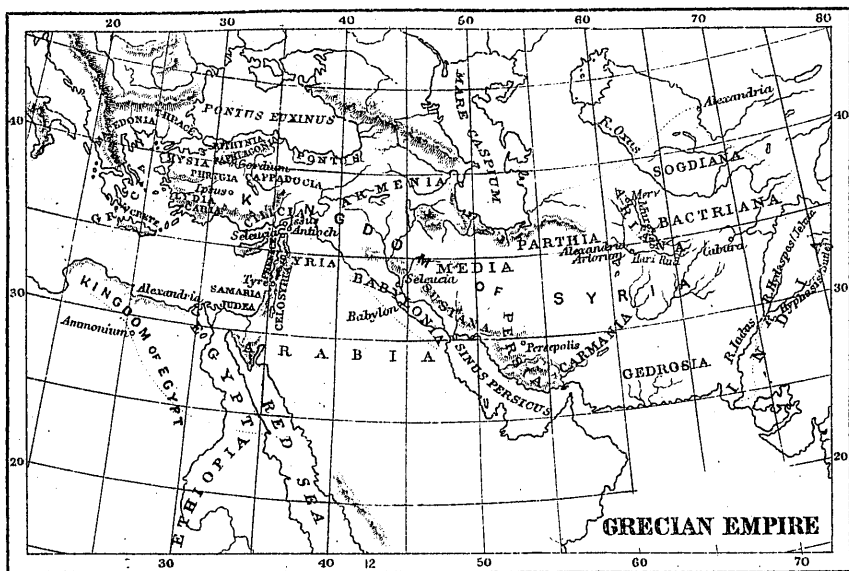


The explored routes are indicated by lines, thus: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th.

THE TEMPLE REBUILT BY HEROD



- B. Beautiful Gate (?)
 C. Chambers for treasures & offerings Nch.XII.44.Mal.III.10.
 G. The Hall Gazith, where the Sunhedrim met
 T. 13 Trumpet shaped Treasure Chests
 W. Galleries in which the women usually worshipped
 (men assembled in the court below)





NO.	NAME.	SURNAME.	PARENTS.	HOME.	BUSINESS.	WRITINGS.	WORK.	DEATH.
1	SIMON.	Peter } = <i>Rock</i> . Cephas }	Jonah.	Early life in Bethsaida, afterwards at Capernaum.	Fisherman.	1 Peter, 2 Peter, (Mark ?)	A missionary among the Jews as far as Babylon and Rome.	Crucified here downward, at Rome. <i>Tradition.</i>
2	ANDREW.		Jonah.		Fisherman.		Preached in Scythia, Greece, and Asia Minor. <i>Tradition.</i>	Crucified on St. Andrew's cross(X). <i>Tradition.</i>
3	JAMES, the elder.	{ Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder.	{ Zebedee and Salome.	Bethsaida and afterwards in Jerusalem.	Fisherman.		Preached in Jerusalem and Judea.	Beheaded by Herod, A. D. 44, at Jerusalem.
4	JOHN, the beloved disciple.				Fisherman.	Gospel. 3 Epistles. Revelation.	Labored among the churches of Asia Minor, especially Ephesus.	Banished to Patmos, A.D. 95. Recalled. Died a natural death. <i>Tradition.</i>
5	JAMES, the less or younger.		{ Alphæus or Cleophas	Galilee.		(Epistle of James ?)	Preached in Palestine and Egypt. (Bishop of Jerusalem ?)	Crucified in Egypt, or by another tradition thrown from a pinnacle. <i>Tradition.</i>
6	JUDE.	Same as Thaddæus and Lebæus.	and Mary.	Galilee.		Epistle of Jude.	Preached in Assyria and Persia. <i>Tradition.</i>	Martyred in Persia. <i>Tradition.</i>
7	PHILIP.			Bethsaida.			Preached in Phrygia.	Died martyr at Hierapolis in Phrygia. <i>Trad.</i>
8	BARTHOLOMEW.	Nathanael.		Cana of Galilee.				Flayed to death. <i>Tradition.</i>
9	MATTHEW.	Levi.	Alphæus.	Capernaum.	Tax-collector. Publican.	Gospel.		Died a martyr in Ethiopia. <i>Tradition.</i>
10	THOMAS.	Didymus.		Galilee.			Claimed by the Syrian Christians as founder of their church; perhaps also in Persia and India.	Martyred. Shot by a shower of arrows while at prayer. <i>Tradition.</i>
11	SIMON.	The Cananean, or Zelotes.		Galilee.				Crucified. <i>Tradition.</i>
12	JUDAS.	Iscariot.		Kerioth of Judea.				Suicide.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS.

PERIOD.	DATE, A. D.	ACTS.	CORRESPONDING REFERENCES.	EVENTS.
JESUS, THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH.	B. C. 5 to	.....	The Gospels	Life of Christ.....
	A. D. 30. April.	.....	"	Crucifixion.....
	30. Apr., May.	1: 1-12.....	Luke 24	Resurrection Days—40 days, 10 or 11 appearances.....
	30. May 18.	.....	.....	Ascension
COMMISSION TO THE APOSTLES.	30	1: 8	Mat. 28: 19, 20. Mark 16: 15.... Luke 24: 47, 48.	Commission to preach the gospel and witness to Jesus the Christ unto all the world.....
THE POWER GIVEN.	.....	1: 13, 14....	.....	Waiting for the promise of the Father.....
	.....	1: 15-26....	.....	Election of Matthias to take the place of Judas....
	.....	2: 1-4. ....	.....	Descent of the Holy Spirit. { The return
	.....	2: 5-13....	See Acts 10: 44-47. 19: 1-7.	The gift of tongues. { of Jesus through the Holy Spirit.
I. THE CHURCH AT JERUSA- LEM.	.....	2: 14-36....	.....	Peter's address.....
	.....	2: 37-41....	.....	The first converts. 3000 in number.....
	.....	2: 42-47....	.....	Description of the early church.....
	.....	2: 44, 45....	.....	The community of goods
GROWTH OF THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM. First church organiza- tion. Five or six years of undisturbed growth.	30	3: 1-10....	.....	The lame man healed in the temple
	"	3: 11-26....	.....	Second address by Peter
	"	4: 1-22....	.....	The first persecution. Peter and John imprisoned, tried before the Sanhedrim, and released
	"	4: 23-35....	.....	A fresh baptism of the Spirit
SUMMARY OF 1ST PERIOD.	30	4: 36-37....	Acts 2: 41-47....	Barnabas and his gifts.....
	30	5: 1-11....	.....	Ananias and Sapphira
	to	5: 12-16....	.....	Signs and wonders. Healing the sick. Great in- crease in the number of disciples.....
	34	5: 17-42....	.....	Second persecution. Apostles imprisoned. Re- lease. Re-arrest. Address to the Sanhedrim.
SUMMARY OF 2D PERIOD.	"	6: 1-4.....	.....	Gamaliel's counsel
	35 to 36	6: 5, 6.....	.....	A difficulty between Hebrews and Hellenists....
	.....	6: 7.....	.....	Deacons appointed to remedy the difficulty. The first church organization.....
	.....	6: 8-15....	.....	GREAT INCREASE IN NUMBERS.....
Beginning of opposition.	35 to 36	7: 1-53....	.....	Stephen. Character, work, arrest.....
	36	7: 54-60....	.....	Stephen's defence before the Sanhedrim.....
	.....	8: 1-4.....	.....	Stephen, the first Christian martyr.....
	.....	8: 5-24....	.....	A great persecution, extending the gospel to....
GOSPEL EXTENDED TO SAMARIA, GALILEE, AND NORTHERN SYRIA; chiefly to Jews. Conversion of Paul.	.....	8: 25-40....	.....	Philip the evangelist, and Simon the magician....
	.....	9: 1-19....	Acts 22: 3-16.... Acts 26: 2-19....	Philip and the Ethiopian Lord of the Treasury....
	.....	9: 20-22....	.....	Paul of Tarsus converted
	.....	9: 23.....	.....	Paul preaching at Damascus
II.	36-38	9: 23-26....	Gal. 1: 17, 18.... Acts 26: 20, 21....	Paul in Arabia. Returns to Damascus.....
	.....	9: 27-29....	.....	Paul persecuted. Escapes in a basket over the wall.
	38	9: 30.....	Acts 22: 17-21.... Gal. 1: 18-24....	Paul comes to Jerusalem, and preaches there
	38-40	.....	.....	Paul in Cilicia and Syria several years till A. D. 42.
SUMMARY OF 2D PERIOD.	.....	9: 31.....	.....	REST FROM PERSECUTION. GROWTH IN GRACE AND NUMBERS.....

NOTE. The dates in the left-hand column are very nearly in accord with those of Mr. C. H. Turner in Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, and not far from the average of the leading authorities. Dates are also given from a number of leading scholars to show the variation of opinions, usually within narrow limits, and that we must be "content with what Harnack describes as relative rather than absolute chronology." The dates of secular events are derived

PLACE.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY, A. D.	Recent Schemes of the Chronology of the Acts.								
		C. H. Turner in Hastings' B. D.	Ramsay.	Levin.	Lightfoot.	Harnack.	McGiffert.	Encyclopædia Biblica.	Blass.	Weizsäcker.
Palestine.	Augustus Cæsar. 30 B. C.- 14 A. D.	B. C. 7 or 6 to						B. C. 4 to A. D. 30		
Jerusalem.	Tiberius Cæsar. A. D. 14-37.	20 or 30	30	33	30	29 or 30	30	30	29	30
Galilee. Near Bethany.	Pontius Pilate. 26-36.	29 or 30	30		30	29 or 30			29	30
Bethany.	.....	29-30	30	33	30	29 or 30	30	30	29	30
Jerusalem, in an upper room.	Seneca. 4 B. C.-65 A. D. Essays and Tragedies.	29-30	30	33	30	29 or 30	30	30	29	30
Jerusalem.										
	Gamaliel. 30-40 A. D.	29 or 30	30	33	30	29 or 30	30	30	29	30
Jerusalem.	Philo Judæus. 20 B. C.- after 40 A. D.									
Temple courts.										
Jerusalem.										
"		30								
"		to								
"		35								
"										
"										
"										
Jerusalem.										
Jerusalem.	Pilate sent to Rome for trial early A. D. 36.	36	33	37	34	30	31 or 32	31/35	30 ?	35
"	Vitellius takes his place as governor.									
Samaria, Galilee, and Syria.										
Samaria.	Tiberius died Mch. 16, A. D. 37.	36	33	37	34	30	31 or 32	31/35	30	35
Road to Gaza. Near Damascus.										
Arabia. Damascus.	Caligula, emperor, 16 Mch., 37 to 24 Jan., 41.									
Jerusalem.	.....	38	35, 36	39	37	33	34, 35	34/38	33	38
Cilicia, Tarsus, Syria.										
Palestine.	Herod Agrippa made king by Caligula, 37.									

originally from Tacitus, Josephus, and Eusebius; and these do not agree, although there are considerations, such as the different times of beginning the year, which may bring them closer together. But the dates are abundantly accurate for all practical purposes.

PERIOD.	DATE, A. D.	ACTS.	CORRESPONDING REFERENCES.	EVENTS.
CHURCH EXTENDED TO ANTIOCH. PREPARATION FOR RECEIVING THE GENTILES. First Gentile church. First Gentile convert. III.	41	9 : 32-35.... 9 : 36-42.... 10 : 1-48.... 11 : 1-18....	Acts 2 : 1-12....	Peter cures <i>Aeneas</i> Dorcas restored to life..... Cornelius the Centurion converted. Peter's vision. Pentecost repeated..... Peter called to account for his part in it.....
	38-41	11 : 19-21....		Church in Antioch founded among Gentiles.....
	42, 43	11 : 22-24....		Barnabas comes to Antioch from Jerusalem.....
	"	11 : 25, 26....		Paul called to Antioch from Tarsus.....
	44-46	11 : 27, 28....		The famine.....
	45, 46	11 : 29, 30....		Relief sent to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Saul....
	44, Spring	12 : 1, 2....		Martyrdom of James
	44	12 : 3-18....		Imprisonment and deliverance of Peter.....
	Early summer.	12 : 19-23....		Death of Herod Agrippa I.
	46	12 : 24, 25....		Return of Paul and Barnabas with John Mark to..
SUMMARY OF 3D PERIOD.		12 : 24.....		WORD OF GOD GREW AND MULTIPLIED.
GOSPEL EXTENDED TO GENTILES. MISSIONS IN ASIA MINOR. IV. Beginning of second missionary tour.	47 to 49	13 : 1-3.... (Chs.) xlii. xiv.		First foreign missionaries, Paul and Barnabas... FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.....
		13 : 4-52....		Paul in Cyprus and Antioch of Pisidia. Success and persecution.....
	49	14 : 1-20....		Paul in Iconium, Lystra, Derbe.....
	49	14 : 21-25....		Revisiting the churches there formed
		14 : 26-28....		Return to Antioch. Report to the home church..
	50	15 : 1-35....	Gal. 2 : 1-10 ..	Council at Jerusalem.....
	"	15 : 36-40....		Paul and Barnabas go on separate missions
	Spring, 50-52	15 : 40, 41....		Paul, with Silas, begins his SECOND MISSIONARY TOUR.
	"	16 : 1-4....		Paul revisits the churches of his first tour.....
		16 : 5.....		CHURCHES ESTABLISHED IN THE FAITH. INCREASING NUMBERS.
SUMMARY OF 4TH PERIOD.				
GOSPEL EXTENDED TO EUROPE. Second missionary journey continued into Europe. Third missionary journey. V.	50-52	16 : 6-11.... 16 : 12-40.... 17 : 1-14....		Paul enters Europe..... Paul at Philippi; Lydia; conversion of the jailor.. Paul in Thessalonica and Berea
	51-52	17 : 15-34.... 18 : 1-18....	1 Thessalonians.. 2 Thessalonians..	Paul at Athens. Address on Mars' Hill..... Paul at Corinth. Crispus
	"	18 : 18-22....		Returns home via Ephesus and Cæsarea to.....
	52	18 : 22....		Paul makes a brief visit to Jerusalem. His fourth.
		18 : 22, 23....		Paul spends some time in Antioch.....
	53	18 : 23....		Paul begins his THIRD MISSIONARY TOUR
		18 : 24-28....		Apollos at Ephesus.....
	53-56	19 : 1-11....	1 Corinthians....	Paul nearly three years at Ephesus.....
		19 : 12-19....		Sceva, the exorcist. Burning the magic books....
		19 : 20.....		MIGHTILY GREW THE WORD OF GOD AND PREVAILED.
SUMMARY OF 5TH PERIOD.				

PLACE.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY, A. D.	Recent Schemes of the Chronology of the Acts.							
		C. H. Turner in Hastings' B.D.	Ramsay.	Lewin.	Lightfoot.	Harnack.	McCliffert.	Encyclopedia Biblica.	Blass. Weizsäcker.
Lydda. Joppa.									
Cæsarea. Jerusalem.	Claudius becomes emperor, 24 Jan., 41; continues till 13 Oct., 54.								
Antioch.	Seneca in exile, 41-49.								
"									
Palestine. Jerusalem.	Romans in Britain, 43.	46	45, 46		45	44			
"	The famine.								
Cæsarea.	Death of Herod Agrippa I. at the games in Cæsarea, aged 54.	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44
Antioch.									
Antioch. Asia Minor.	London founded, 47. Expulsion of the Jews from Rome, 48?	47 to 49	47 to 50	45 or 46	48 to 51	45 to 47			45 and 46
"									
"									
Antioch, in Syria. Jerusalem.	.....	49	50	48	51	47	45 or 46	45 or 49	47 52
Antioch. Asia Minor.		49 to 52	50-53	49 to 53	.....	46 to 49	46 to 49	.....	48 to 50
"									
Macedonia. Philippi. Macedonia.	Caractacus defeated in Britain. Expulsion of the Jews from Rome.								
Athens. Corinth.	Gallio, proconsul of Cor- inth.	late in 50	late in 51		late in 52	late in 48	.....	Sum'ner, 47-49, or 49-53	
Antioch.									
Jerusalem. Syria. Asia Minor.	..... Nero, emperor, 54 to 68. Birth of Tacitus, 55.	52 to 56	53 to 57	..... 53 to 58	54	50			
Ephesus.	St. Peter at Corinth, 55 or 56.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	49, 50, or 53, 54 50-53, or 54-57	50 to 54
"	Felix, procurator, 52-59.								

PERIOD.	DATE, A. D.	ACTS.	CORRESPONDING REFERENCES.	EVENTS.
GOSPEL EXTENDED TO ROME. VI. Paul at Rome. The Appeal to Cæsar. The way by which Paul was brought to Rome.	57	19 : 21-41....	.....	The mob. Silver shrines of Diana
		20 : 1-5.....	2 Corinthians.... Galatians..... Romans.	Paul revisits Macedonia..... Paul three months in Greece.....
		20 : 6-12....	.....	Paul at Troas. Eutychus restored to life.....
		20 : 13-16....	.....	Sails, via Assos, Mitylene, Samos, to
	57	20 : 17-38....	.....	Address to the elders of Ephesus at
		21 : 1-16....	.....	Journey to Jerusalem via Tyre (7 days), Cæsarea. (Warning by Philip the evangelist).....
		21 : 17-20....	.....	Paul's reception at.....
		21 : 21-31....	.....	Paul's vow, and the mob in the temple.....
	58 and 59	21 : 31-40....	.....	Rescue by the Roman general.....
		22 : 1-21....	Acts 9 : 1-18.... Acts 26 : 1-20....	Paul's address to the mob from the stairs.....
		22 : 22-30....	.....	Paul a prisoner in Castle Antonia
		23 : 1-10....	.....	Paul's defence in the castle hall.....
	Sept., 59	23 : 11.....	.....	A vision of good cheer.....
		23 : 12-22....	.....	The conspiracy against Paul's life.....
		23 : 23-35....	.....	Paul sent secretly to Felix at
		24 : 1-22....	.....	Paul's trial before Felix.....
	Spring, 60	24 : 23-27....	.....	Paul in prison two years at
		25 : 1-9.....	.....	Paul accused to Festus, the new governor.....
		25 : 10-12....	.....	Paul's appeal to Cæsar.....
		25 : 13-27....	.....	Festus consults with King Agrippa.....
	61-62 or 62	26 : 1-32....	Acts 9 : 1-18.... Acts 22 : 6-21....	Paul's defence before Festus and his court.....
		27 : 1-44....	.....	Paul's voyage and shipwreck.....
		28 : 1-10....	.....	Paul rescued, and experience on the island of.....
		28 : 11-16....	.....	Paul's journey from Malta to Rome.....
SUMMARY OF 6TH PERIOD.	62-68 63 63-66	28 : 15, 16....	.....	Paul's reception at Rome.....
		28 : 17-29....	.....	Paul's conference with the Jews at Rome.....
		28 : 30, 31....	Philippians.... Colossians.... Ephesians.... Philemon....	Paul two years a prisoner in his own hired house..
		.....	.....	Close of the history in the Acts
	66 66 or 67	28 : 31.....	.....	THE GOSPEL EXTENDED TO ROME.
	
	
	
	August, 70.	.....	.....	Probable composition of Acts.....
		.....	.....	Release.....
		.....	1 Timothy	Paul probably visited Macedonia, Greece, Ephesus, Spain.....
		.....	2 Timothy .....	.....
	August, 70.	.....	.....	Second imprisonment of Paul
		.....	.....	Martyrdom of Paul.
	.....	.....	.....	Destruction of Jerusalem.

A. D.	Jesus.	30	Paul	66	John.	106
	Childhood.	Ministry.	Conversion.	Missionary work.	Rome.	Ephesus. Revelation.
			Epistles.			Epistles. Gospel.

PLACE.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY, A. D.	Recent Schemes of the Chronology of the Acts.								
		C. H. Turner in Hastings' B. D.	Ramsay.	Levin.	Lightfoot.	Harnack.	McGiffert.	Encyclopedia Biblica.	Blass.	Weizsäcker.
Ephesus.										
Cities of Macedonia, Greece, (Corinth).	.....	55	Sum- mer, 56	57	57	53	.....	53, 54, or 57, 58		
Troas. Miletus.	.....		Dec., Jan., Feb., 57	Nov., 57, to Mch., 58						
Sea and land. Jerusalem.	.....	56	57	58	58	54	53	54 or 58	54	
"									
"									
"									
Cæsarea.										
"	Festus, procurator, 59.	.....						54-56, or 58-60		
"	Luke's Gospel probably written.	.....							
"	Queen Boadicea defeated by Suetonius in Britain about 62.	.....							
"										
Mediterranean	.....							Aut'mn, 56/60		
Malta.	.....								
Italy.	.....								
Rome.	.....	59	60	60	61	57	55	Spring, 57/61	56	61
"									
"	.....	61	62		63	59	.....	59-63		
Rome.	.....	70	B'fore			80-90	81-96			
.....	.....	Yes. 61	80 Yes. 62	Yes. 62	Yes. 63	Yes. 59	No. 58	?	Yes. 58	No? 63
Europe.	Burning of Rome, 19 July, 64.									
	Persecution of Christians.									
	Martyrdom of St. Peter, 65.									
Rome.										
"	Vespasian, emperor, 1 July, 69, to 23 June, 79.....	64, 65	65, 67	66	67	64	58	64	67, 68	64, 67

ANALYSIS.

FOUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

I. THE FOUNDATION, JESUS CHRIST.	{ INCARNATION. LIFE. TEACHINGS. DEATH.	{ Recorded in the former treatise of Luke.
II. COMMISSION TO THE APOSTLES. Chapter 1: 1-12.	{ PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS STILL LIVING. THE COMMISSION TO BEAR WITNESS THE ASCENSION. THE PROMISE OF RETURN.	{ Eleven appearances during 40 days. in Jerusalem. in Samaria. in Galilee. in all the world.
III. THE POWER. Chapter 1: 13-2: 13.	{ WAITING FOR THE PRO- MISE OF THE FATHER. DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT. FIRST EFFECTS.	{ Prayer meeting. One hundred and twenty disciples. Election of Matthias in place of Judas. Symbol of the wind. Symbol of the flame. Speaking with tongues. Amazement. Inquiry. Opposition.
IV. THE CHURCH BEAUTI- FUL. 2: 14-47.	{ PETER'S SERMON. BIRTH OF THE CHURCH. CHARACTERISTICS.	{ Defence. Argument. Application. Three thousand converted. Baptized. Fellowship. Teachableness. Worship. Generosity. Joy. Singleness of heart. Attractiveness.
V. THE CHURCH AT JERU- SALEM. Five or six years. 3: 1-8: 3.	{ GROWTH, IN TWO DIREC- TIONS. CHURCH LIFE, TWO KINDS. ATTACKS FROM WITHOUT. DANGERS FROM WITHIN. ORGANIZATION. MEANS OF GROWTH.	{ In numbers, 3000; 5000; great numbers, including priests. In spiritual life, knowledge, cour- age, faith. (1) Peaceful, joyful, steady, heavenly life. (2) Troublous times, dangers, oppo- sition; and victories over them. Imprisonment. Persecutions. False accusations. Martyrdom. False disciples. Complaints of partiality. Apostles for preaching. Deacons for ministrations to the poor. The witness of the apostles. The witness of good works. The witness of character produced by believing in Jesus. The witness of signs and wonders. The witness of divine deliverance. The witness of conduct under perse- cution. The witness of Stephen's martyr- dom.

VI. THE CHURCH EXTENDED 8: 4-9: 42. Two or three years.	TO SAMARIA, GALILEE, SYRIA.	By persecution To Samaria, by Philip the evangelist, Peter, and John. To Ethiopia, by Candace's treasurer. To Damascus, by Paul, converted. To Antioch, by persecuted disciples. To Cilicia, by Paul. To Lydda, by Peter. Eneas. To Joppa, by Peter. Dorcas. Rest from persecution. Great increase.
VII. THE FIRST GENTILE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH. 10: 11-2: 24. Seven or eight years.	EXTENSION IN TERRITORY. EXTENSION IN THOUGHT. Movement toward a world-wide gospel.	Cæsarea. Conversion of Cornelius. Antioch. { Jews. { Gentiles. Arrival of Barnabas. Arrival of Paul. Relief sent to Jerusalem. Conversion of Paul. Roman centurion baptized. Jews and Gentiles united in the church. Gentile aid to Jerusalem. The missionary spirit.
VIII. FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY THROUGH ASIA MINOR. 13: 1-15: 40. Two or three years.	PAUL AND BARNABAS.	Cyprus. Antioch of Pisidia. Iconium. Lystra. Derbe. Return to Antioch of Syria. Council at Jerusalem.
IX. SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY. EUROPE. 15: 41-18: 23. Two or three years.	PAUL AND SILAS.	Revisits churches of Asia Minor. They enter Europe. Philippi. { Lydia. { Conversion of jailor. Thessalonica. Berea. Athens. { 1 Thessalonians. Corinth. { 2 Thessalonians.
X. THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY. EUROPE AND ASIA. 18: 23-21: 16. Three or four years.	PAUL. { Apollos. { Aquila. { Priscilla. { Timothy. { Luke. { Sopater. { Aristarchus. { Secundus. { Gaius. { Tychicus. { Trophimus. { Philip. { Agabus.	Return to Antioch. { Revisits Jerusalem; some time in Antioch. { Galatians. Revisits Asia Minor. { Seva. Ephesus. { Burning magic books. { Shrines of Diana. { The mob. { 1 Corinthians. Revisits Macedonia { 2 Corinthians. { and Greece. { Romans. Troas. Eutychus. Miletus. Address to Ephesian elders. Tyre. Seven days. Cæsarea. { Philip the evangelist. { Agabus the prophet. To Jerusalem.
XI. EVENTS WHICH BROUGHT ST. PAUL TO ROME.	AT JERUSALEM. AT CÆSAREA.	Reception of Paul. Paul's vow. The mob. The rescue. In Castle Antonia. The conspiracy. Paul sent to the capital. A prisoner for two years. Trial before Felix. Appeal to Cæsar. Trial before Festus.

XII. PAUL AT ROME.

Paul sent a prisoner to	{	<i>Philippians.</i> <i>Colossians.</i> <i>Ephesians.</i> <i>Philemon.</i>
Rome.		
Voyage and shipwreck.		
Journey from Malta to		
Rome.		
Paul a prisoner at Rome.		
Conference with the Jews.	{	
Two years a prisoner.		

CLOSE OF THE ACTS.

BURNING OF ROME.

MARTYRDOM OF PAUL.

MARTYRDOM OF PETER.

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE ACTS.

I. THE BOOK OF THE ACTS. 1. "If anything is clear, it is that the book of the Acts is not a mere collection of documents, but a well-ordered and artistically arranged composition."¹ "To me it appears a singularly clear work of history, viewed in the light of the commission given to the apostles by their Master in the opening section."²

2. The book of the Acts cannot be understood perfectly except in connection with the Gospel according to Luke, of which it claims to be the continuation. It is the "second book of the Life of Jesus."

As the Gospels record what Jesus *began* to do and teach, so the Acts records what he *continued* to do and teach. This was done through the Holy Spirit, "who is to be to the disciple and to the church all that Christ would have been had he tarried among us, and been the personal companion and counsellor of each and all. Whatever appears in the Gospel narratives in the form of precept or teaching reappears in the Acts in the form of practice or example."³ The Acts is "the church of God in action." It shows us how the apostles and early Christians interpreted and applied the teachings of Jesus. It is the history of the founding of the church which Jesus came to institute; and of the visible beginning and development of the kingdom of heaven which Jesus declared was at hand; it was the spring-time bursting into flower and fruit, of the old tree which had been planted by God centuries before, and cultured and trained throughout the whole Old Testament history.

3. The Acts is the record, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, of the inspired history of the early church, founded by the power of the Holy Spirit, and guided in its development and work by his inspiration. There is no possible understanding of this marvellous epoch, this turning point in the world's history, without the miraculous power of God as manifested on the day of Pentecost. No other power can account for the change in the apostles and early disciples, or for the changes wrought in the history of the world. Next to the resurrection of Jesus, this is the supreme miracle of history. "The Holy Spirit is referred to by name fifty times in the Acts, more frequently than in all the four Gospels together;"⁴ and this because He was the soul of the history. That the course of the world was changed by a few poor fishermen, without rank, or power, or wealth, or learning, or army, challenges our admiration, and compels us to believe that the change was wrought by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 1: 24-31).

4. The extent of its history reaches about thirty-two years, or one generation; as the Gospel history extends over thirty-three years, the previous generation.

5. It "is eminently a hopeful book," for it is the rapid unfolding of the kingdom of

¹ Prof. McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, p. 346.

² Prof. Moulton, *Modern Reader's Bible*, "St. Luke and St. Paul." Preface.

³ A. T. Pierson, D. D.

⁴ Prof. Lumly in *Cambridge Bible*.

God, and shows a marvellous rate of progress, and looks forward to the second coming of our Lord.

6. "It is animate with the spirit of joy." The apostles even *rejoice* that they are counted worthy to suffer for him (5 : 41). The tidings which they preach, like those the angels brought, are "good tidings" (13 : 32). Paul and Silas sing in prison (16 : 25), and the acceptance of the gospel is everywhere attended with *great joy* (8 : 39 ; 13 : 52 ; 15 : 3 ; 16 : 34 ; etc.).

7. It is a book of missionary activity. Intensity of purpose and effort pulsates through it.

8. It is a book exemplifying God's providence in many ways, as in the choice of deacons, the conversion of Saul, and the way in which he reached Rome.

9. It is a book of victories, of the greatest victories recorded in history. "The matter included within the covers of these two small volumes (Luke and Acts) has turned the world upside down, laid the foundations of modern religion and civilization, and struck a unity through all history."¹

"In the Agamemnon of Æschylus there is a magnificent description of the fire-signals by which the Greek hero made known to his queen at Argos the capture of Troy. The poet tells us how the courier flame flashed from mountain to mountain, leaping over the plains and seas from Ida to the Scaur of Hermes in Lemnos, thence to Mount Athos, then to Makistus, Messapium, Cithæron, and so at last to the roof of the Atridæ.

"Even so does St. Luke, a poet and more than a poet, tell us how the beacon lights of Christianity flashed from Jerusalem to Antioch, — from Antioch to Ephesus, and to Troas, and to Philippi, — from Philippi to Athens and Corinth, until at last it was kindled in the very palace and Prætorian camp of the Cæsars at Imperial Rome. The Light of the World dawned in the little Judæan village, and brightened in the Galilean hills, and then it seemed to set upon Golgotha amid disastrous eclipse. The Book of the Acts shows us how, rekindled from its apparent embers, in the brief space of thirty years, it had gleamed over the Ægean, and over Hadria; and had filled Asia and Greece and Italy with such light as had never shone before on land or sea."²

II. THE ENVIRONMENT. When Christianity entered into the world's history, it was, as Lightfoot says, at the confluence of three great civilizations, — the Greek civilization of Literature and Art ; the Roman, of Government and Law ; the Jewish, of Revealed Religion. Christianity used or absorbed whatever was best in them all ; but at the same time was opposed by the combined sum of all the false and evil forces they represented and embodied. We best understand the history in the Acts when we realize this environment.

In opposition to Christianity were most of the great world forces, — the government, the wealth, the armies, the religions, the unbelief, the fashions and customs, which embodied the selfishness and the worst passions of the human heart.

1. The religion was polytheism. The gods and goddesses were innumerable. "The heathen thought of the world as the playground of malicious gods and spirits, which were lying in wait for an opportunity to play some mad prank in the realm of nature, cross the plans and purposes of some other god, or inflict an injury on some unsuspecting and helpless mortal."³ Hence the people tried to propitiate the favor of many gods. The more they

¹ Prof. R. G. Moulton.

² Canon Farrar in *Messages of the Books*.

³ Prof. Oliver J. Thatcher, *History of the Apostolic Church*, 25.

worshipped the safer they were. "It was like taking out an insurance policy in many companies."

2. This religion not only did not require morals in its worshippers, but the gods themselves were immoral, and one of the attractions of their worship was that the social vice could in some cases at least be practised as a part of the worship itself. Thus at Antioch, which in vice was a miniature Rome, were the famous pleasure grounds of Daphne, "where all that was beautiful in nature and art had created a sanctuary for a perpetual festival of vice."¹

Dr. Breed suggests that perhaps the destruction of Pompeii soon after these days, so like that of Sodom, may have been to preserve the records of the horrible nature of the vice and crime at this period as a testimony to the fruit of heathenism.²

3. "Christianity met a powerful enemy in the new and universal religion that had just been invented. This was Emperor-worship. In the days of the republic, the Romans had deified their city. According to Roman modes of thought, everything of value had a 'genius' that presided over it. So temples were erected and sacrifices offered to the genius of Rome. When Augustus became Emperor, the same process of reasoning led them to deify him. To his genius also temples were built, altars set up, sacrifices appointed, and a ritual fixed. His statues were everywhere, and to refuse to sacrifice before one of them was to be guilty of high treason, which was of course punishable with death. Christians were every day brought into contact with this practice, and as they had to refuse, persecution was the necessary result. This soon came to be the test in all trials of Christians. They were placed before a statue of the Emperor, and if they sacrificed they were set free; but if they refused, they were at once condemned to death."³

4. Heathenism was the official religion of the empire, and idolatrous practices and ritual were interwoven into almost every transaction of daily and public life. It was very difficult for Christians to escape from being compromised by idolatrous rituals either in social or in business life. See Acts 15 and 1 Cor. 10.

5. The Christian religion originated in Judea, and for some time most of the Christians were Jews. But the Jews were hated and despised. Their religion, their separation from unbelievers, their sabbath-keeping, their strict moral teachings, their assumption of superiority, made them offensive to their heathen neighbors.⁴

On the other hand, many things had prepared the way for the progress of Christianity.

1. It was a time of intellectual and spiritual awakening. Some of the greatest writers in the world had stirred the minds of the people. They had taught better morals. They had argued for immortality. There was a large reading public. "New works by prominent authors were anxiously awaited, eagerly read, and quickly sent to the farthest provinces."⁵

"Tacitus and Juvenal paint the death-bed of Pagan Rome. They have no eyes to see the growth of New Rome. Christianity was the friend, not the enemy, of Rome."⁶ "One of the most remarkable sides of the history of Rome is the growth of ideas which found their realization and completion in the Christian Empire. Universal citizenship, universal equality, a Universal Church, were all ideas which the Empire was slowly working out, but which it could not realize till it merged itself in Christianity."⁶

¹ Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*.

² *Preparation of the World for Christ*. See Farrar's story, *Darkness and Dawn*; Uhlhorn's *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*.

³ Prof. Oliver J. Thatcher, *History of the Apostolic Church*, 25.

⁴ See Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, ch. 9, for this and a fuller discussion of the subject.

⁵ Prof. Ramsay. ⁶ Mommsen.

2. The Jews had been dispersed through all lands, carrying the Old Testament, which bore witness to one God and held the prophecies of the Messiah; and they had established synagogues in almost every town, so that there was a place in which to preach the gospel, and a people who could easily be reached. The Old Testament had been translated into Greek (the *Septuagint* version), and could be read by nearly all who could read at all.

3. Not only had the dispersed Jews done those things, but they themselves had been modified by their contact with other nations, other cultures, philosophies, and civilizations; so that while they held to the one true spiritual and loving God, and the highest morality, yet they became less obnoxious to the better class of heathen.

4. Moreover the Jews dispersed among the nations "had been tremendously in earnest in their efforts to convert the world," and had succeeded in winning a large number of proselytes among the more devout heathen who were hungering for a better religion than the popular one. Such were the centurions of Capernaum and Cæsarea, and the "devout women" of Acts 13: 50. These were especially prepared to receive the Good News of Jesus Christ. Some of the methods of this propaganda are mentioned by Professor Thatcher, — the translation of the Scriptures into Greek, commentaries upon them, philosophical works, histories of the Jewish nation, epic poetry, and the drama.

"As Homer had sung of Troy and her fate, so Philo, the epic poet, wrote the history of Jerusalem and her kings in the form of a great epic poem. Just as the Greek dramatists had chosen some great and decisive event in the history of their country for the subject of their greatest dramas, and thereby held up their history for the admiration of the world, so the Jews competed for praise and honor for their land by presenting its history in the same fascinating way. We have fragments of one of these plays, called *The Exodus*, a dramatization, as its name indicates, of the biblical story of the Exodus from Egypt."¹

5. There were many lands, but nearly all the world was subject to the one government at Rome; so that the preachers of the gospel could travel in safety, and be protected in their work. Great military roads extended throughout the empire.

6. The world was at peace, so that the gospel could have free course. The doors of the Roman temple of Janus were shut; and no great wars prevented the missionaries from going everywhere with the gospel.

7. The Greek language was spoken everywhere together with the native languages, so that the gospel could be heard and read by a large number in every land. This universal language was an aid of incomparable value for the rapid evangelization of the world.

8. There was a preparation in the needs, the oppressions, the poverty, as well as the longings and ideals and hopes awakening in the hearts of the people. A gospel of love, of forgiveness, of brotherhood, of divine care over all, of a new kingdom, of new life, of heaven, met these needs, and fulfilled these hopes.²

III. THE AUTHOR. "The Third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles are the work of the same person, and all tradition and argument suggest that the author was St. Luke, the companion of St. Paul." This is the conclusion to which the long argumentative article in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* arrives.³

¹ Thatcher's *The Apostolic Church*, 24-29.

² See *Preparation of the World for Christ*, by David R. Breed, D. D., and *The Preparation for Christianity*, by Prof. R. M. Wenley, Sc. D., Ph. D.

³ Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* (1898), art. "Acts," by Rev. Arthur Cayley Headlam, M. A., B. D., Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford.

1. "The name of Luke has been handed down by unbroken tradition as the author of the Third Gospel and the Acts. . . . This universal acceptance goes far to prove the fact."¹

2. The writer of the "We"-sections, called the "Travel-document," must have been a companion of Paul. And "the view which attributes the composition of the whole of the Acts to the author of the 'We'-sections receives very strong support from linguistic considerations." "The evidence seems to me irresistible."² "The German philologist Vogel . . . states the common-sense view of the matter in pointing out that when an author of such literary skill as the author of the Acts undoubtedly possessed passes without a break from the third to the first person in his narrative, every unprejudiced reader will explain it on the ground that the author thus wished modestly to intimate his own personal presence during certain events."³

3. That Luke was the author of the Acts is rendered almost certain by the many indications in the book that the author was a medical man, agreeing with the almost universal ancient tradition that Luke was a physician. See Dr. Hobart's interesting and valuable book, *The Medical Language of St. Luke*, of which Zahn recently says: "Dr. Hobart has proved, for every one for whom anything can be proved, that the author of the Lucan work (Luke and Acts) is a Greek physician acquainted with the terms of the medical art."⁴

4. "The general character of the history goes far to stamp the Acts as a contemporary record. . . . The personal narratives are related with a wealth of local and circumstantial details which must have been unattainable after the lapse of a few years, however easily accessible at the time."⁴ This confirms the authorship of Luke. So does the Pauline character of the Acts as compared with the epistles show that the author was a companion of Paul.⁵

Most of the leading English scholars and many of the German accept the Lucan authorship of the Acts, such as Ramsay, Knowling, Rendall, Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, Renan, Weiss, Blass, Lightfoot. See an interesting article by Prof. Ramsay on "The Authorship of the Acts" in *Expositor*, February, 1898.

On the other hand, Prof. Paul W. Schmiedel (Zurich), in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Prof. Arthur C. McGiffert (Theol. Sem., New York), Weizsäcker, and others argue against the authorship of Luke, believing that a later writer in the second century compiled the Acts from various earlier documents, and especially the "Travel-document" which may have been by Luke, or by some other companion of Paul. Professor McGiffert suggests, and in much of his work takes for granted, that the Acts was written, not by Luke the companion of Paul, but by some other man by the name of Luke of a later date.

IV. THE DATE OF WRITING. Our decision as to the date when the Acts was written depends largely on (1) the question of authorship, and (2) on the date when the Gospel according to Luke was written. For Acts must in any event have been written later than the Gos-

¹ *The Acts of the Apostles* (1897), by Rev. Frederick Rendall, M. A., of Trinity College, Cambridge.

² *Horæ Synopticæ* (1899), 140-158, by Rev. Sir John C. Hawkins, Bart., M. A.

³ Prof. R. J. Knowling, D. D., of King's College, London, in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*.

⁴ Rendall.

⁵ "Luke, a native of Antioch, by profession a physician, having associated for the most part with Paul, and having companied not a little with the other apostles, has left us examples of that art of healing of souls which he acquired from them, in two inspired books, one in the Gospel, . . . the other in the Acts of the Apostles, which he composed not from report, as in the other case [that of the Gospel], but from what he had himself observed." — Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book III. chap. 4. "The acts of all the apostles are written in one book. Luke explains to the most excellent Theophilus everything that had happened in his presence." — *Muratorian Fragment*, a list of New Testament writings edited by the Italian scholar Muratori, dating from about B. C. 170.

pel ; and if Luke wrote it the writing could not have been many years later than the death of St. Paul.

The arguments are almost conclusive for a date somewhere between A. D. 62 and 70.

1. All the arguments for the Lucan authorship favor this date.

2. "The date is not far from A. D. 63, for the narrative breaks off abruptly at the end of Paul's two years' residence at Rome (his first imprisonment). Why is this? Evidently, because there is no more to tell at the time. The writer continues his history up to the date of his writing and stops there. If he had been writing after the death of Paul, he would certainly have told us of the circumstances of his death. There is no rational explanation of this abrupt ending, except that the book was written about the time when the story closes. This was certainly about A. D. 63."¹

3. Dr. Rendall says that to his mind the most forcible argument for fixing an early date for the Third Gospel is the urgent demand for Christian Scriptures among "the multitude of Greek believers who had been trained in the synagogue upon the Jewish scriptures, and were now flocking thence into the Pauline churches. Critics who postpone the publication of the Synoptic Gospels to the latter part of the first century, or later, hardly realize the urgency of this demand. . . . His Gospel . . . was in all probability completed and the materials collected for the Acts before the arrival of the author at Rome. Its closing verses bring down the history to A. D. 62. Two years later came the Neronian persecution, and soon after that the Jewish war altered the face of the religious world. The Jews became down-trodden exiles ; the Roman Empire and populace took their place as persecutors of the church. Of that altered world the author gives no hint ; and I see no reason to date the publication of Acts much later than the termination of the history in 62."²

"The chief argument for a later date of Luke is generally based on Luke 21: 20, as compared with Matt. 24: 15 ; Mark 13 : 14," because it is thought that the form of the prophecy there recorded concerning the destruction of Jerusalem "has been modified by the knowledge of what happened at the siege of Jerusalem. The Gospel therefore was written after that event."³ But the logic of this inference is not good ; and it is much more satisfactory to regard Luke's Gospel as written earlier, than by a late date to compel a later date for the Acts.

The dates are given by different writers, thus : —

64–70, Rendall, Knowling, Blass, Hitzig, and the majority of the older authorities.

About 80, Weiss, Ewald, Meyer, Renan.

Ramsay considers that the finishing touches of the Gospel were inserted while Titus was reigning as sole Emperor, 79–81, and Acts immediately following.

McGiffert places the date in the reign of Domitian, 81–96.⁴

Schmiedel, in *The Encyclopædia Biblica*, places it somewhere between 105 and 130.

"The arguments for later date are given most fully among recent writers by Holtzmann, *Einleitung*, 1892, p. 405."⁵

V. METHOD OF PUBLICATION. "There was no printing-press, but books were quickly and inexpensively made. Every publisher kept a large number of slaves, who were trained penmen, and to these the work which was to be published was dictated. As one read, hundreds wrote, and when the reader had finished there were so many hundreds of copies ready to be put on the market. The book trade throughout the empire was large and important.

¹ Washington Gladden, D. D.

³ Dr. Headlam in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

² *Acts of the Apostles*, 12, 13.

⁴ *St. Paul the Traveller*, 387.

There were many publishing houses, bookstores, and public libraries in the cities. Books were not so large as books now are, but many volumes were to be had at prices ranging from ten cents to one dollar, according to size and binding.”¹

“Christian writings may have been (a) reproduced by means of written copies, a method which would be at best limited, or (b) read with comments to various circles of listeners. Probably the latter method was more common in the early days of Christianity. Pliny’s correspondence is full of references to the custom of ‘publishing’ a book by reading it aloud to a group of friends.”²

VI. THE SOURCES. As Luke expressly says in the preface to his Gospel that he derived his information from the records of eye-witnesses, with which he was perfectly familiar, the same is doubtless true of his treatise on the Acts of the Apostles. He “had a perfect understanding of all things from the very first,” “of those things most surely believed among us.” Here then we have the Sources of the Acts, beyond what he had himself personally seen and known.

1. For the four passages called the “We” sections (16 : 10-17 ; 20 : 5-15 ; 21 : 1-18 ; 27 : 1-28 : 16), containing 97 verses in all, Luke had his personal experience and observation, recorded in his own notes, and in his memory which would be assisted by Paul, with whom he was in the closest intimacy of companionship.

2. For the first twelve chapters Luke must have depended upon the oral or written reports of those who were acquainted with the facts. “It is plain from the narrative that a man in St. Luke’s position would be brought into contact with many persons from whom he could have obtained rich and varied information, and in many cases the details of his narrative point unmistakably to the origin of the information.”³

Thus Luke could learn from Barnabas (with whom he would be acquainted at Antioch, his birthplace, according to Eusebius) many things about the early church ; and perhaps still more from John Mark, the companion of Paul, in whose mother’s house the early disciples were accustomed to meet, and where Peter returned to the disciples after his miraculous escape from imprisonment. “It would have been strange if amongst the men of Cyprus and Cyrene who fled from Judæa to Antioch, 11 : 19, there had been none who were baptized at the first Christian Pentecost, *cf.* 2 : 10, 41 (*Zahn, u. s., p. 414*). . . . St. Luke had access also to the information preserved by Mnason, a disciple *ἀρχαῖος, i. e.,* from the first Pentecost, *cf.* 11 : 15 ; 21 : 16, from whom likewise he may have learnt the account given in 9 : 31-43. In chap. 21 we are also told how Luke was a guest for several days in the house of Philip the Evangelist, vers. 8-12, an intercourse which could have furnished him with the information narrated not only in 8 : 4-40, but in 6 : 1-8 : 3 ; 10 : 1-11 : 18.”⁴

Thus Luke would have much accurate knowledge directly from eye-witnesses and partakers in the events, besides such written documents as had been made to preserve the records of the church.

3. As to the record of the speeches, “we may notice two points. (1) They are all very short, too short to have been delivered as they stand, and for the most part the style in which they are written is that of the historian. They are clearly, therefore, in a sense his own compositions. But (2) on the other hand there is no reason for thinking, *a priori*, that the speeches cannot be historical. . . . The speeches of the leading apostles would impress themselves on the growing community, and would be remembered as the words of the Lord were remembered.”⁴

¹ Prof. Oliver J. Thatcher.

³ Knowling.

² Moffat, *Historical New Testament*.

⁴ Hastings’ *Bible Dictionary*.

"A careful consideration of the speeches and of their appropriateness to their various occasions tends more and more surely to refute the notion that they are fictitious addresses, the work of a writer of the second century. The testimony of Dr. McGiffert may be cited as bearing witness to the primitive character of the reports of the speeches of St. Peter in the early chapters of Acts, and for the truthful manner in which they represent a very early type of Christian teaching."¹

Paul would naturally remember Stephen's speech, and he could give a true report of his own addresses. "The speeches of St. Paul are singularly harmonious with the situation."

Moffatt suggests that the author of the Acts would "work up his sources into extant history very much as the mediæval chronicler (Layamon) is reported to have compiled his *Brut*, or *Chronicle of Britain*, from three "noble books" in which he found his chief materials, namely, the English book of Bede, *Albin*, and the fair Austin's *Latin Treatise*, but especially Wace's *Norman-French Version of Geoffrey's History*."²

"Then Layamon before him laid these books,
And turned their leaves and lovingly beheld them;
Then in his fingers took up the quill,
And so he wrote on book-skin, and true words
He set together, gathering into one
Three books."³

There are some interesting comparisons of the discussion of the composite nature of the Acts with other literature in President A. H. Strong's *The Great Poets and their Theology*. "The German Lachman resolved the Iliad into sixteen distinct and clearly defined lays." "Paley has compared the Iliad and the Odyssey to pictures of stained glass made up by an artistic combination of handsome bits of older windows which fortune and time had shivered." The combatants are more and more arraying themselves on the side of the traditional view that both poems are by the same author, and that this author is Homer. But Homer himself may have taken many years for the elaboration of his poems, revising and improving them as he repeated them again and again, so that during those years versions of various degrees of perfection may have been set in circulation. Goethe in one of his letters to Schiller cites different versions of his own poems, in connection with the theory we have been considering. He had at various times amended and enlarged them; but he did not on that account prove that there was a second Goethe, or many Goethes.

VII. THE CHRONOLOGY of the book of the Acts is connected with so many vexed questions, and is under such a fire of discussion that the various arguments cannot be presented in the space at our disposal, but only reference to the full and learned discussions, and a table on pages xx-xxv giving the results arrived at by a number of leading scholars.

The greatest variations, however, are but a few years at most. The critical points are :—
The date of the crucifixion.

The conversion of Paul.

The death of Herod Agrippa.

The missionary conference at Jerusalem.

The arrival of Festus in Palestine in the place of Felix.

The martyrdom of St. Paul.

¹ Knowling. Compare remarks of Schmiedel in *Encyc. Biblica*, 1. 48.

² *Historical New Testament*, p. 616. Appendix.

³ Abbey, *Religious Thought in Old English Verse*, p. 30. Quoted by Moffatt.

In these the greatest changes from the common dates, by some authorities, are the date of the conversion of Paul, and the date of the recall of Felix and the arrival of Festus, according to the shorter dates of Eusebius, instead of the later dates of Josephus.

The whole subject can be studied in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* and Cheyne's *Encyclopædia Biblica*; in Lewin's *Fasti Sacri*; Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller*; in the Introductions to the *Commentaries* of Rendall, Knowling, and others; in Blass' *Acta Apostolorum*; Harnack's *Chronologie*; articles by Professor Ramsay on the Pauline Chronology in the *Expositor* for March, 1897, Dec., 1899; "A Fixed Point in Pauline Chronology," *Expositor* for May, 1896, and "A Second Fixed Point" in Sept., 1900; Professor Bacon, "Criticism of the New Chronology of Paul" in the *Expositor* for Feb., 1898, and November and December, 1899. The *Biblical World* for 1898 and 1899. Mr. James Vernon Bartlet in his *Apostolic Age* (1899), and in the *Expositor* for Oct., 1899.

THE WESTERN TEXT. The Text of Westcott and Hort is regarded as on the whole the most accurate text we possess, having been decided upon after immense labor in collating manuscripts.

But within a few years the greatest interest has centred around what is called the Western Text, the most important representative of which is Codex Bezae, now in the University library at Cambridge, England. It was found at Lyons in 1562 by Theodor Beza, and presented by him to the University. It is remarkable as the first example of a copy of the Bible in two languages, Greek and Latin, facing each other on opposite pages; and for the notable variations from the usual text.

The theory of Professor Blass is that Luke wrote the Acts twice, giving us two originals; first a rough copy, which remained at Rome, and was the foundation of the Western Text, and second a fair copy, revised and somewhat abridged, and on fine paper for the use of Theophilus, as a man of some rank. Blass, in the Prolegomena to his *Acta Apostolorum* (p. 32), gives two examples from ancient history, one from a charming ode of Catullus, describing a poet who wrote first on common papyrus, and then made a revised copy on parchment. So he thinks Luke wrote first on common paper, and then a revised copy on elegant paper for Theophilus. The other example is that of a lately discovered book of Aristotle.

The reviser's aim was to make the story clear and complete. "For this latter purpose he added some touches where surviving tradition seemed to contain trustworthy additional particulars. . . . The process of modernizing was performed with skill. It was applied to many passages in which the received text presented real difficulty, and to a few where the received text still defies interpretation. In several cases, chiefly relating to Asia Minor, it produced a text which is really smoother and clearer in expression without actual change of sense."

See Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, chapter 8. Kenyon's *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, Codex Bezae, pp. 139-144. Prolegomena of Blass' *Acta Apostolorum*. Introduction to Professor Knowling's *Expositor's Greek Testament*, on Acts.

Prof. Ramsay shows how the Western Text applies to several parts of Acts 13 to 21, which will be referred to in the Commentary on those chapters.

SOME RECENT LITERATURE ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

No book of the New Testament has received more attention from critical students during the last few years than has the book of the Acts ; and quite a large number of volumes have been published, and still more articles in the Biblical magazines, discussing the various questions concerning this book.

Prof. R. J. Knowling's *Acts of the Apostles*, 1900, vol. ii. of the *Expositor's Greek Testament* series. It is bound with Romans and First Corinthians. The text is Greek. The notes are full. There are many references to the modern literature of the subject. Professor Ramsay places it first of all.

Professor McGiffert's *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age* is a notable addition to the critical literature of early church history. It denies the Lucan authorship of the Acts, and sees a number of mistakes and errors in the history, made so chiefly by the learned professor's point of view. At the same time some points are brought out with great vividness, which throw a distinctly clearer light on the history (2d edition, 1900).

Rev. Frederic Rendall, M. A., Assistant Master of Harrow School, has sent forth *The Acts of the Apostles in Greek and English*. It is divided into two parts: one with the Greek text, and comments; the other with a translation of his own, and comments. "It contains many noteworthy and interesting suggestions" (1897).

In the *Ten Epochs of Church History*, the volume on *The Apostolic Age* is by James Vernon Bartlet, M. A., Lecturer in church history in Mansfield College, Oxford. It is a suggestive and helpful volume in a series of popular monographs (1899).

The Footprints of the Apostles as traced by St. Luke in the Acts, by H. M. Luckock, D. D., Dean of Lichfield, seeks with learning and accuracy to aid the spiritual and practical life of the people (1897).

Weizsäcker's *The Apostolic Age in the Christian Church* is able, learned, touching many interesting questions. It is from the standpoint that regards the miraculous birth of Christ and his bodily resurrection as doctrinal developments and not facts, and the Acts in many places unhistorical (1894).

The Messages of the Apostles (1900), by Prof. George B. Stevens, Ph. D., D. D., and the *Messages of Paul*, include all the addresses and epistles of the apostles.

Dr. Joseph Knabenbaur's *Commentarius in Actus Apostolorum*, 1899, is from the Romish point of view.

Meyer's *Commentaries* are well known and unsurpassed in critical learning and acumen. Prof. Wendt's eighth edition (1899), has not yet been translated into English.

Lightfoot's *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age* discusses certain questions in a most scholarly manner (1892).

Prof. Oliver J. Thatcher's (Chicago) *Sketch of the History of the Apostolic Church* (1893), gives a clear, well-written, general, connected view, with distinct outlines of the eras of development of the early church. Prof. J. M. Stifter's *Introduction to the Acts* is another capital book, with the same general characteristics. Both supply admirable analyses.

Professor Moulton's *St. Luke and St. Paul*, in the *Modern Reader's Bible* series, is capital from the literary standpoint (1898).

Dr. A. T. Pierson's *Acts of the Holy Spirit* is a very suggestive examination of the work of the Holy Spirit as revealed in the Acts.

Prof. Vedder's *Dawn of Christianity* is written from the Baptist standpoint as one of the Christian Culture courses, to interest and help young people in the study of the early Chris-

tian church. It is excellently well adapted to this purpose. Its literature references are especially helpful.

R. E. Speer's *Studies in the Book of Acts* is a condensed aid to the study of the Acts, especially on the authors, sources, authenticity, etc.

Geikie's *New Testament Hours*, the 2 vols. on *The Apostles, their Lives and Letters* (1895).

Marvin R. Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. i., includes the Acts, and is capital for those who understand the Greek, and useful even to those who do not.

Professor Briggs' *Messiah of the Apostles* is a most scholarly and thorough presentation of the subject (1895).

HARMONIES. Goodwin's *Harmony of the Life of Paul* and Burton's *Records and Letters of the Apostolic Age* do for the Acts what the Gospel Harmonies do for the Gospels.

CHRONOLOGY. Lewin's *Fasti Sacri*, or a *Key to the Chronology of the New Testament*, gives a view of the chronology of the Acts, together with the best general view of the chief events and rulers, both religious and secular, of each year, and the exact dates of the Passover, Pentecost, and other events so far as possible. The chronology of the Acts is given with varying views in most of the above books. There is a full discussion in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, Article "Chronology," by Cuthbert H. Turner, of Magdalen College, Oxford; and in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, by Baron Hermann Von Soden, Professor of New Testament Exegesis, Berlin. Also Professor Ramsay, in *St. Paul the Traveller*.

LIFE OF ST. PAUL. *The Church in the Roman Empire* (1892) and *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, by Prof. W. M. Ramsay, D. C. L., LL. D., of Aberdeen (1896), throw much new light on St. Paul's travels, and on the Acts in general, and the circumstances of the early church. Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* (many editions and prices) still stands first in its completeness for ordinary readers.

Lewin's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* is a scholarly and exhaustive work, close upon Conybeare and Howson's, and superior to it in the great number and value of its picture illustrations and descriptions of places.

The Life and Letters of Paul, by Lyman Abbott, D. D., traces the evolution of Paul's mind and the development of his religious system (1898).

Farrar's *Life and Work of St. Paul*, and Wm. M. Taylor's *Paul the Missionary*, are popular, interesting, and instructive.

Professor Jacobus' *A Problem in New Testament Criticism* is a fine exposition of "the teachings of Jesus and Paul."

Stalker's *Life of St. Paul* is "a model of condensation," giving a general survey of his whole course, with all the admirable qualities of his well-known *Life of Christ*.

Paul, the Man, the Missionary, and the Teacher, by Orello Cone, D. D., connects the man with his environment and the great forces of Christianity (1898).

Matheson's *Spiritual Development of St. Paul* has the thoughtfulness, suggestiveness, and insight of this distinguished preacher (1891).

POEMS. *The Epic of Saul*, by Prof. W. C. Wilkinson (1891), is a story of the conversion of Paul, embodying the account given in the Acts, but showing the possible steps to this end, and the probable workings and conflicts of his mind. The picture is made very vivid.

The Epic of Paul, by Prof. W. C. Wilkinson (1897), is a similar poem on the later portion of Paul's life. It presents a living portrait of the man Paul amid these dramatic scenes.

SECULAR HISTORIANS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE. Tacitus' *Annals*, XV: 4, 4 (born A. D. 54. *Annals* published about 115). Josephus' *Antiquities*, 18: 3, 3; 5, 2; 20: 9, 1 (born 37 or 38. *Antiquities* completed about 93 or 94). Suetonius' *Lives of the Cæsars*, "Nero" (about 120).

EXPLANATIONS.

MARGINAL REFERENCES.

THE Marginal References are those prepared under the supervision of the University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge, and completed in 1898, for their Revised Version.

The marginal references given in the original edition of the Authorized Version of 1611 have been retained as far as possible, and the Contributors have availed themselves largely of the references in Dr. Scrivener's Paragraph Bible, which they were instructed to make the basis of their work.

The references given may be arranged under the following heads :—

1. Quotations, or exact verbal parallels.
2. Passages referred to for similarity of idea or of expression.
3. Passages referred to by way of explanation or illustration.
4. Historical and Geographical references :— names of persons, places, etc., which recur.
5. Passages referred to as illustrating differences of rendering between the Authorized and Revised Versions.

The following modes of indication have been used :—

1. A simple index letter is employed, when there is an exact or close parallel between the passages.
2. "Cited," or "Cited from," is prefixed to cases of actual quotation.
3. "Cp." (compare) is prefixed to references, when the parallel is less exact.
4. "See" is prefixed :—
 - (a) When reference is made to a parallel passage, on which a body of references has been collected ;
 - (b) In referring to longer passages, parallel or explanatory. When one longer passage is given as a parallel to another of similar length, the mode of indication is "For &c., see &c."
5. "al" (= *alibi*, elsewhere) is added to indicate that all the parallel passages are not given.
6. "(?)" is placed after a reference, when its appropriateness is doubtful.
7. "(mg.)," "& mg.)," "(for mg.)," "(mg. for mg.)," are used when references relate solely or partly to the Revisers' marginal renderings.

THE COMBINED TEXT.

In order to have the two Versions before the reader in the most convenient form, the text used combines them both. It presents in a single line and in large, clear type the texts of the Authorized and Revised Versions, where said texts are alike. Where they are unlike, the difference is clearly and at once set forth by means of double lines of smaller type, making a readily and easily readable combined text.

To read the Authorized Version, one has but to read the large type line along to any point of difference in the respective versions, and then follow the UPPER small type line through such difference. Likewise, to read the Revised Version, one has but to read the large type line along to any difference in the respective versions, and then follow the LOWER small type line through such difference. This plan furnishes the simplest and most complete plan for comparing the two versions.

PRONUNCIATIONS.

THE pronunciation of proper names is like that in the OXFORD SELF-PRONOUNCING BIBLE.

ā as in ah, arm, father.	ī as in him, fir, plentiful.	ū as in us.
ā " abet, hat, dilemma.	ī " machine.	ŷ " lyre.
ā " tame.	ō " alone.	ŷ " typical, fully.
â " fare.	ō " on, protect.	ç " celestial.
ē " met, her, second.	ô " nor.	g " giant.
ē " mete.	ū " tune.	g " his.
ī " fine.	û " rude.	

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

CHAPTER 1.

COMMISSION TO THE APOSTLES. vers. 1-12.	Proofs that Jesus was alive.	Eleven Appearances. Forty Days. in Jerusalem. in Samaria. in Galilee. in all the world.	RULERS. Tiberius, Emperor of Rome. Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea. Caiaphas, High Priest.
	The Commission to witness:		
WAITING FOR THE PROMISE. vers. 13-26.	The Ascension.		DATE. A. D. 30. May 18-28.
	The Promise of Return.		
	The Prayer-Meeting.		PLACE. Jerusalem. An upper room.
	120 Disciples. Ten Days. Election of Matthias.		

1 THE former treatise ^{have} I made, O ^a Thē-ōph'ī-lūs, ^{of} concerning all that Jē'sus began ^b both to do and to teach,

^a Luke 1. 3. ^b Luke 24. 19.

THE FORMER TREATISE, vers. 1, 2.

The former, *πρῶτον*, the first of a series, whether of only two, or of more. Lucian used the word in the title of his *True History* to designate the first book, although there are but two books. Prof. Ramsay, however, thinks it more probable that Luke proposed to write three books, one later than the Acts.¹ Treatise, *λόγον*, book, "frequently used by classical writers in the sense of a narrative or history contained in a book."² As for instance in Xenophon's *Anabasis* the word is used for the first book in the opening sentence of the second book. Herodotus uses it with the same meaning. The former treatise refers "beyond all reasonable doubt to St. Luke's Gospel. Not merely the dedication of both writings to Theophilus, but their unity of language and style is regarded by critics of all schools as convincing proof of the identity of authorship of Acts and the third Gospel."³

O Theophilus. A proper name, not uncommon among the Greeks and the Jews. In the Gospel Luke calls him "most excellent," *κράτιστε*, a title which was "peculiarly appropriated to Romans holding high office, and actually became, during the second century, a technical title to denote equestrian rank."⁴ "There is the statement in the Clementine Recognitions (10: 71) that he was at the head of the men of influence in Antioch (eunectis potentibus in civitate sublimior)."⁵ The

title is applied in the Acts to Felix (23 : 26), and to Festus (26 : 25). It refers to the patrician order of knights. See Prof. Ramsay's *Was Christ born in Bethlehem*, 65-72.

It has been suggested that the omission of the title here "denotes that St. Luke's friendship had become less ceremonious, just as a similar change has been noted in the dedication of Shakespeare's two poems to the Earl of Southampton." The title "right honorable" is left off from the second dedication, as "most excellent" is left off by Luke in the Acts.

All that Jesus began both to do and teach. Either what Jesus did from the beginning, or "the former treatise related what Jesus began to do and to teach; and this relates what he, the same Jesus, continued to do and to teach."⁶ Everything that Jesus did or taught was but a beginning, a seed from which far greater things were to grow, as he himself taught (John 13 : 7 ; 14 : 12, 26).⁵ "The book is the second part of the Acts of Jesus." "The fact is both curious and significant that what is found in the Gospel Narratives, in the form of precept or teaching, reappears in the Acts of the Apostles in the form of practice or example." Jesus is working through the Holy Spirit (ver. 2). "The Holy Spirit becomes to the believer all that Christ would have been had he remained on earth."⁶

"No doubt there is a sense in which, with every

¹ St. Paul, p. 28.

² Prof. R. J. Knowling, D. D.

³ Prof. Jacobus.

⁴ Dean Alford.

⁵ See such books as Dr. Lyman Abbott's *Life and Let-*

ters of Paul. Compare the obverse of the United States seal in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*.

⁶ A. T. Pierson, D. D.

2 Until the day in which ^{he was taken received} up, after that he ^{d through the Holy Ghost, had given commandment} unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 To ^{whom also he} shewed himself alive after his passion by many ^{being seen of} infallible proofs, ^{appearing unto} them by the space of forty days, and speaking ^{of} the things ^{pertaining to} the kingdom of God:

c See Mark 16. 19. d Cp. ch. 10. 42 & Matt. 28. 19, 20 & Mark 16. 15 & Luke 24. 47 & John 20. 21. e Cp. ch. 10. 38 & Luke 4. 1, 18 & John 20. 22. f ch. 10. 40, 41 & 13. 31. Matt. 28. 17. Mark 16. 14. Luke 24. 34, 36-51. John 20. 19-29 & 21. 1 Cor. 15. 5-7.

Christian for nineteen centuries, St. Luke would regard the whole earthly life of Jesus as a *beginning*, a prelude to the glory and mighty working to be revealed and perfected in the ascended Lord.¹ Olshausen thinks that the word "began" expresses the fact that Jesus only began his work on earth, and that he still continues that work in heaven. This is in perfect harmony with the statement above that Jesus is working through the Holy Spirit. To do and teach. "The gospel story is a book of mighty deeds as well as of wondrous speech."² And the Acts continues both.

NOTE. "He did first, then he taught; he first taught by example, and then by word. He did not teach what he had not first himself done."³

2. Until the day. Luke closes his Gospel with the account of the ascension. Taken up, to heaven, *ἀνελήφθη*, the word used in the Septuagint to describe Elijah's ascent to heaven in the whirlwind and chariot of fire. Through the Holy Ghost. Ghost is old English for Spirit. "It is in the Acts of the Apostles that the Holy Spirit's fire is first seen to burn and shine in latter-day glory."⁴

"The older commentators, and Wendt, Holtzmann, Zöckler, Hilgenfeld, amongst moderns, connect the words with had chosen. . . . On the other hand, it is urged that there is no need to emphasize further the divine choice of the apostles, but that it was important to show that the instructions to continue the work and teaching of Jesus were a divine commission (Weiss), and to emphasize from the commencement of the Acts that Jesus had given this commission to his apostles through the same divine Spirit whom they received shortly after his Ascension."⁵

We catch the meaning better through the order in the R. V., had given commandments through the Holy Ghost. His commandments and promises given as he was departing, and indeed all through his life, had divine authority and power behind them.

JESUS RETURNED TO LIFE. THE EVER-LIVING SAVIOUR, ver. 3.

3. To whom also he shewed himself. Not merely "appeared," but showed himself, made

himself appear, *παρέστηεν*. The original meaning is to place beside. He placed himself beside the apostles, he presented himself, shewed himself. Demonstravit (Blass). Alive. The same Jesus who was crucified, and with the same body as before his crucifixion, that bore the wounds of the cross, had flesh and bones, and ate as in former days. The great change of his body into a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15: 51-53) seems to have occurred at the ascension. After his passion, *τὸ παθεῖν*, the suffering, the supreme suffering of his life. This is the only place in the Bible where this Greek expression, as also the English "Passion" (in the singular), is used. It becomes a sacred word.

By many of every kind, from every point of view, to give every possible assurance. Infallible proofs, one word in the original, *τεκμηριας*, from *τέκμαρ*, a sign; hence, proof by sure signs, manifest to the senses; that from which something may be surely known; convincing, certain evidence. It is so used by Plato and Aristotle to denote "the strongest proofs of which a subject is capable."⁶

"The Greek word signifies some sign or token



Greek and Roman Books of Papyrus. From Paintings at Pompeii (A. D. 79).

From Harper's Classical Dictionary, by per.

The roll of Thucydides was 300 feet long, with 578 pages or columns; and one of Homer was said to have been 360 feet. But usually a long work was divided into books, each book being on a separate roll. The rolls were formed of pages pasted together.

manifest to the senses, as opposed to evidence given by witnesses."⁶

"Used by Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1:2) for proofs that carried certainty of conviction with them, as contrasted with those that were only probable or

¹ Knowing.

⁴ A. T. Pierson, D. D.

² Prof. Stifter on *The Acts*.

⁵ Prof. Philip Schaff.

³ Cornelius à Lapidé.

⁶ Cambridge Bible.

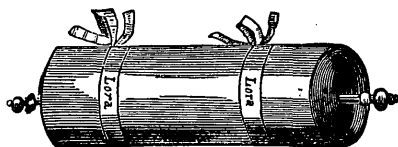
circumstantial."¹ Bela renders it well, *certissimis signis*.

Forty days, at intervals, ten or eleven times. The Greek expression "through forty days" (*dia* with the genitive) implies that Jesus did not remain with them continuously. Speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, which was to be unfolded and carried on through them. During all this transition period the disciples were being trained to understand and to do the work that was before them. There was much that it was impossible for them to understand before.

"God's oracles grew luminous as he spake;
And light from darkness sprang, as day from night."²

"The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from his word."

THE INFALLIBLE PROOFS. "The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact in history."³ "I have been used for many years to



Roll, closed.

study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidences of those who have written about them; and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the mind of a fair inquirer, than that Christ died, and rose again from the dead."⁴

1. The proofs were so complete as to convince the apostles of it so thoroughly that they staked their lives, their happiness, their all, upon it, with no motive for believing it if false. They believed it because they were compelled by the evidence to believe it. It was against their worldly interests to accept the truth.

2. There were a large number of witnesses, well qualified, extending over a considerable time, with every opportunity to know the facts under a great variety of circumstances. And they saw, and touched the very same identical body which was crucified and buried.⁵

3. They put their seal to the proof by living according to it, by building their lives upon it, and dying in attestation of it.

4. By their declaration of the fact they induced thousands of the very enemies of Christ to believe in it, and that close to the time and near the very spot on which it occurred.

5. Only the fact of the resurrection can account for the marvellous change in the spirit and character of the apostles. The resurrection completely transformed them; inspired them with a new conception of Christ's kingdom as for all people, with a new courage to suffer for the sake of their risen Lord and his kingdom. Neither fraud nor fiction is competent to account for the moral contrast.

6. "A singular and significant testimony to the truth of the resurrection is afforded by the change in the Sabbath day. It was changed, not by any express command in the New Testament, but by the almost universal consent of the church, which could not endure to observe as a day of joy and gladness that on which Christ lay in the tomb, nor forbear to mark as a weekly festival that on which he arose."⁶

7. The very existence of the Christian church is a proof of the resurrection of Jesus. "Faith in mere visions or phantoms may produce phantoms, but not such a phenomenon as the Christian church, the greatest fact and the mightiest institution in the history of the world."⁶ We do not "worship a dead Christ," but a living.

8. The Ascension, the appearances to Stephen and to Paul, the Revelation to John, the many references to his resurrection in the Epistles, all confirm the fact of his existence after death.

9. The resurrection fits into the life of Christ the Saviour as an essential part. His life and the whole plan of salvation would be incomplete without it.

10. No one can conceive how Jesus could have given his disciples better proof than he did of his resurrection.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

1. "The whole alphabet of human hope" is in the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning proof that he is the Son of God, the Messiah, the living Saviour, sitting on the right hand of God (Rom. 8: 34; Col. 3: 1), seated with the Father in his throne (Rev. 3: 21; 22: 1). If he could not conquer death, and come back from heaven, he could not prove that at the first he came from heaven. Canon Liddon says, "The resurrection of Christ is the certificate of our Lord's mission from heaven, to which he himself pointed as a warrant of his claims."

2. In relation to the succeeding history, the fact that Jesus was alive after his crucifixion was essential to the certainty that Jesus was the promised Messiah, proclaimed in the Old Testa-

¹ Bp. C. J. Ellicott.

² Bickersteth.

³ Lyman Abbott, D. D.

⁴ Dr. Arnold.

⁵ So Judge Waite, so Barnes, so McClintock and

Strong's *Cyclopedia*, and C. R. Morison's *From a Lawyer's Standpoint*.

⁶ President Theodore D. Woolsey.

4 And, ^{being} assembled together with ^{them,} ^{he} ^{commanded} ^{them} ^{that they should} ^{not} ^{to} depart from Jě-rú'să-lēm, but ^{to} wait for the promise of the Father, which, ^{said} ^{he,} ^{ye} ^{have} ^{heard} ^{of} ^{from} ^{me:}

g ch. 10. 41 (for mg.). Luke 24. 43 (for mg.). John 21. 13 (for mg.). h Luke 24. 49.

ment as an everlasting king, whose reign should never end, the Saviour and Redeemer of men. In no other way could they present Jesus to the Jews as their Messiah, with the least hope of their believing in him. Without the fact of the Resurrection it would not only be impossible to understand by what Christianity originated and progressed till the present day, but the facts themselves would have been impossible. It was impossible to build up a kingdom with a dead king, a mere memory, as its ruler. Behind the apostles must be the living Teacher and Master and King; the one they had known and loved and trusted. They must present a living Saviour, a present help, one who could be loved and served, one who could be everywhere present, with all power to help, or why should the people believe on him? The first thing in the new kingdom was THE KING.

3. It is the proof of immortal life beyond the grave; that death does not end all, but the soul lives after the body dies. It is a fact and not merely reasonings and hopes, like those of Socrates preserved by Plato in his *Phædo*, and of Cicero in his *De Senectute*. We can be sure from his testimony and his resurrection that we are not

"Like ships that sailed from sunny isles,
But never came to shore."

The soul does not go out like a candle flame, nor does the Christian have any such sad creed as "I believe in the dispersion of the body, and in death everlasting." "Theodore Monod said he would like the epitaph on his tombstone to be, Here endeth the First Lesson."¹

THE COMMISSION TO THE APOSTLES,

vers. 4-8.

The next essential after THE KING was a POWER by which the kingdom could be established, gain adherents, transform sinful men into holy citizens of the kingdom, overcome all obstacles, and

change the whole world into a kingdom of God such as is pictured in the last chapters of the Bible. The work was one of inconceivable magnitude and difficulty. A few common men, without rank, or learning, or wealth, or territory, or army, were to conquer the world; conquer lust, passion, prejudices, selfishness, customs, fashions, wrought into the very texture of society; conquer the victorious Roman empire that itself had subdued the world. It was the height of absurdity, of impossibility, except by divine power working through these few disciples.

4. And being assembled together with them, the twelve (pointing back to Luke 24: 49). They assembled probably in Jerusalem on the day of ascension, whence Jesus led them out toward Bethany (Luke 24: 50). There are two derivations of the original word for being assembled together: one συναλιζόμενος, from σύν, together, and ἀλῆς, thronged or crowded. The other from σύν, together, and ἔας, salt; eating salt together; hence, taking a meal together, as in the margins of both the common and revised versions. Commanded them. Emphatic, "charged them" (παράγγειλεν). "Originally to pass on or transmit; hence, as a military term, of passing a watchword or command."² Should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait. They waited by prayer, by conference together, by doing necessary duties (vers. 13, 14, and rest of the chapter). Waiting is not sleeping with folded hands.

NOTE. There are times when it is our duty to wait; not in idleness, not in sleep, but in prayer, in removing all hindrances from our hearts, in doing every duty close at hand. No time is lost in sharpening the scythe; the prelude on the grindstone makes a quicker harvesting. Tuning the instruments is the way to the best music. We must wait for the fruit to ripen before we pluck it. We must wait till we are prepared before we enter upon any work. Jesus waited thirty years before he began his great mission.³ They waited ten days.

¹ Cato was one of the best of the Romans who lived before Christ, and is said to have been reading in his last moments Plato's dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul, *The Phædo*. Addison's *Cato*, Act V., Scene 1, showing the best that reason can do, contrasted with Christ's Infallible Proofs.

"It must be so — Plato, thou reasonest well!"

The Christian Doctrine of Immortality by Prof. Salmon (4th ed., 1901); Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, "Biology;" Dr. Sears' *Foregleams and Foreshadows*;

Whately's *Future State*. Discussions of immortality from various standpoints, as, Plato's *Phædo*; Cicero's *De Senectute*; Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Hamlet's soliloquy in the castle of Elsinore; and *Measure for Measure*, Claudio's address to his sister Isabella; Wordsworth's *Poems*, "Intimations." The story of King Edwin and Paulinus, a poem concerning the entrance of the Gospel into Northumbria.

² Prof. M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

³ See "Delayed Blessings" Office, in the tract *Expectation Corner*.

5 For ^{truly indeed} John baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost ^{not} many days hence.

6 ^{When they therefore} They therefore, when they were come together, ^{they} asked of him, saying, Lord, ^{wilt dost} thou at this time ^{again} restore the kingdom to *Is̄rā-ēl*?

i ch. 11. 16. See Matt. 3. 11.

j ch. 2. 1-4.

k See Luke 17. 20.

l Cp. Mic. 4. 8 & Matt. 17. 11 & Mark 9. 12

& Luke 19. 11.

For the promise of the Father. The Greek *ἐπαγγελίαν*, *promise*, invariably, in the New Testament, signified "a free promise, given without solicitation." They were to wait for the fulfilment of the promise which the Father had given. It was *the* promise, as being the greatest, most important, all-embracing promise, — the Holy Spirit promised by Joel (2: 28, 29; see Acts 2: 17, 18) and by Isaiah (44: 3). It was really the sum and substance of all the promises of the coming of the kingdom of God, and the redeemed world to Abraham, to David, and through the prophets, especially Isaiah. For the new dispensation was to be the dispensation of the Spirit, by whose power the transformation and triumph were to come. **Which . . . ye have heard of me.** This promise is alluded to in Luke 24: 49, and found in John 14: 16, 26; 15: 26. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

THE REASONS WHY THEY MUST WAIT. 1. "Because it was fitting that the new law, as the old, should go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2: 3; Mic. 4: 2).

2. "The apostles' testimony should be delivered not to men unacquainted with the facts, but to the inhabitants of the city where Jesus had been crucified and buried."¹ Thus the well-known facts could best be used for convincing and saving men.

3. That the great gift might come upon all at once and alike, so that all could preach the gospel from one experience, and with one power, and all testify to the great event. The effect on the community would also be far more powerful. The effect was massed.

4. So that the coming of the Spirit might be at the next great festival after the crucifixion, when strangers from all parts of the world would be gathered at Jerusalem, who would carry back the tidings into all lands.

5. Till then, they themselves would not be prepared to preach the gospel. They needed more training, they needed to be equipped by the Spirit for service. They needed time for all these teachings and strange events to gradually crystallize in their thoughts, and for their souls to be consecrated anew, and open to receive the influences of the Spirit.

6. The people needed something of the same process of gradual preparation. To have begun too soon to preach would have been like sowing seed on frozen ground.

5. For John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, truly baptized with water, the symbol and type of a higher and better baptism. Many were brought to repentance then. But something far mightier, higher, better, was needed. While John was baptizing with water, he pointed to Jesus as the one who should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Matt. 3: 11). Jesus says that this promise is about to be fulfilled. **Ye shall be baptized with (or in) the Holy Ghost.** "As the element in which the baptism is performed."² Not that this would be the first time that the Holy Spirit had been received, but that the influence would come with peculiar manifestations, in great abundance, and upon all disciples.

"'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
More life, and fuller, that we want."

Not many days hence. About ten days, on Pentecost. "Not many days, that they may hope, but he does not say *how* few, in order that they may watch."³

6. When they therefore were come together on the Mount of Olives (ver. 12), referring either to the assembly mentioned in ver. 4, or to the gathering again at the place of the ascension after they had walked thither from Jerusalem. **They asked.** Kept asking, "the imperfect denoting a repetition of the question."⁴ "Perhaps indicating that the same question was put by one inquirer after another."¹ **Lord, wilt thou (R. V., "dost thou") at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?** As promised again and again in the Scriptures, including Joel, referred to in vers. 4, 5, "to be realized by the annihilation of the enemies of God and victory and happiness for the good. As in the days of old the yoke of Pharaoh had been broken and Israel redeemed from captivity, so would the Messiah accomplish the final redemption (comp. Luke 24: 21) and set up again after the destruction of the world-powers, the kingdom in Jerusalem."¹ Israel was then subject to the Roman power. They probably imagined that the world would be converted to Judaism, and that Jerusalem, the holy city, would

¹ Prof. Knowling.

² Prof. Hackett.

³ Chrysostom.

⁴ Prof. Vincent.

7 And he said unto them, ^m It is not for you to know ^{the} times ⁿ or ^{the} seasons, which the Father hath ^{put in} ^{set within} his own ^{power.} ^{authority.}

m Cp. Matt. 24. 36 & Mark 13. 32.

n Dan. 2. 21. 1 Thess. 5. 1.

be the resort of all nations, the centre of light and power and religion for the world. They probably had no conception, and could not have, of any other way in which the hopes of the Jews and the promises of the Bible could be accomplished.¹ But these thoughts were also mingled with higher thoughts of turning from sin, and righteousness, and "the disciples may well have shared, even if imperfectly, in the hopes of a Zacharias or a Simeon."²

Restore, ἀποκαθίσταεις. "This word denotes restoration in its most enlarged sense, not a mere reestablishment of the ancient kingdom, but the establishment of a new kingdom of God instinct with life and power, like the restoration of a withered hand by the quickening power of Christ's word. The dative appended to it further describes this restoration as a blessing for Israel. The A. V. *restore to Israel* implies on the contrary a mere giving back to Israel. The present tense denotes a purpose to be carried into immediate effect."³

7. And he said, implying that their general expectation of some kind of restoration was correct. It is not for you to know the times or the seasons. Omit *the*. Two distinct objects of curiosity are specified: (1) the duration of future periods (χρόνους, times), (2) critical occasions of special importance yet to come (καιρός, seasons),⁴ with the special idea of fitness. "In modern Greek, whilst καιρός means *weather*, χρόνος means *year*, so that 'in both words the kernel of meaning has remained unaltered; this in the case of καιρός is changeableness, of χρόνον, duration.'"⁴ Which the Father hath put in, set within, his own (τῆ ἰδῆ), his *private, personal power*, ἐξουσία, both *authority*, the liberty to do as one pleases without restraint from others; and *power*, ability to accomplish one's will. Εξουσία is derived from ἐκ and εἶναι, to be from a person as the source or cause; hence, *power, authority, absolute control*. A different word from "power" in ver. 8.

WHY THE FUTURE WAS HIDDEN FROM THE

APOSTLES. 1. It was impossible for them to see the future events as they really occurred. Their ideas, their point of view, their expectations, and the circumstances connected with the times and seasons would all have to be changed before it would be possible for any one to understand them. For instance, the knowledge of the fall of Jerusalem and of the Mosaic ritual would have staggered their faith. They had too many prejudices, they had too narrow a view, to yet understand the method in which it could be restored, and how the new could be grafted on the old.

Again we find two lines of prophecy in relation to the second coming, in one of which it is depicted as near, while the other points to a dim and distant future. They are not contradictory, but only two views of the same thing, which began very soon, with different eras, and is to be consummated at the end of the world. So that all the practical power of an imminent coming, and of a great transcendent event to be labored for and hoped for, is brought to bear upon the disciples of Christ.

The same is true of all great moral changes. The changes in thought and feeling and attitude toward many questions, from old to new, are like the changes in the seasons, where no one can possibly tell by observation the exact time when winter ends and spring begins, or when spring ends and summer begins. No one can "read the book till God unrolls it" in history.

2. The knowledge of the times and seasons would have been worse than useless to them. It would have taken their thoughts away from their work, and interested them in useless questions.⁵ This is justified by the apostolic experience as shown in the second epistle to the Thessalonians. The false views of the immediate expectation of the second coming of Christ led to idleness, disorder and scandals. Professor Stokes, in the *Expositor's Bible*, pp. 38-40, gives two instances from church history, one of some monks in an Egypt-

¹ In 1773 there was discovered in Abyssinia a book called the *Book of Enoch*, which was written in the first and second centuries before Christ. It expresses the inner mind of the Jewish people at the time of Christ. The people were daily expecting the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, not a spiritual kingdom, but a scene of material glory, where "the Jews would be exalted above all surrounding nations, and the hated invader expelled." "This eager expectation," says Professor Stokes, "dominated every other feeling in the Jewish mind, and was burned into the very secrets of their existence by the tyranny of the Roman rule."

² Prof. Knowling.

³ Rev. Frederic Rendall, *Acts of the Apostles in Greek and English*.

⁴ Prof. Knowling, who refers to "Curtius, *Etym.*, p. 110 sq.; see, also, Trench, *N. T. Synonyms*, ii. p. 27 ff.; Kennedy, *Sources of N. T. Greek*, p. 153."

⁵ "Too-curious man, why dost thou seek to know Events which, good or ill, foreknown, are we? Foreknowledge only is enjoyed by Heaven, And for his peace of mind to man forbidden."

Dryden.

See, also, *The Loom of Life* (United Soc. of C. E., Boston).

8 But ye shall receive ^{power,} ^{*p* after that *when*} the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye ^{shall be} ^{*my*} witnesses ^{*r* unto me} both in Jerusalem, and in all Jû-dæ'ā' and ⁱⁿ ^{*s*} Sā-mā'ri-ā, and unto ' the uttermost part of the earth.

o ch. 4. 33. Luke 24. 49. 1 Thess. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 7, *al.* Cp. ch. 10. 38 & Luke 4. 14. *p* ver. 5. *q* Cp. ver. 22. See Luke 24. 48. *r* ch. 2. 32 (mg.) & 13. 31. Cp. Isai. 43. 12. *s* ch. 8. 1, 14. Cp. Matt. 10. 5. *t* ch. 13. 47. Cp. Mark 16. 15 & Col. 1. 23.

tian monastery in the fifth century, and another in London in the tenth century, when business was suspended in that city on a certain day because it was expected that the Lord on that day would appear in judgment.

"Oh, blindness to the Future! kindly given,
That each may fill the circle marked by heaven."¹

3. Those to whom they preached would have still greater misunderstandings, and useless opposition would have been aroused. Indeed, it would have been almost impossible to have carried on the work under such circumstances. Every ray of sunrise would have seemed like the flame of the burning world.

4. All they needed was the fact, as a certainty, toward which God would gradually lead them, and the power to accomplish the desired results.

"I know not the way I am going,
But well do I know my Guide."

8. But instead of this useless knowledge ye shall receive power to accomplish the things you desire to know, to make the Ideal the Real. You cannot *know* the future, but you can *make* it. Power in the Greek is *δύναμις* (*dynamis*), of which our word "dynamite" is almost a transliteration, and this expresses well the greatness of the power to upheave the obstacles in their way; although the power bestowed was in its action more like that of the sun, which is infinitely greater than all the explosives in the world.²

This power given includes (1) moral and spiritual power; (2) power to overcome temptations, and to do right under the most trying circumstances; (3) power to lead men to the Saviour; (4) power to overcome all enemies and obstacles, though they were like mountains to be cast into the sea; (5) power to work miracles; (6) power to lead the church; (7) power to bring the kingdom of heaven. After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. The Power is divine, working through human souls. "It contemplates, not a single outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, as the A. V. implies, but a new dispensation of the Spirit, whose indwelling presence should become a continuous power within them."³

Ye shall be witnesses unto me. The words,

which are identical in spirit with those of Luke 24: 48, strike the keynote of the whole book, which is the history of the way and the places in which the commission was carried out. Witnesses. Greek, *μάρτυρες* (*martyres*), from which comes our word "martyrs," i. e., those who bear witness to Jesus Christ by suffering and dying for him. The gospel is built upon facts, not theories. The Gospels are the summary of the witness of the apostles. They were written many years after the apostles began to preach, and are the story that had been told many hundreds of times by these witnesses.

Witnesses unto me (*μοι*). The better reading, as in the R. V., is *μου*, of me, my. "Not only witnesses to the facts of their Lord's life, but also his witnesses, his by a direct personal relationship."⁴ They were to bear witness that Jesus their Master was the Messiah, the Christ, foretold in the Old Testament, that he was to bring in all those glorious visions and descriptions which the prophets had declared would come to pass (only in a different way from the expectations of many of the people), that he was the Deliverer of the people from their sins, that he was the Messenger from God bringing the good news of his love and care and fatherhood.

NOTE the order of development.

- (1) An ever-living, all-powerful KING.
- (2) The necessary POWER.
- (3) A divinely authorized COMMISSION.
- (4) The work: TO BEAR WITNESS.
- (5) The field: ALL THE WORLD.

The places named express the order in which the witness should be borne, and correspond to the great divisions of the book.

FIRST. In Jerusalem, where the facts of his death and resurrection were best known; the central point of the former dispensation, on which the new was to be grafted (Acts chs. 1-7).

SECOND. And in all Judæa, and in Samaria, when the disciples were driven from Jerusalem by persecution (Acts chs. 8-12).

THIRD. Unto the uttermost part of the earth. "By uttermost both time and space are included; to the remotest corners of the earth, to the remotest period of time."⁵ Paul himself

¹ Pope.

² Compare the gentle action of the sun in removing vast fields and mountains of ice, more easily than earthquakes could have done it. Indeed scientists have shown

that nearly all the great forces on the earth are derived from the sun. See Tyndall's *Heat as a Mode of Motion*.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Knowling.

⁵ Lyman Abbott.

9 And when he had ^{spoken} said these things, ^{while} as they ^{beheld,} were looking, he "was taken up; and a "cloud received him out of their sight.

u ver. 2. v See 1 Thess. 4. 17.

carried the witness of the gospel to Rome, which in the case of Pompey was called (in the *Psalms* of Solomon, an apocryphal book, 70-40 B. C.) "the uttermost part of the earth." But it is probable that Paul went much further, and so far as we can learn from the traditions of the time, the apostles preached the gospel throughout the then known world.

PRACTICAL. 1. Witnessing is still the most effective way of preaching Jesus and his gospel. The great Psalms, the great poems that reach the depths of the soul, grew out of the experiences of those who wrote them.

2. The witness is to what Jesus has actually done for us, to the fulfilment of his promises, to his conscious presence, to his power to save from sin, to help in trouble, to the transformations he has wrought in character and life.

3. The witness is borne (a) by words, for there is much which can be made known only by expressing through speech the inner thoughts. (b) By life, deeds, conduct, and all outward expressions of the inner character, under various circumstances. Times of trial are like the cross-examination of a witness in court. "The life of a disciple is one long stance in the witness-box, under cross-examination by a severe adversary."

THE ASCENSION.

9. While they beheld. That they might have clear proof of his ascension, to assure them that there was no deception. He was in the act of blessing them when he was taken up (Luke 24: 51). A cloud received him out of their sight. (Compare Matt. 17: 5; Luke 9: 34.) Perhaps it was like the "fiery, cloudy pillar," the symbol of God that led the Israelites through the wilderness, or like Elijah's storm chariot, or the bright cloud of glory which overshadowed Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. It was at this time, doubtless, that the great change came over his body described in 1 Cor. 15: 51-53. For such a change is signified by his appearance as John saw him (Rev. 1: 12-16).

"Earth cannot bar flame from ascending,
Hell cannot bind light from descending,
Death cannot finish life never ending."

¹ Rendall.

² Baumgarten.

³ Alford.

NOTE. Some (as Zeller on the Acts, and Friedrich on Luke) mention four points of difference between the account of the Ascension in Luke's Gospel and the record in the Acts. 1. *The place.* In the Gospel (24: 50) it is Bethany, in the Acts (1: 12) the Mount of Olives. But

He "climbed Love's ladder so high
From the round at the top he stepped to the sky."

PLACE OF THE ASCENSION IN THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD. 1. "The reality of his heavenly life is assured by the bodily shape in which he is taken up into heaven: the vision of angels and the promise of a like return in glory reveal to the group of beholders the magnificent future in store for the kingdom of God. The whole scene is calculated to raise their hopes to the highest pitch: they cannot but feel that the Ascension is not the end, but the beginning, of the new dispensation."¹

THE SAME JESUS WHO LIVED AND TAUGHT ON EARTH NOW RULES IN GLORY AND POWER IN HEAVEN OVER HIS EARTHLY KINGDOM. "The ascension of Elijah may be compared to the flight of a bird, which none can follow; the ascension of Christ is, as it were, a bridge between earth and heaven, laid down for all who are drawn to him by his earthly existence."²

2. The ascension was a fitting close of Jesus' earthly mission, a return to his Father, corresponding to his coming from the Father when "he was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." It completed the proof of his divine nature and mission, and crowned his life with success.

3. We are enabled to realize his glorious nature, as revealed on the Mount of Transfiguration, to John in Rev. 1: 12-16, to Stephen, and to Paul.

The last view of Christ is not upon the cross, but ascending from Olivet into glory; not in agony of atonement, but in the act of blessing; not in seeming defeat, but in manifest triumph. We worship not a dead, but a living Saviour, to whom we shall go, with whom we shall be in glory, and whom we shall love and serve through endless ages.

"There was a manifest propriety in the last withdrawal of the Lord, while ascending, not consisting in a *disappearance* of his Body, as on former occasions since the Resurrection; for thus might his abiding Humanity have been called in question. As it was, he went up, past the visible boundary of heaven, the cloud, — *in human form*, and so we think of and pray to him."³

Bethany is on the Mount of Olives; so that the two accounts exactly agree.

2. *The time.* According to Acts the Ascension was on the fortieth day; "according to Luke on the Resurrection day itself." But Luke does not say so in his Gospel. He simply states the fact, without stating the time.

3. "The words of Jesus are not the same in the two

10 And while they ^{looked} ^{were looking} steadfastly ^{toward} ^{into} heaven as he went, ^{up}, behold, ^w two ^x men stood by them in ^v white apparel ;

11 Which also said, ^z Ye men of Gal'i-lee, why stand ye ^{gazing up} ^{looking} into heaven? this ^{same} Jē'sus, which ^{is taken} ^{was received} up from you into heaven, ^a shall ^b so come in like manner as ye ^{have seen} ^{beheld} him ^{go} into heaven.

w Cp. Luke 24. 4. *x* Josh. 5. 13. Dan. 9. 21 & 10. 5 & 12. 6, 7. Zech. 1. 8-11. *y* Matt. 28. 3. Mark 16. 5. John 20. 12. *z* ch. 2. 7 & 13. 31. *a* Cp. Phil. 3. 20 & 1 Thess. 1. 10. See Matt. 16. 27. *b* 2 Thess. 1. 10.

4. His bodily presence could be only in some one place, toward which all men would tend. "A present bodily Jesus involves a geographical church." Now abiding on the right hand of God, he is enabled to be the omnipresent Saviour of all men, as would not be possible if he were in the body, though as king in Jerusalem. His Holy Spirit is everything to all men everywhere that he himself would be if present with each one to aid, to comfort, and to guide. "The Holy Spirit," says Boardman, "gives us one and the same church, even the Holy Catholic Church, throughout all lands, and times, and names."

5. Only by his going away could the Holy Spirit come and take his place. With him in bodily presence in any one place, the attention of his people would be called away from the spiritual and universal nature of his church to that which was outward and temporal and earthly. The work of the Holy Spirit would be hindered and hampered by statecraft, politics, worldly rank and position.

6. Thus his children are taught to live by faith and not by sight, and are trained in character and manhood by the responsibility of carrying on his work. The present system trains "governors and governed, kings and subjects, parents and children, teachers and pupils, all alike."

7. The doctrine of the Ascension, with its hope of future glory, with its transfigured Son of man (not son of Jew or Greek, but of man) on the throne, "adds new dignity to life," for the lowliest shall be changed into the likeness of his glorified body. "It is an everflowing fountain of dignity, of purity, of mercy."

THE PROMISE OF RETURN, vers. 10, 11.

One more thing was necessary to complete this portion of the fundamental preparations for the inauguration of the Christian Church—the assurance of success, the final triumph of Jesus and of his kingdom.

10. And while they looked, were looking, steadfastly. "Looking steadfastly" is one word in the

narratives." But the report in each case is only the substance of what he said, and neither claims that it records all that he said. Each is simply a complement of the other, and no contradiction exists.

4. "In the Gospel the words appear to be spoken in Jerusalem, in the Acts at the place of the Ascension."

Greek, — ἀνελθόντες, from ἀ, intensive, and ἔλγω, to stretch, hence *fixed attention*, which latter word is almost a transliteration of the Greek, through the Latin. They were looking with intense, eager, questioning, protracted gaze, trying to comprehend what it meant.

As he went. "As he was going." "The present tense denotes that the cloud was still visible for a considerable time, as if carrying their eyes and their hearts with him to heaven."¹

The feelings of the disciples are thus represented by Arthur Clough:—

"Ye men of Galilee!

Why stand ye looking up to heaven, where him ye ne'er may see

Neither ascending hence, nor returning hither again?

Ye ignorant and idle fishermen!

Hence to your huts, and boats, and inland native shore,

And catch not men, but fish;

Whate'er things ye may wish,

Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall meet with more.

Ye poor deluded youths, go home;

Mend the old nets ye left to roam;

Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail;

It was an idle tale —

He was not risen!"

Still, it is not possible that they were so hopeless. They were waiting in hope, perhaps doubting hope, for the Lord's time to come.

Behold. Implying suddenness. Two men. Angels in the form of men. (Compare Matt. 28: 2-5 with Luke 24: 4.) By them. Rather, "before them." In white apparel. No doubt, like the angel in Matt. 28: 3, "his raiment white as snow," and "in shining garments" (Luke 24: 4). The brilliant whiteness showed their pure nature and the bright home whence they came. As his advent and his resurrection, so his return to heaven was accompanied by ministering angels.

"By them does not give a correct impression of the scene: the heavenly vision met their upward gaze as they looked steadfastly up to heaven."²

11. Ye men of Galilee. All of them were

But it is implied in the Acts that words were spoken in both places, and what in Acts is recorded as spoken at the place of the Ascension is not the portion spoken in Jerusalem according to the Gospel. Nor is it improbable that these important commands were repeated more than once. ¹ Knowing. ² Rendall.

Galileans, Judas having been the only one of the twelve who did not belong in Galilee.

Why stand ye gazing up as if you had lost your Master, and he was separated from you forever? **This same Jesus**, but in another form. The physical body was changed into the spiritual, and the earthly beauty into heavenly glory, but it was the same Jesus who lived, was crucified, and rose again.

Shall so come in like manner. Visibly, openly, gloriously. This apparently refers to the final coming of our Lord at the completion of his earthly mission, when shall be fulfilled the description of the new Jerusalem in Rev. 21, 22. The angels only reminded the apostles of what Jesus himself had promised them. "Henceforth (*ἀπ' ἄρτι*, from this time on) you'll see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26: 64).

1. The disciples were in constant expectation of the second coming of Christ. They believed it was near at hand, for Jesus himself repeatedly declared that he would come in that generation, and that some of the disciples who heard him speak would be still living when he came in the glory of his Father with the holy angels (Mark 9: 1; Matt. 16: 27, 28; Luke 9: 26, 27).

2. They did not and could not know when he would come. (See on ver. 7.)

3. They also had reason to look for his coming at the end of the world.

There is only one way in which I have been able to bring into harmony, and yet include, all that is said concerning the second coming of Christ; namely, that this one great event consists of a series of epochs or marked stages each of which is rightfully and naturally called his second coming; just as when we speak of the coming of the day, we speak of it as having come when the first rays touch the mountain tops, or we think of it as having come when the sun rises, or again when the sun has burst through the clouds and we see the full blaze of day.

To change the figure, the Second Advent seen in a vision of the future is like a great mountain range, which is really but one mountain system, and, when described as seen from a distant point, may be described as one mountain; and yet, on a nearer view, is seen to consist of three ranges, rising one above the other, with long spaces between. We find, then, a threefold coming, all preceded by the same signs, all characterized in the same terms, all based on the same principles, all the effects of the same forces.

I. There was a *second advent which began with the day of Pentecost and culminated at the destruction of Jerusalem*, when Christ's kingdom had

really been established on the earth in the place of the old dispensation.

Dr. A. J. Gordon says that Christ's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit, who will "abide with you forever." "And lest by this discourse about his going and the Comforter's coming we should be led to think that it is not Christ who is with us, he says, clearly referring to the Spirit, 'I will not leave you orphans: *I will come to you.*'"¹

II. *There will be a second coming when the Gospel has triumphed over all the earth, and the millennium is ushered in, and the believers, scattered through many nations and organizations, shall become one visible kingdom, free, governed only by Jesus Christ and his heavenly principles.* This is the full coming of the kingdom prophesied in Daniel and the Old Testament; this is the coming the later apostles were expecting; this is what John means when he prayed, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." Both of these are personal comings, both were preceded by the fall of great powers like stars from heaven. The Gospel will be preached to all the world. It will be a coming in the clouds with power and glory; for the source of all these triumphs of Christ is from heaven, the triumph is spiritual, and no kingdom is so glorious or so powerful as this.

III. *There will be a coming of Christ, in visible presence, in some day of judgment and resurrection,* as in 1 Thess. 4: 13-18; Rev. 20: 7 to 22: 5; and Matt. 25. I cannot see how the Scriptures can be fulfilled without this; and some visible, external manifestation of Jesus in his glory to all beings, earthly and heavenly, at the end of the Gospel dispensation seems most fitting and natural.

NOTE. Thus we see that the expectation of the immediate coming of their Lord was not a mistake of the apostles. They were not disappointed in their expectations, repeatedly expressed, of the return of Jesus. They did see the beginnings of that coming, its first rays. They did not understand the times and seasons, but they did know the fact. They did not recognize the coming since it came so gradually. They were right in looking for an early coming; they were also right in looking for one far away. The hope, the joy, the strength, the glory of the church, is in this promise of the coming again of Jesus, of the triumph of his cause, of his glorious reign. We are not warring and laboring against hope, but with the certainty of the victory through an ever-living, ever-present Saviour.

"I may not stay to see the day
When the Great Saviour shall bear sway
And earth shall glitter in the ray
That cometh from above.

¹ *How Christ Came to Church*, pp. 10, 11.

12 Then ^{from} returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Ōl'i-vēt, which is ^{high} unto Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey' off.

13 And when they were come in, they went up into ^{all} the ^d upper ^{room,} chamber, where they ^{abode} were abiding; ^e both Pē'tēr and ^{James,} John, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bār-thōl'ō-mēw, and Mātth'ew, James ^{the son of} Alphe'us and Simon ^{Ze-lo'tes,} and Jū'dās ^{the brother} son of James.

14 These all ^{continued with one accord} with one accord ^{continued steadfastly} in prayer, and supplication, with ⁱ the women, and Mā'r'y the mother of Jē'sus, and with ^j his brethren.

c Luke 24. 50, 52. d ch. 9. 37, 39 & 20. 8. e See Matt. 10. 2-4 & Mark 3. 16-19 & Luke 6. 14-16. f Cp. ch. 21. 20. - g ch. 2. 46 & 4. 24 & 5. 12 & 15. 25. Rom. 15. 6. h ch. 2. 42 & 6. 4. Rom. 12. 12. Col. 4. 2. Cp. Eph. 6. 18. i Luke 8. 2, 3. j See Matt. 12. 46.

"But come it fast or come it slow —
'T will come at last, I surely know,
And heaven and earth shall feel the glow,
And men shall call it love."

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER, vers. 12-14.

12. Returned . . . from the mount called Olivet. This expression implies that Luke was writing to persons not familiar with Jerusalem.

A sabbath day's journey. Reckoned at 2000 cubits, or three fourths of a mile, according to Jewish tradition. Bethany, just over the crown of Olivet, was about 15 furlongs from Jerusalem; so that the place of the Ascension from which the Sabbath day's journey is reckoned was considerably nearer to Jerusalem than the village. "Luke 24: 50 defines the locality by the words *over against* Bethany, *ἐως πρὸς*, as the further side of the hill away from Jerusalem and facing Bethany."¹ Bethany may be the name of a district as well as a village, and parts of the Bethany district have been some distance from the village.

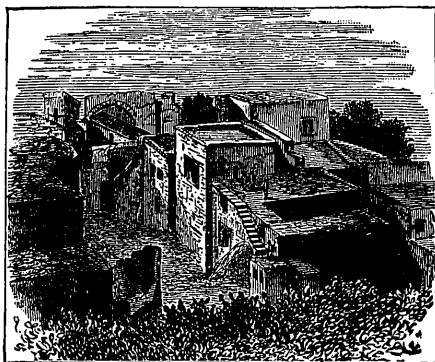
13. They went up into an upper room, τὸ ὑπερῶν, "with the article, denoting some well-known place of resort. It was the name given to the room directly under the flat roof. Such rooms were often set apart as halls for meetings. In such an apartment Paul delivered his farewell address at Troas (Acts 20: 8)."²

"The upper story seldom extended over the whole space occupied by the lower story. Access to the upper floor seems to have been sometimes by stairs on the outside of the house leading up from the street, as was the case at Rome."³ It was in some private house, quite possibly that of Mary the mother of John Mark, at whose house later many were gathered together praying (Acts 12: 12).

Where abode. Not as a home, but as a regu-

lar place of meeting, their church home. Besides this they were regular attendants at the temple services (at 9 and at 3 o'clock). The eleven apostles, as named, were the central company.

Peter, etc. The eleven apostles are here named.



UPPER ROOM OF HOUSE, showing access to it by outside stairs.

For account of each, their character and grouping, see *Teachers' Commentary on Matthew*, chapter 10.⁴

Judas, Jude, author of the Epistle, the brother, rather son, according to Greek usage.

14. These all continued, προσκαρτεροῦντες, from καρτερός, strong. lord or master of, as of circumstances or opposition. "This verb denotes either steadfast perseverance in a habit (as here and in 2: 42; 6: 4), or steadfast adherence to a person (8: 13), or constant attendance in a place (2: 46)."¹

With one accord, ὁμοθυμαδόν, from ὁμός, one and the same, and θυμός, feeling, thought, expressing inner concord, and agreement of mind, unanimity, a symphony of feeling and purpose. They had one desire, one hope, one purpose.

¹ Rendall.

² Prof. M. R. Vincent.

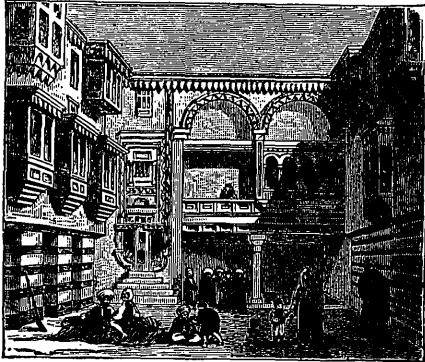
³ Harper's *Classical Dictionary*.

⁴ Vance's *The College of the Apostles* gives a good

description of the characteristics of the apostles, and the power of their distribution two by two. See, also, *Suggestive Illustrations on Matthew*, pp. 201-203.

Prayer and supplication. *Prayer* is the more general word; *supplication*, petition in some special need.¹

With the women. There is no article before "women" in the Greek, showing that "the company of believing women were not at this time a definite body."² Both Erasmus and Calvin interpret this as meaning "with their wives." Lightfoot allows this, so far as they had wives, but considers that meaning to be too limited.



COURT OF AN EASTERN HOUSE, belonging to a more wealthy family. Showing another form of upper room with windows opening into the inner court.

Doubtless there were present the women mentioned in the Gospels as ministering to Jesus and watching around the cross, — Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of James and Joses; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; Salome, the mother of John; Susanna (Luke 8:3; John 19:25); and why not Martha and Mary of Bethany?

Especially named was **Mary the mother of Jesus**, who is here mentioned for the last time, "and the Scripture leaves her in prayer."

"Who above all mothers shone,
The mother of the Blessed One."

"The beautiful gate of the Jewish Temple," says Burton, "opened into the 'Court of the Women.' And as we open the gate of the third Gospel, we enter the 'Court of the Women;' for, more than any other evangelist, St. Luke records their loving and varied ministries." And he continues their record in the Acts.

And with his brethren. James, Joses, Simon, Jude (Matt. 13:55; 27:56). There has been an age-long discussion whether these were the sons of Joseph and Mary, or of Joseph by a former wife, or were his adopted sons, and only cousins of Jesus by blood-relationship, but brethren by adoption. "They are previously mentioned as unbelieving (John 7:5; comp. Mark 6:4), but

not only the resurrection of the Lord, but also that of Lazarus may well have overcome their unbelief. . . . But whatever meaning we give to the word 'brethren' here or in the Gospels, nothing could be more significant than the fact that they had now left their settled homes in Galilee to take part in the lot of the disciples of Jesus, and to await with them the promise of the Father (Fellen). It may have been that James, 'the Lord's brother,' was converted by the Resurrection, 1 Cor. 15:7, and that his example constrained the other 'brethren' to follow him."³

The whole number in this prayer-meeting was 120 (ver. 15), and the meeting continued for ten days, the time between the Ascension, 40 days after the Passover, and the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, 50 days after the Passover.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. There is a special promise to those who are of one accord, in faith, in ardor, in pursuit of a common object. When two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, he is present with them. When they agree together for any object their prayer will be answered. The Greek word for "agree," in Matthew 18:19, is that from which comes our word "symphony," a harmony of different tones and notes. There is a power in a choir, an orchestra, to produce effects on the soul which no single voice, though of an archangel, can accomplish.

2. It is possible for a large number united in prayer to receive answers which it would be impossible for a single person to receive. For (1) each heart is strengthened, enlarged, inspired by the others; and (2) much can be accomplished by the many of one accord, which would be beyond the power of any single one, as, for instance, in the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, which was the answer to the prayers of this assembly.

3. There are two ways in which God answers prayer for spiritual gifts: (1) one by the gift itself, (2) the other by making the soul capable of receiving the gift in full measure. He can give the sunlight, and he can open blind eyes to receive it, or ordinary eyes to clearer sight. Both kinds of answers were given to this company.

4. It has been said that prayer connects us with God, as a rope connects a small boat with a great ship. The boat does not draw the ship to its position, but only itself to the ship. Prayer draws us to God, if it does not draw God to us. But in reality it does both. No answer of prayer can be better than the drawing of ourselves toward God's wisdom and love, and work, and character, and heaven. Yet as the little boat may by its connecting line bring messages and supplies from the ship, so we may by prayer bring to ourselves blessings and power and love from God.

5. Men and women were together. This is one

¹ Canon Cook.

² Rendall.

³ Knowling.

15 And in ^{those} ^{these} days Peter stood up in the midst of ^{the} ^{disciples,} ^{brethren,} and said,
(the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty.)
(and there was a multitude of persons gathered together, about a hundred and twenty),

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost ^{by the} ^{spake}
^{mouth of Da'vid spake before} ^{before by the mouth of Da'vid} concerning Judas, ^{which} ^{who} was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 For ^{he} was numbered ^{with} ^{among} us, and ^{had obtained part of} ^{received his portion in} this ^{ministry}.

18 * Now this man ^a ^{purchased} ^{obtained} a field with ^r the reward of ^{his} iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

‡ See John 21. 23. † Rev. 3. 4 (for mg.) & 11. 13 (mg. for mg.). m Luke 24. 44. Cp. Luke 22. 37. n Matt. 26. 47. Mark 14. 43. Luke 22. 47. John 18. 3. o John 6. 71 & 13. 21. p ver. 25. ch. 20. 24 & 21. 19. Rom. 11. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 1. * These two verses (18, 19) are a parenthesis in the R. V. q Cp. Matt. 27. 5-8. r Cp. Matt. 26. 14-16.

of the silent results of the gospel, the uniting of men and women in the work of saving the world.

6. The prayer-meeting was the best method of waiting for the promise of the Father. They needed the preparation in order to receive. "Men often look to bring about great results by violent and unprepared effort. But it is only in fair and forecast order, 'as the earth bringeth forth her bud.'"¹ It is useless to sow the summer seed on winter's frozen ground.

7. While we are praying, we are also to do the duties that come to hand, as these disciples took measures to choose another apostle in the place of Judas.

THE ELECTION OF MATTHIAS IN PLACE OF JUDAS, vers. 15-26.

This is the first Apostolic action after Jesus had separated from them. It is the only similar action recorded during the interval before Pentecost.

15. And in those days, the ten days of praying and waiting.

Peter stood up, as the natural spokesman calling the matter to the attention of the disciples. He assumed no authority.

The number of names together, ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ, in one place, but the force of the preposition "points to a common purpose."² They were of one mind as well as in one place. The language of this verse suggests a registration of the members as one step toward an organized community before the election of a twelfth apostle.³

16. Men and brethren, "Brother men," a respectful and solemn mode of address indicating the importance of the occasion.

This scripture, referring to the passages quoted in verse 20 (compare Luke 4: 21; Acts 8: 35).

Must needs, εἴδει, expresses "a divine necessity,"⁴ not a necessity that Judas should betray his Master, but a necessity of divine law that

punishment should follow his crime, and another apostle should take his place.

Have been fulfilled, filled full, completed the fulfilment of words spoken by David concerning the punishment of similar treachery toward himself. Both came under the same divine law; one presaged and predicted the other.

"But while David spake of himself and of his own circumstances, the Holy Ghost through him was speaking of the betrayal of the 'Son of David,' and the words which had been true of David must have their still more complete fulfilment in the betrayal of the Saviour, by him who was guide to them that took Jesus" (Matt. 26: 47, etc.).⁵

17. For he was numbered with us. He had been chosen and ordained and taught by Jesus, exactly as the other apostles; and he had every possibility and opportunity which the rest had. He grew bad under the best influences, as the rankest weeds grow in the richest soil and in the brightest sunshine.

Had obtained part, ἔλαχε τὸν κλῆρον, received the lot or portion; κλῆρον (clēron) is the same word as used for "lot" in ver. 26.⁶

18. This verse and 19 are placed in a parenthesis in the R. V., and quite probably are an explanation by Luke, and not a part of Peter's address. For Peter's audience would be familiar with the facts; Luke's would need to be told why another apostle was chosen in place of Judas.

This man purchased (R. V., obtained) a field. In Matthew 27: 7, it is said that the rulers bought the field with the Judas money. Luke's expression is merely a rhetorical figure perfectly natural under the circumstances, to show that all the reward Judas obtained for the betrayal of Jesus was a field to be buried in. The chief priests were likely to look upon what was purchased with the money as still the property of the traitor, and

¹ Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. v., the chapter on "The Bud," which furnishes an excellent example and illustration from nature.

² Rendall. ³ Knowing. ⁴ *Cambridge Bible*.

⁵ "Cleric," "clerk," "clergy," designating ministers of the Gospel, are almost transliterations of this word.

They are the choice of the Lord; their lot, or heritage, or parishes, are assigned to them by the divine will. "Webster derives the name from the lands originally allotted to the clergy" (Carr). See Deut. 18: 2, where the Levites have no landed inheritance, because "the Lord is their inheritance."

19 And it ^{was} ^{known} ^{unto} all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch ^{as} ^{that} ^{that field is called, in their proper tongue, Acel'dama,} ^{that is,} ^{to say,} The field of blood.

20 For it is written in the book of Psalms,

' Let his habitation be ^{made} desolate,
And let no man dwell therein:

and

His ^{bishopric} ^{office} let another take.

21 ^{Wherefore of these men} ^{Of the men therefore} which have companied with us ["] all the time that the Lord Jesus ["] went in and ^{went} out among us,

22 ["] Beginning from the baptism of John, unto ^{that same} ^{the} day that ["] he was ^{taken} ^{received} up from us, ^{of these} must one ^{be ordained to be} ^{become} a ["] witness with us of his resurrection.

^s Cp. ch. 21. 40. ^t Cited from Ps. 69. 25. ^u Cited from Ps. 109. 8. ^v Cp. John 15. 27. ^w Num. 27. 17. Deut. 31. 2. 1 Sam. 18. 13. John 10. 9, *al.* ^z ch. 13. 24. Mark 1. 1-4. ^y vers. 2, 9. ^z ch. 4. 33. Cp. ver. 8 & 1 Pet. 1. 3. See Luke 24. 48.

that would be the popular way of looking at it. Edersheim's view is that the blood-money by a fiction of the law was still considered to belong to Judas. And this is the more natural, if, as seems probable from the next verse, "the death of Judas, attended by all these dreadful circumstances, took place in the spot which the chief priests eventually purchased."¹

And falling headlong, he burst asunder. Matthew says that Judas hanged himself, but that is in perfect harmony with what is said here. Eastern burying grounds were of a rocky character; and "if in such a place the suicide first hanged himself and the cord which he used gave way, it is easy to understand how in the fall all the consequences described in this verse would be the result. For a similar result to bodies falling on rocks, comp. 2 Chron. 25: 12."²

"Matthew traces the traitor's fall through all its human stages of remorse to his own extreme self-inflicted penalty; and the curtain appropriately drops over the last act of the workings of guilty despair. St. Luke portrays not the act of Judas in the frenzy of desperation, but the act of God in righteous retribution. . . . The two accounts are (not, as Meyer, the result of different traditions, but) companion pictures by inspired artists, equally and perfectly informed; whereof, in strict suitability to their several designs, the one reveals the *human* side of the tragedy, and the other the *divine*."²

19. Called, in their proper tongue, Aramaic, one branch of the Syriac (the Hebrew Aram = Syria). It was written with the same alphabet as the Hebrew, and was allied to it. "By the time of Christ Aramaic had long been the current popular speech of the Jews in Palestine."³

The field of blood, because bought with blood-money, and because Judas here met his tragic death. Both reasons are good and true, and there is no contradiction between them.⁴

20. For it is written in the (rather "a") book of Psalms (69: 26), Let his habitation be desolate and let no man dwell therein. Quoted not quite verbally from the Septuagint, a Greek translation. Psalm 69 was written, according to the title, by David, or the title means that it belongs to the Book or Collection of David's Psalms, and was sung to the popular tune, "Lilies."

His bishopric let another take is from Psalm 109: 8. "In these Psalms we see how the history of prophets and holy men of old, of a David or a Jeremiah, was typical of the history of the Son of man made perfect through suffering, and we know how our Lord himself saw the fulfilment of the words of the suffering Psalmist (41: 9) in the tragic events of his own life (John 13: 18). So, too, St. Peter in the recent miserable end of the traitor sees another evidence, not only of the general truth, which the Psalmists learnt through suffering, that God rewarded his servants and that confusion awaited the unrighteous, but also another fulfilment in the case of Judas of the doom which the Psalmists of old had invoked upon the persecutors of the faithful servants of God."⁵

Bishopric did not at that time have the limited, ecclesiastical meaning it now possesses. It is better to translate "office," as the R. V., the office of an apostle, who was to oversee, and carry on the work of Jesus.⁶

Another, *ἕτερος*. The Greek implies another of a different kind.

21, 22. The first step was to decide as to who

¹ Cambridge Bible.

² McClellan, in *Speaker's Commentary*.

³ *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

⁴ "There is a curious Latin book, published in 1680, which gives all the traditions about the traitor. Its title

is *Kempius, On the Life and Fate of Judas Iscariot*," — Stokes.

⁵ Knowling.

⁶ See Ruskin's stirring words concerning the office of bishop in his *Sesame and Lilies*.

23 And they ^{appointed} ^{put forward} two, Joseph called ^a Bar'sa-bas, who was surnamed ^b Jūs'-tūs, and ^c Mātthi'ās.

24 And ^d they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, ^e which knowest the hearts of all ^{men,} shew ^{whether} of these two ^{the one whom} thou hast chosen,

25 ^{That he may} ^{to} take ^{part of} ^{the place in} this ministry and ^{apostleship}, from which Judas ^{by transgression fell} ^{tell away,} that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave ^{forth their lots;} ^{lots for them;} and the lot fell upon Mātthi'ās; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

a Cp. ch. 15. 22. b Cp. ch. 18. 7 & Col. 4. 11. c ver. 26. d ch. 6. 6 & 13. 3. e See 1 Sam. 16. 7 & Rom. 8. 27. f See ver. 17. g Rōm. 1. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 2. Gal. 2. 8.

were eligible to the office of Apostle. Which have companied with us. He only could be of the twelve, who had been taught and trained by Jesus during his whole ministry, and had witnessed his deeds, studied his character, and had seen him on the cross; and after his resurrection. They were to be witnesses of the great facts of the Messiah, and their meaning. Thus the witness was twofold. "On the one side there is the historical witness to the facts, on the other, the internal testimony of personal experience."¹

23. And they, probably the whole assembly (Carr). Appointed two. The method of choosing them is unknown. But probably only very few could fulfil the conditions. Nothing is known of the two men. Joseph Barsabas may possibly have been a brother of Judas Barsabas mentioned in 15: 22. Both Eusebius and Epiphanius rank Matthias in the Seventy, and he is said to have suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia.

24. They prayed, and said. Praying they said, Thou, Lord. "As the choice and appointment of the Twelve and Seventy belonged to Christ personally, this prayer must be addressed to Christ himself, the first public prayer addressed to him. The title Lord is applied in the Acts both to the Father and to the ascended Jesus."²

Which knowest the hearts, καρδιογνώστα, heart-knowing. Only He who knew the inner motive and character could choose aright.

Shew, ἀνδείξον, to lift up anything on high, and exhibit it for all to behold; hence, to proclaim any one as elected to an office.³

Thou hast chosen, by guiding the lot that was cast (ver. 26). The result expressed a divine purpose and verdict. "To the Jew the lot was a natural and reverential expedient. It was an appeal to God for decision. To him there was no element of chance in it. . . . It was by this method that every day in the temple the most sacred functions of divine service were appor-

tioned to the ministering priests. Thus it was that Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, on the most critical day of his life, obtained by lot the privilege of burning incense in the Holy Place."⁴

25. Judas . . . might go to his own place. Peter does not take the part of judge, but leaves Judas in the hands of God. Judas could not remain in the place of an apostle, to which place he was chosen. He must of necessity go to the place to which his character and deeds proved that he belonged, and which by his acts he had deliberately chosen.

NOTE that every one is likely in this world to find his own place, and in the other world he must go to his own. It is natural for each to go to his own place, to the company he loves, to the society where he feels at home. It is so in nature. Each particle in a free saturated solution goes to its own place and forms exactly the crystal which is made of such particles. In the soil, the particles go to their own place in tree or flower.

26. And they gave forth their lots. This was not a voting by the whole assembly, but, as better expressed in R. V., "gave lots for them," the choice being only between these two. The method is uncertain, but probably small tablets of stone or wood were inscribed with the names of the two candidates, and placed in an urn, and then one of them drawn out,⁵ or the urn was shaken till one came out.⁶ Possibly one white stone was put in with black ones. See Rev. 2: 17. "In ancient courts of justice the accused were condemned by black pebbles, and acquitted by white."⁷

And He was numbered with the eleven, συγκατεψηφίσθη, from σύν, with, implying the unanimity of the vote, κατά, down, from top to bottom, implying the thoroughness, completeness of the ratification, and ψηφίζω, to count with pebbles (ψηφός), to reckon. Matthias was reckoned as

¹ Westcott, on John 15: 27.

² Rendall.

³ Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon.

⁴ Arthur Carr, M. A., in Expositor.

⁵ See Hastings' Bib. Dic.

⁶ "A like custom prevailed among the Greeks, as in the well-known story of the stratagem of Ctesiphon in the division of territory after the Dorian invasion (Sophocles, *Aias*, 1285; comp. Prov. 16: 33)."—Plumptre.

one of the twelve apostles by the unanimous declaration of the company.

NOTE. "In every subsequent call and election to the ministry in every branch of the Church of Christ, it is not difficult to discern in some form or procedure the requirements and method foreshewn in the election of Matthias: (1) Companionship of Jesus; (2) Testimony of those who have known the life and character of the candidate; (3) Choice by the brotherhood; (4) The appeal to God in prayer; (5) The Divine judgment; (6) The formal admission to the ministry."¹

NOTE. Although no mention is made of Matthias in history, it does not follow that he was not a very useful apostle. Obscurity is not uselessness.

It may be true of a rose that it is

"born to blush unseen

And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

but it is not true of human souls. The invisible moisture at some time changes into rain, and again unseen helps make flowers and fruit. The largest part of the forces transforming our visible world are themselves invisible.

¹ Arthur Carr, M. A.

CHAPTER 2.

THE POWER.	Descent of the Spirit.	{ Symbol of the wind. Symbol of the flame. Speaking with tongues.	TIME. A. D. 30. May 28.
	First Effects.	{ Amazement. Inquiry. Opposition.	
THE CHURCH BEAUTIFUL.	Peter's Sermon.	{ Defence. Argument. Application.	PLACE. Jerusalem. An upper room.
	Birth of the Church.	{ 3000 converted. Baptized into the church. Fellowship. Teachableness. Worship.	
	Characteristics.	{ Generosity. Singleness of heart. Attractiveness. Joy.	

1 AND when ^h the day of Pēn'tē-cōst was ^{fully} now come, they were all ^{with one accord} together in one place.

^h ch. 20. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 8. Cp. Lev. 23. 15.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, vers. 1-11.

1. When the day of Pentecost. The meaning of Pentecost is Fiftieth; and the feast on that day was so called because it occurred on the fiftieth day after the Passover, calculating from the second day of unleavened bread. It was a harvest festival, a feast of first fruits of the harvest, and a day of Thanksgiving, Deut. 16: 10, 11. It was one of the three great feasts of the Jews to which people came from all parts of the land.

Was fully come. Was being fulfilled (imp. tense), was in the process of fulfilment. The day

began at the previous sunset, according to Jewish reckoning, and now the dawn was bursting into the full glory of its shining.

They, the one hundred and twenty who had been waiting and praying for ten days, were all with one accord, *ὁμοθυμαδόν*, see on 1: 14. "It has been said, whether by poetry or science matters not, that there is a certain point in the upper air, in which all the discordant sounds of the earth—the rattle of wheels, the chime of bells, the roll of the drum, the laugh of the child—meet and blend in perfect harmony. Surely it is more than a pleasant conceit, that when once

2 And suddenly there came ^{a sound from heaven} ^{from heaven a sound} as of ⁱ the rushing of a mighty wind, and ^j it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them ^{cloven tongues} ^{tongues parting asunder,} ^k like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them.

i Cp. 1 Kin. 19. 11 & Job 38. 1 & Ezek. 1. 4.

j Cp. ch. 4. 31 & 16. 26.

k Matt. 3. 11.

lifted up in fellowship in Christ Jesus, we meet in a high and heavenly place where all things are gathered together in one."¹

In one place. The upper room mentioned in the previous chapter. The same two elements of unity of Spirit and oneness of place are present, if we use the better text of the R. V. (*ἑνὸς, together*, instead of *ὁμοθυμαδόν, with one accord*), and accept Rendall's meaning of *ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ, in one place*, as indicating "of one mind and purpose," as well as place.

THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE TIME. 1. It was called the "day of first fruits" (Num. 28: 26), or "feast of harvest" (Ex. 23: 16). The wheat-fields were then white with the harvest. It was to be a great harvest ingathering of disciples.

2. It was, according to a probable Jewish tradition, the anniversary of the giving of the law from Sinai, the revelation that ushered in the first dispensation. It was thus specially fitting that the new dispensation begin on the same day, the day of promulgation of the new and better Law,—the Law of Faith and Love and Hope.

3. It was the day on which especially the Jew was to remember his deliverance from the bondage of Egypt (Deut. 16: 12) into the freedom of the promised land, and now into the glorious freedom of the sons of God.

4. It was a day of joy and thanksgiving, a fitting time for this most joyful day in the church's history.

5. At this feast, being in the summer, greater numbers were present in Jerusalem than at any other season, from all parts of the world. "From a census taken in the time of Nero, more than two million seven hundred thousand were gathered at the Passover, and still greater numbers came to Pentecost." From this centre the power would radiate to all parts of the world. Those who came were the Jews of the Dispersion, and proselytes to the Jewish religion, expecting the Messiah.

2. And suddenly. As they were praying. So the lightning breaks forth suddenly from the cloud, but the electricity that prepared for it had been gathering silently for hours and days. A sound... as of a rushing mighty wind. R. V., "as of the rushing of a mighty wind," *ῥεπουμένης πνοῆς βίας, a mighty wind borne along; πνοῆς, wind*, is from *πνέω, to breathe, to blow*; whence also *πνεῦμα, spirit, breath*. It is not said that

there was any wind, but only a sound as of a wind. No "whirlwind shook the building." "The audible sign filling the room announced the power represented by it as doing the same."² And it filled all the house. Not merely the upper room of Acts 1: 13. This was a token that the Spirit would fill the whole church, which is the house of God (1 Tim. 3: 15), and that it filled every part and faculty of the soul, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED BY THE SYMBOL OF THE WIND. The Greek word, as the Hebrew word, for "spirit" is the same as that for "wind," which is the natural metaphor to represent the spirit. Jesus himself so uses it in John 3: 8.

1. It is an invisible power of which no one knows "whence it cometh or whither it goeth." You see the results, but you cannot tell the causes, which are beyond our reach. Even to-day, when we have daily reports from the weather bureau, no one knows where and when a storm will arise. We see the storm and its direction, and can tell with great probability to what place it is going and when it will get there. But for beginning and end we know not whence it cometh or whither it goeth.

2. But we recognize it by its effects, in sound, in music, in force, in life.

3. It is very powerful. The air is so powerful that even free dynamite smiting against it on one side crushes the rocks on the other. Compare a great storm at sea.

4. Yet it is very gentle and delicate, breathing around the rose, and gently touching the little child.

5. It comes pure from heaven.

6. The air is all pervasive. It penetrates the hardest rock.

7. It is the breath of life. No one can live without it.

"We are but organs mute, till a master touches the keys—

Verily, vessels of earth into which God poureth the wine;

Harps are we, silent harps that have hung on the willow trees,

Dumb till our heartstrings swell and break with a pulse divine."

3. And there appeared. The audible sign is

¹ Rev. William Adams, D. D.

² Prof. Alvah Hovey, D. D.

4 And they were all 'filled with the Holy ^{Ghost,} Spirit, and began "to speak with other tongues, "as the Spirit gave them utterance.

l ch. 4. 31 & 13. 52. Cp. ch. 1. 5 & 8. 17 & 9. 17 & 11. 15, 24 & 13. 9, *al.*

m See Mark 16. 17.

n Cp. 1 Cor. 12.

followed by a visible. **Cloven tongues like as of fire.** Not fire, but with the appearance and brightness of fire, as the burning bush which Moses saw. **Cloven.** Parted as from a central flame, διαμερίζουσαι γλώσσαι, *tongues distributing themselves throughout*, from *διδ*, *throughout*, and *μερίζω*, *to part, to distribute*. The idea is not that each tongue of fire was divided or forked, but that the fiery appearance, at first presenting itself as a single body, one mighty flame of fire, soon divided into separate tongues of flame, one for each person in the assembly. "The present participle denotes a process seen in actual operation. Tongues of fire were seen to detach themselves and settle on the several Christians there present."¹ Plumptre likens it to a shower of fiery tongues. "A lambent flame upon the head was believed by the Rabbins to be a token of divine favor (Schöttgen); as by classic poets, Homer (*Iliad*, 13: 214), Virgil (*Æneid*, 2: 683)."² "See instances in Wetstein. But the thought here is not so much of fire as the token of divine favor, as of the tongue, as of fire, conferring a divine power to utter in speech divine things."³ **And it, the appearance of flame, one tongue, sat upon each of them.** Apostles, laymen, and women. **Sat** denotes that the appearance was not a momentary flash, and that the influence, which it symbolized, was to be permanent. The Spirit henceforth was to abide in the church, and "hold his throne and seat there, as the Shekinah in the Holy of Holies of old," and as the spirit of life abides in our bodies, the organizing, controlling, life-giving power.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED BY THE SYMBOL OF THE FLAME. Fire is one of the most expressive symbols of the Holy Spirit. Fire, shining in light, is mysterious in nature, ineffably bright and glorious, everywhere present, swift-winged, undefiled, and undefilable.

"The *fiery sword* barred of old the gates of Paradise; the *fiery tongue*, which brought salvation, restored the gift."⁴

1. The twofold aspect of the church is here represented. (1) Its unity was shown by the original mass of flame, all of one nature; and then (2) the individual aspect, for the flame separated and each person had his own distinct share.

2. The flame represents the revealing power of the Holy Spirit, shining into each soul, and illu-

minating it as a house when the lamps are lighted within; as a twilight scene when the sun rises upon it.

3. It expresses the purifying, cleansing power of the Spirit. Fire and light are the great disease killers. So is the Spirit to moral diseases. He always purifies the soul where he dwells. He is the refining fire that cleanses the dross from the pure gold.

4. It symbolized the comfort, warmth, cheer, fresh life, joy, peace, which the Holy Spirit imparts.

5. The far-reaching power of light expressed the light which the disciples should impart to the world. Light cannot be hidden. If it ceases to shine, it ceases to exist.

6. Light convinces the world of dust, of dirt, of a thousand evil things unknown in the darkness. For examples, a ray of light in a dusty room, and Tyndall's ray through the glass tube showing seed germs that no other process could make known. So the Spirit convinces of sin, of the evils in the heart. He does more than this: he causes men to feel as well as to see.

7. Fire is the symbol of intense energy and zeal. The Holy Spirit fills the soul with glowing enthusiasms and unconquerable energy and zeal.

"Swiftly and straight each tongue of flame,
Through cloud and breeze unwavering came,
And darted to its place of rest
On some meek brow of Jesus blest.
Nor fades it yet, that living gleam;
And still those lambent lightnings stream;
Where'er the Lord is, there are they;
In every heart that gives him room
They light his altar every day,
Zeal to inflame and vice consume."⁵

4. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit filled every part of their being,—mind, heart, will, memory, body, and spirit. There were different degrees of capacity, but each one's measure was full.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. 1. There could be no mistake about this being a divine power actually bestowed. The effects produced prove this. Nothing less than divine power could have so changed the disciples from common men to men able to "turn the world upside down," and change the whole course of history. Nothing less than divine power could have wrought such

¹ Rendall.

² Canon Cook.

³ Knowling.

⁴ St. Cyril.

⁵ John Keble.

5 ^{And} ^{Now} there were dwelling at Jě-rŭ'să-lēm Jews, devout men, ^{out of} ^{from} every nation under heaven.

6 ^{Now} ^{And} when this ^{was noised abroad,} ^{sound was heard,} the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them ^{speak} ^{speaking} in his own language.

o ver. 2.

changes in the lives and moral character of such great numbers.

2. This gift was bestowed not only upon the apostles, but the whole worshipping church.

3. The signs that accompanied this power were to reveal the fact, "in letters that could be read from the stars," that the invisible Holy Spirit was actually present, to make the fact clear and unmistakable, to show the source whence the power and its effects came, and to illustrate its nature.

4. That the Holy Spirit was not now for the first time bestowed upon men is plain, from the fact that "the same language here employed is used respecting Elizabeth (Luke 1: 41), Zacharias (Luke 1: 67), and John the Baptist (Luke 1: 15); and the Old Testament repeatedly makes mention of the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of the prophets and others." "That which was peculiar in this event is, that (1) now, for the first time, *all* were filled with the Holy Ghost, not merely the apostles; and (2) the influence was not occasional and transient, but abiding."¹ (3) But the chief difference is the *abundance* and *power* with which the Holy Spirit is now given, thus characterizing the gospel times as the dispensation of the Spirit. Formerly the gift was like the dew, now it is like the rain; formerly like the early dawning light, now like the full splendor and power of the day; formerly like the first early fruits, now like an abundant harvest. (4) "It implies a reception from the Spirit of extraordinary powers, in addition to ordinary sanctifying grace."² It was endowment for service.

Began to speak with other tongues, in other languages than their own Hebrew, or Aramaic, the then popular language of Palestine, or Greek; with all three of which they naturally were more or less familiar. "Luke distinctly asserts that the apostles, if not the whole Christian assembly, received the power of speaking in foreign languages, and that some of the hearers, at all events, understood them."³

Other tongues, *ἑτέρας γλώσσας*, "strictly, *different tongues*, from their native tongues; the distinction being in *quality* rather than a *numerical* distinction, which is represented by *ἔλλος*."⁴

As the Spirit gave them utterance. It was the Spirit speaking through the persons who ut-

tered words. "It may be gathered from the explicit referencee made to it in the New Testament that the miracle did not affect the ears of the hearers, or the understanding of the speaker, but simply his utterance. He did not gain intelligent knowledge of a language which he had never learned, nor himself understand the words which he was enabled to frame, but he did receive some faculty of articulate utterance in a strange language, which conveyed his thought to those who understood that language. This explains the different effect produced on various hearers at Pentecost: some heard with amazement from the lips of Galileans the familiar tones of their own language, while others caught only a confused babel of foreign sounds."⁵

5. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem. Both residents (for the foreign Jews loved to spend their declining years there) and pilgrims who had come up to the Pentecost feast.

There are two readings for the Greek word translated "at," — *eis*, *in*, with the thought of "to," of approach, referring to visitors and immigrants; and *ἐν*, *in*, the better reading, for those who had their permanent abode there. The two are distinguished in 7: 4.

Devout men. Truly religious men, waiting for the appearing of the promised Messiah. These were the persons most likely to become Christians. Such an one was Simeon (Luke 2: 25), who is described by the same word "devout," and as "waiting for the consolation of Israel." Out of every nation under heaven. Only a very small portion of the Jewish people lived in Palestine during the times of our Lord and his apostles; by far the largest number were natives of other lands.

6. Now when this was noised abroad. Better as in R. V., "And when this sound was heard." Literally, *this sound having taken place*. The Greek word here for "sound" is never used for "report" or "rumor." It must mean either the sound of the rushing, mighty wind (Meyer), or the sound of the disciples talking in the various languages (Neander). The sound was heard outside of the house and drew the attention of the passing crowds. And were confounded, *συνεχθῆναι*, *poured together*. Our word "confound" is from the Latin, with the same meaning. The

¹ Lyman Abbott, D. D.

² Prof. Alvah Hovey, D. D.

³ Knowling.

⁴ Prof. M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

⁵ Rendall.

7 And ^{one to another,} they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these which speak ² Gāl-i-læ'āns?

8 And how hear we every man in our own ^{tongue,} wherein we were born?

9 Pār'thī-āns, and ³ Mēdes, and ⁴ Ē'lām-ītes, and the dwellers in Mēs-ō-pō-tā'-mī-ā, ^{and} in Jū-dæ'ā, and Cāp-pā-dō'cī-ā, in Pōn'tūs, and Ā'siā,

10 ⁱⁿ Phryg'i-ā and Pām-phyl'i-ā, in Ē'gypt, and ⁱⁿ the parts of Lib'y-ā about Cŷ-rē-nē, and ^{strangers of sojourners from} Rome, both Jews and ⁵ proselytes,

11 ^{Cretes} ^{Cre'tans} and Ā-rā'bī-āns, we do hear them ^{speak} in our tongues the ^{wonderful} ^{mighty} works of God.

p ver. 12. q ch. 1. 11. Cp. Matt. 26. 73. r 2 Kin. 17. 6. s Gen. 14. 1, 9. Isai. 11. 11. Dan. 8. 2. t Acts 8:27.

picture is of a cascade pouring into a pool, or of streams rushing together, making a confused mingling of the waters. The whole assembly were perplexed and confused as to the meaning of this strange phenomenon. Every man heard them (was hearing, imperfect) speak in his own language. A different word from "tongues" in ver. 4. It means both dialect and language.

7. They were all amazed, ἐξίστατο, from ἐκ, out of, and ἵστημι, to place or put. The verb means to put out of place, to drive one out of his senses, to be overwhelmed with surprise. Our word *ecstasy* is a transcript of the corresponding noun.

And marvelled. This denotes continuing wonder.

All . . . Galileans. They had come from Galilee to the feasts. The larger part of the believers in Jesus lived in Galilee. The majority of those who met together continually in the upper room would naturally be visitors, since those who lived in Jerusalem would have their own homes.

These Galileans were of the common people, hence the wonder.

8. In our own tongue. Language, dialect; same word as in ver. 6. So, still, the Bible speaks the universal language, coming home to each soul of whatever nation or race, speaking to his individual needs, and answering to his longings and prayers. Each one did not speak all the languages, but some spoke each of them, so that they recognized the wonder when they heard ordinary people, who had never been educated and never travelled out of Palestine, speak rare, strange, and difficult languages. Hence the various distant peoples are named in vers. 9-11.

"It is difficult for us who travel over vast areas of one language to understand the confusion and perplexity now existing in Oriental lands, where the greatest empires 'are merely a congeries of unamalgamated and jealous tribes;' and racial distinctions, separate governments, and restricted commercial intercourse have preserved,

and very often created, distinct and mutually unintelligible dialects and languages."¹

9. Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites. In the Persian Empire beyond the Tigris, and including Turkistan and Afghanistan to the border of India. Here some of the ten tribes were settled by Shalmaneser. They all spoke Persian, but in different provincial forms and dialects. Mesopotamia, i. e., "between the rivers" Tigris and Euphrates. It includes Assyria and Babylon, now belonging to the Turkish Empire. The language was some form of Chaldee. Judæa. Speaking Aramaic in a different dialect from Galilee. Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia. Not our Asia, but a small Roman province in what is now Asia Minor. Greek; and local dialects.

10. Phrygia, and Pamphylia. Here Greek, a different dialect in each, was spoken by the educated, but the common people had their own dialects, Lycaonian, Galatian, etc. The last five were all in Asia Minor. Egypt, where the language was Coptic. Libya. In northern Africa, the portion referred to being Cyrene, on the Mediterranean. Their language is not certainly known, but they must have spoken also Greek. Rome, with the Latin language. Jews and proselytes, i. e., heathen who had accepted the Jewish religion. These terms probably include all the preceding nations.

11. Cretes, from the island of Crete in the Mediterranean, now called Candia. They may have spoken Greek. Arabians, from the great peninsula which stretches between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. They spoke Arabic. The wonderful works of God. The disciples told the people of all these countries, in their own languages, about God's wondrous love in sending his son Jesus, the Messiah, to save men from sin, and bring in the glorious days foretold by the prophets.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED BY THE SYMBOL OF THE TONGUE. 1. "The human tongue, illuminated and sanctified by fire from the inner sanctuary, was about to be the instrument of the

¹ Canon Tristram,

gospel's advancement, — not penal laws, not the sword and fire of persecution; and so long as the divinely appointed means were adhered to, so long the course of our holy religion was one long-continued triumph."¹

2. "This miracle was meant to foreshadow the universal progress of the new faith and its message for all mankind, without distinction of nation, position, or age."² "Pentecost is the reversal of Babel." The Bible in whole or in part is translated into more than four hundred languages and dialects, all the principal ones of the world. This is the modern Pentecost, whenever the Holy Spirit in Christ's disciples makes these tongues speak the gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. But it must ever be a tongue of fire, a tongue inspired and filled with the Spirit. The best preaching is "logic set on fire."

4. Those who are filled with the Spirit speak to all hearts, all needs, all characters. Not each disciple to all, but some disciple for each need. They speak with new tongues, new meaning, new power. The tongue is the outlet of the soul. A new spirit always means a new tongue.

5. It was the symbol of the unity of the church, — one spirit, but many tongues; one central power, but a thousand manifestations. "Many as the waves, but one as the sea."

6. It is well, with the fiery tongues, ever to recall another complementary symbol of the Spirit, so often referred to in the Gospels, that of *the dove*, — the symbol of innocence, gentleness, tenderness, and love. By these, as well as by fire, was Jesus victorious. "He wooed and won." "The Holy Ghost was made manifest in a dove and in fire; to betoken it is the same Spirit which requires innocency in the saints, but would not have them forget zeal. If the dove sit upon your head, it will instil simplicity, but simplicity may be chill and faint in a good cause. Therefore, if a pillar of fire sit upon your head, it will infuse fervency."³

THE NATURE OF THE GIFT OF TONGUES. The interpretation of this has perplexed commentators almost as much as the actual event perplexed the hearers then.

1. We have two comparatively full accounts of speaking with tongues: one here and the other in 1 Cor. 14: 1-33, with several other references to the fact.

2. The phenomena described in the two places, while differing somewhat in manifestation and form, are doubtless one and the same gift. In essence and in source they are identical.

3. The gift was "evidently the frenzied or ecstatic utterance of sounds ordinarily unintelligible both to speakers and hearers. . . . The speaker

was supposed to be completely under the control of the spirit, to be a mere passive instrument in his hands, and to be moved and played upon by him."⁴ "I believe the event related in our text to have been a sudden and powerful inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by which the disciples uttered not of their minds, but as mouthpieces of the Spirit, the praises of God in various languages, hitherto, and possibly at the time itself, unknown to them. How is this related to the speaking with tongues afterward spoken of by St. Paul (1 Cor. 14)? I answer that they were one and the same thing."⁵

The reason for the need of an interpreter in the Corinthian church, and for Paul's argument, lies in the fact that most of those present in the meeting were ignorant of the meaning of the unknown tongue, so that the effect produced would be the same as described in the Acts. A few could understand, but to most it would be unintelligible jargon. But Paul distinctly implies that at Corinth real languages were spoken.

Professor Stokes makes use of the scientific fact of hypnotism, which shows that "it is impossible to assign any limits to the influence of the mind over the body," to show that such an impartation of the gift of speech is certainly possible.

4. *Was the gift of tongues used for preaching the gospel?*

On the one hand, most commentators think that the gift was not abiding beyond the time of speaking, and imparted no knowledge of foreign languages; and hence was not used in preaching. The gift "was not a permanent one, any more than the presence of the dove on the head of Jesus was permanent; but the presence of the Spirit was to be as permanent with the disciples as it had been with Jesus." Nothing is said of the use of this gift in preaching. In most places it was not needed, for Greek was almost universally spoken by the more intelligent people in every country, and through them the gospel could be made known to their countrymen who spoke only the local dialects. The Jews, too, doubtless retained their knowledge of the Palestinian Aramaic. "The gift of tongues then was one of the special powers bestowed at Pentecost; but it was by no means a permanent and abiding power with any one. It is, however, utterly at variance with all early record to suppose this gift was a power of speaking in various languages, to be used by the first believers when they preached the gospel in distant lands. The New Testament knows of no such supernatural endowment with power to preach the gospel in languages which the preacher had never learned. On the contrary, Paul, 'who spoke with tongues more

¹ Prof. Stokes in *Expositor's Bible*.

² Prof. Knowlton.

³ Prof. Hackett.

⁴ Prof. McGiffert.

⁵ Dean Alford, *Greek New Test.*

12 And " they were all amazed, and were ^{in doubt, perplexed,} saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 ^{Others} But others ^v mocking said, ^{These men} They ^{are} ^{full of} filled with new wine.

u ver. 7. v Cp. ch. 17. 32 & 1 Cor. 14. 23.

than all,' did not understand the dialect of Lycaonia (Acts 14: 11). Jerome also tells us that Paul was accompanied by Titus as an interpreter (Estius on 2 Cor. 11); and Papias (Eusebius, *H. E.* 3: 39) writes of Mark as acting in a like capacity to Peter."¹

On the other hand, Professor Stokes in *The Expositors' Bible*, Sadler, in an excursus to his *Commentary on the Acts*, and others, think that the gift "was designed by its very nature to have been a means of disseminating the gospel." This gives a new and deeper meaning to the gift, if the wonderful works of God, made known to strangers in Jerusalem each in their own tongue, were also made known by the apostles and early Christians to the foreign nations to which these strangers belonged.

"We have no trace of any apostle being compelled to spend months, or may be years, in mastering some language, whereas you cannot take up a missionary journal of the present day without reading of the time which has to be spent before one from this country can very imperfectly make the truth known to those amongst whom he labors." The gift was bestowed at Corinth "that they might speak to the crowds of foreigners which thronged its streets and places of public resort 'in their own tongues the wonderful works of God.'" And so of all the four places, Jerusalem, Corinth, Cesarea, and Ephesus, where the gift was bestowed, and where the reality of the gift could be at once tested.²

Origen, who lived about 200 years later, says: "I suppose that he was made a debtor to different nations, because, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, he had received the gift of speaking in the languages of all nations, as he himself also saith, 'I speak in tongues more than ye all.'"³

Professor Ramsay says that in Asia Minor, while most books were written in Greek, and Greek and Latin were used by the officials and the educated, the great body of the people, to whom Paul preached, knew only their own dialect. Twelve unlearned men, chiefly Galilean peasants, could not well evangelize the world without the gift of tongues. As Greek then, so "English now will carry a man over the world,

but English will not enable him to preach to the people of India or of China."⁴

FOUR EFFECTS OF THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT, vers. 12, 13.

I. THE CHANGE IN THE APOSTLES. One effect of this gift of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles was a wonderful change in them. It was almost a transfiguration experience. So the dead wire is thrilled with electricity, and bursts out into light and power. They were common men no longer. As Mosheim says, "Their ignorance was turned into light, their doubts into certainty, their fears into a firm and invincible fortitude, and their former backwardness into an ardent and inextinguishable zeal." Note especially the change in Peter from the man who, two months before, had forsaken his Lord and fled, and thrice denied him.⁵

II. THE SPIRIT OF INQUIRY, growing out of amazement and perplexity.

12. And they were all amazed. See on ver. 7. And were in doubt, *διηπόρουν*, from *διδ*, through, and *ἀπορεύω*, to be without a way out. The radical idea of the compound verb seems to be of one who goes through the whole list of possible ways, and finds no way out. Hence, to be in perplexity.⁶ They could not understand what these strange sights and sounds meant.

III. OPPOSITION. 13. Others, *ἑτεροι*, of a different class.

Mocking, *χλευάζοντες*, from *χλεύη*, a jest or joke. The best texts prefix *διδ*, through, or intensive. It was a jest all through, a complete joke.

These men are full of new wine. At that season there was no new wine, in the sense of unfermented. But it refers to the last vintage of the previous autumn. It was "sweet wine," still in the process of fermenting, "referring to the lusciousness of the quality of its make, and not of necessity to the brevity of its age."⁷ They well knew that "in the East men drink only in the evening, so that no drunken person is ever seen by day."⁸

Only those foreign Jews of each country could understand what was said in their own language. To all others the words were unintelligible, and

¹ Schaff, note in *Revision Com.*

² From Sadler.

³ Quoted by Wordsworth.

⁴ *Church in the Roman Empire.*

⁵ Very instructive are the experiences of Charles G.

Finney; Dwight L. Moody, told by him in an address at Glasgow; and President Jonathan Edwards.

⁶ Prof. M. R. Vincent, in *Word Studies.*

⁷ Knowing.

⁸ Geikie. See the story of the "Sleeper Awakened" in the *Arabian Nights.*

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and ^{said} unto them, *saying*, Ye men of Jū-dæ'ā, and all ^{spoke forth} ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and ^{hearken to} give ear unto my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, *w* seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day.

w Cp. 1 Thess. 5. 7.

seemed like a meaningless babel. Similar results are often noticed in a revival of religion. We know there is a great power for good, when the opposition is strong. There is no excitement against a cold church or an indifferent religion. But when men rage against the truth, then take courage, for there is power on your side.

IV. There came a wonderful power upon the people, leading three thousand of them to become disciples in one day. Such a power has been often felt since, and nothing can account for it but the Holy Spirit of God.

PETER'S SERMON, vers. 14-40.

Peter "had to speak on the spur of the moment, and to a crowd excited as only an Eastern crowd can be. It is not easy for the most practised orator to catch the ear and hold the attention of a confused and hostile crowd. Shakespeare means us to recognize consummate skill in Mark Antony's handling of the Roman citizens at Cæsar's funeral; but he used flattering words, and he spoke in order to rouse the people against the assassins of Cæsar, not against themselves. St. Peter had to address the crowd on a theme which could not be welcome, and to stir them to self-condemnation. Yet we see no trace of hesitation or embarrassment."¹

CHARACTERISTICS. 1. It was characterized by great fearlessness.

2. It had a definite, practical theme of vital

importance, a theme which filled Peter's whole soul.

3. It was based on facts, on what he personally knew of Jesus Christ. The life of Christ all knew, but the great essential final fact, the resurrection of Jesus, had occurred within 50 days; so that even before a hostile audience Peter "adduces no evidence, alleges no argument to prove its truth, but simply states the fact as indisputable, and his hearers accept it without question or demur. The fact was too notorious, it seems, the witnesses who had seen Jesus alive since his resurrection too many, for any adversary to challenge the testimony of the twelve. Peter here strikes the keynote of apostolic teaching."²

4. The sermon was scriptural, based on what the people accepted without doubting. "The first thing that strikes one," says Bishop Williams, "whether in the preaching of St. Peter or St. Paul, is the way in which they always present, at the outset, *something held in common* by themselves and their hearers."

5. The sermon was well reasoned. It was an appeal to their convictions and good judgment.

6. There was a direct, personal application.

7. The real power came from the Holy Spirit, who was present. Nothing less can account for the results.

8. There was also the speaker's personal character and experience. Phillips Brooks says that "the most important part of a sermon is the man behind it."

ANALYSIS OF THE SERMON.

SUBJECT. Jesus is the true Messiah and Saviour.

INTRODUCTION. A kindly denial of false accusations, and explanation of what led to them.

ARGUMENT. { Fulfilment of Scripture.
Jesus did the works of the expected Messiah.
His miracles they had witnessed.
His resurrection proved his Messiahship.
All was in accordance with Scripture.

CONCLUSION. "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

APPLICATION. Repent, Believe, Receive the Holy Spirit.

INTRODUCTION. 14. Peter, standing up with the eleven other apostles, including Matthias. Peter was the spokesman, but all the others stood up with him as endorsers of what he said.

Said, ἀπεφθέγγετο, to proclaim out, to speak out (ἀπό). It "denotes a clear, loud utterance."

Hearken, ἐνωρίσασθε, from ἐν, in, and οὖς, the ear, "give ear." Let my words enter your ears, both physical and spiritual.

15. Not drunken . . . seeing it is but the third hour. Nine o'clock. At so early an hour the charge of drunkenness was contrary to all

¹ Donald Frazer, in *Speeches of the Apostles*.

² Rendall.

16 But this is that which ^{was} ^{hath} been spoken by the prophet Jō'el:

17 ^α And it shall ^{come to pass} ^{be} in the last days, saith God,

"I will pour ^{out} ^{forth} of my Spirit ^z upon all flesh:

And your sons and your ^α daughters shall prophesy,

And your young men shall see visions,

And your old men shall dream dreams:

18 ^{And} ^{yea} and on my servants and on my handmaidens ^{in those days}

^{I will pour out in those days} ^{Will I pour forth} of my Spirit; and ^b they shall prophesy:

^α Cited from Joel 2. 28-32.
Tit. 3. 6. ^α ch. 21. 9.

^y vers. 18, 33. Isai. 32. 15 & 44. 3. Ezek. 36. 27. See Rom. 5. 5. ^z Cp. ch. 10. 45
^b ch. 11. 28 & 21. 10. 1 Cor. 12. 10.

reasonable probability. The morning sacrifice "no doubt coincided with the third hour of the day, or 9 A. M. . . . Possibly they may have gathered chiefly to join in the prayer 'at the time of incense' (Luke 1:10)¹ before which the Jews did not take food," and on festal days they abstained from food and drink until the sixth hour (twelve o'clock).² This being a festal day the Jews would not have been drinking at all.

THE ARGUMENT. 16. Spoken by the prophet Joel (2: 28-32), substantially from the Septuagint with great freedom of verbal alteration.

17. In the last days, the last dispensation, the Messianic times so often foretold by the prophets; beginning with Pentecost, but extending through the dispensation to the end.

I will pour out, expressing great abundance in contrast with the gentle dews of the Spirit in the previous age.

Of my Spirit, ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος μου. Ἀπὸ, from, "may be accounted for by the thought that the Spirit of God considered in its entirety remains with God, and that men acquire only a certain portion of its energies (so Wendt, Holtzmann). Or the partitive force of the word may be taken as signifying the great diversity of the Spirit's gifts and operations."³

Upon all flesh, that all mankind, with the suggested contrast between man as "flesh" with all its weakness, imperfections, and earthly tendencies, and the divine, glorious, all-powerful Spirit of God.

Shall prophesy. Not chiefly or necessarily foretell, but speak forth the word God reveals

to them, in many different ways.⁴ Both men and women shall prophesy, shall see into the heart of things, as God opens their eyes, and shall speak out the truths they see, as Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1: 46-55), and the four daughters of the Evangelist Philip at Cesarea (21: 9).

Charles Mackay has a poem in which Milton, blind to the blue sky, "sees the bowers of Paradise;" and Beethoven, "Music's Great High Priest," deaf to all sound, yet in his soul hears "jubilant hymns and lays of love."

"To blind old Milton's rayless orbs

A light divine is given,

And deaf Beethoven hears the hymns

And harmonies of heaven."

And your young men shall see visions, ὁράσεις, visible forms, waking visions, from ὁρᾶω, to see. In the young the external senses are most alive. And your old men, in whom the inner senses are most active, shall dream dreams, ἐνύπνια, dreams in the night, from ἐν, in, and ὕπνος, sleep. And yet the young are not excluded from dreams, nor the old from visions."⁵ The whole church should keep before her the vision of a perfect church, a perfect world, the city of God.⁶

"In youth, beside the lonely sea,

Voices and visions came to me;

In every wind I felt the stir

Of some celestial messenger."⁷

And on my servants (δοῦλους), and on my handmaidens (δοῦλας). "As there was no limit as to sex or age, so too there is no limit of condition."⁸

The Remarkable Trance of Rev. William Tennent, of Freshhold, New Jersey.

The Sister's Dream of Heaven, a true story.

The Dream of Dr. Philip Doddridge. These three have been printed in tract form.

Dr. A. J. Gordon's dream, that changed his life and ministry, in How Christ came to Church.

Dr. Bonar's dream, in Suggestive Illustrations on Acts p. 408.

Mrs. Preston's Poems, "The Ideal and the Real."

⁷ T. B. Aldrich, in Sea Longings.

¹ Edersheim, Temple and its Services, ch. 7.

² See Knöwling *in loco*, and on 3:1; and Blass on 2:14.

³ Knöwling.

⁴ See Bushnell's Nature and the Supernatural.

⁵ Bengel.

⁶ COMPARE the visions of Bunyan in his Pilgrim's Progress, Dante's vision in his Divina Commedia, Milton's vision of Paradise Lost, and Regained, Plato's vision of an ideal Republic, Virgil's vision of the future in the Eneid.

COMPARE the opening of the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan (2 Kings 6: 8-17). Hagar's eyes opened to see the well (Gen. 21: 19).

19 And I will shew wonders in the heaven above,

And signs ⁱⁿ the earth beneath;

Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:

20 "The sun shall be turned into darkness,

And the moon into blood,

Before ^{that great and notable} ^{the} day of the Lord come,' ^{that great and notable day:}

21 And it shall ^{come to pass, that} ^{be, that} e whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

c See Matt. 24. 29.

d Cp. 1 Thess. 5. 2 & Rev. 16. 14.

e Rom. 10. 13. Cp. ch. 16. 31.

19. And I will shew wonders, *τέρατα, portents, strange appearances*, like the wonders shown by Moses to Pharaoh in Egypt. It is akin to *τηνέω, to watch, observe*; hence, *something that calls us to watch or observe*.

In heaven above, like the star in the East, the angel choir at the birth of Jesus, voices speaking from heaven, as to Jesus and to Paul, the gift of the Spirit with its flame, and speaking with tongues. But more especially do these refer to spiritual wonders, political and moral wonders, the fall of nations, the overthrow of "spiritual wickedness in high places." The fall of Rome, the destruction of Jerusalem, were among these wonders. See on Matthew 24: 29, 30.

Signs. Miracles which were signs or evidences of great truths, of Jesus' power and goodness and love; strange events which were signs of spiritual changes, and divine movements. In the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke, the wars and tumults, and destruction of men, as in the capture of Jerusalem, and many a war and commotion since, arising from the conflict of evil with good. These are signs that the gospel is alive and active, that the truth is not dead, that moral winter is giving way before the coming of spring. The battle is the sign of victory. So Christ himself says, "I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10: 34). This is a universal principle. First, disturbance, overturning, discussing, criticising, unsettling, as the way to better things.¹

20. The sun shall be turned into darkness. This is the same as the prophecy of Christ in reference to his coming (Matt. 24: 29). These are typical metaphors of real occurrences. Similar representations of great commotions are depicted in Isaiah 13: 10; 24: 23; 34: 4; Ezekiel 32: 7, 8; Joel 2: 10; 3: 15; Amos 8: 9; Micah 3: 6-8. They are the common imagery of Old Testament prophecy, applied to the destruction of Babylon

by the Medes, to the judgment on Edom and Egypt, and on the nations in connection with the return of Judah from the Exile. Even the common speech of men describes a time of tribulation as one in which "the skies are dark" and "the sun of a nation's glory sets in gloom."²

Before that great and notable, *ἐπιφανῇ, from ἐπὶ, upon, and φαίω, to shine, to be bright or clear*; hence, *conspicuous, illustrious, shining out upon all and above all other days*.

Day of the Lord come. It came then in Pentecost, it came in the destruction of Jerusalem and the close of the Old Dispensation, it has come in every signal epoch of advance in His kingdom. It will come again before the final triumph.

21. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord. An expression for those who believe in him and worship him, and are his disciples.

Of the Lord. "In Joel, *Κύριος* (Lord) is undoubtedly used of the Lord Jehovah, and the word is here transferred to Christ. In its bearing on our Lord's divinity this fact is of primary importance, for it is not merely that the early Christians addressed their ascended Lord so many times by the same name which is used of Jehovah in the LXX.,—although it is certainly remarkable that in 1 Thess. the name is applied to Christ more than twenty times,—but that they did not hesitate to refer to him the attributes and prophecies which the great prophets of the Jewish nation had associated with the name of Jehovah."³

Shall be saved, from the impending calamities. It is remarkable that no Christians perished in the siege of Jerusalem. Though more than a million of Jews perished, yet the followers of Christ who were there, having been warned by him, when they saw the signs of the Romans approaching, withdrew to Pella, and were preserved. But the salvation means much more than deliverance from impending calamities. The disciples shall come forth from the trials like gold purified

¹ Faith "reels not in the storm of warring words,
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'
She sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,
She feels the sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer through the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,

She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wailed 'mirage.'"
Tennyson's *The Ancient Sage*.

² Byron's *Poems*, "Darkness," "I had a dream that was not all a dream."

³ Knowing.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nāz'ā-rēth, ^a man approved of God ^{among} unto you ^{by} ^h miracles mighty works and wonders and signs, which ⁱ God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves ^{also} know:

23 Him, ^j being delivered up by ^k the determinate counsel and ^l foreknowledge of God, ^m ye ^{have taken, and n} by wicked hands have crucified ^{and} slain: ^{by the hand of lawless men did crucify} ^{and} ^{slain:}

24 ^o Whom God ^{hath} raised up, having loosed the ^{pains} pangs of death: because ^{it} was not possible that he should be holden of it.

25 For David ^{speakeeth} saith concerning him,

I ^q foresaw beheld the Lord always before my face;

For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

^f See John 3. 2. ^g ch. 10. 38. ^h Luke 24. 19. ⁱ 2 Cor. 12. 12. ^j 2 Thess. 2. 9. ^k Heb. 2. 4. ^l Cp. Rom. 15. 19, *al.*
ⁱ Cp. Matt. 12. 28. ^j Matt. 26. 24. ^k Cp. ch. 3. 13 & Matt. 20. 19. ^l See Luke 24. 20. ^m Luke 22. 22. ⁿ Cp. ch. 3. 18
 & 4. 28 & 13. 27. ^o 1 Pet. 1. 2. ^p Cp. 1 Pet. 1. 20 & Rev. 13. 8. ^q See ch. 5. 30. ^r 1 Cor. 9. 21 (for mg.). ^s Cp.
 Rom. 2. 12 (for mg.). ^t over 32. ^u ch. 3. 15 & 4. 10 & 10. 40 & 13. 30, 33, 34, 37 & 17. 31. ^v Rom. 4. 24 & 6. 4 & 8. 11
 & 10. 9. ^w 1 Cor. 6. 14 & 15. 15. ^x 2 Cor. 4. 14. ^y Gal. 1. 1. ^z Eph. 1. 20. ^{aa} Col. 2. 12. ^{ab} 1 Thess. 1. 10. ^{ac} Heb. 13. 20. ^{ad} 1 Pet.
 1. 21. ^{ae} Cp. Eph. 2. 5. ^{af} p Cp. Luke 24. 5 & John 10. 18 & 2 Tim. 1. 10 & Heb. 2. 14 & Rev. 1. 17, 18. ^{ag} Cited from
 Ps. 16. 8-11.

in the fire. They shall be saved in character, and have "the fulness of blessing for body and soul which the verb expresses on the lips of Christ." Their cause shall be triumphant; the truth for which they lived shall shine forth as the sun.

22. **Jesus of Nazareth.** The name they had all seen on the title over the cross.

Approved of God, ἀποδεειγμένον, pointed out, shown to be what he claimed to be. Peter used the argument from miracles, which so many of our day are inclined to slight. The miracles were God's endorsement of Jesus, his testimony to him; and the proofs that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, would be very imperfect without the miracles, δυνάμεις, powers inherent in Christ, the manifestations of divine power, deeds which only God can do; and wonders, τέρασιν, marvellous deeds, exciting wonder, and calling attention to God as their doer; and signs, σημεῖοις, the signs or evidences of Jesus' divine mission, and of the truth he taught, and of the nature of God.

23. **Him, being delivered,** ἐκδοτον, betrayed, by Judas, but in accordance with the determinate, ὁρισμένην, marked out with definite limits, determined by decree or appointment.

Counsel, βουλῇ, "designates His Eternal Plan, by which he has arranged all things."¹

Foreknowledge, "the omniscience, by which every part of this plan is foreseen and forgotten by Him."¹ Peter thus shows that the death of Christ was not a defeat, was not an overthrow of God's plans, as would seem to the people, but an essential part of the divine plan for the Messiah and the scheme of redemption.

Ye have taken. Peter told them the plain truth. By wicked, lawless, hands. Roman soldiers, who were Gentiles without the law of God.

24. **Whom God hath raised up.** Thus defeating the plans of those who crucified Jesus. This was essential to the Messiah.

Having loosed the pains, ὠδύνας, (birth-pangs,) as commonly used in classical Greek, of death, presenting the death of Christ as birth-throes, and his resurrection as a new birth into life. The word ὠδύνας, birth-pangs, is found in the Septuagint translation of Psalms 18: 4 and 116: 3. But "this figure, which presents the death of Christ as a new birth unto life, beautiful and appropriate as it is in itself, does not exist in the original, but only in the LXX. The Hebrew in both Psalms uses another figure, cords of death: and this is evidently the figure in the apostle's mind, for he passes on to the impossibility of Jesus being holden by them."² "The cords of a hunter catching his prey. . . Sheol and Death are personified as hunters lying in wait for their prey with nooses and nets, . . . in which the Christ could not be bound, since he was himself the Life."³

25. **For David speaketh concerning him,** Ps. 16. "In Delitzsch's view, whatever can mark a Psalm as Davidic we actually find combined here, e. g., coincidences of many kinds which he regards as undoubtedly Davidic, and he sees no reason for giving up the testimony afforded by the title."³ So Perowne and most commentators.⁴

I foresaw, προωράμην. "Not to see beforehand, but to see before one's self, as in Ps. 16: 8."⁵

¹ Alford.

² Rendall.

³ Knowing.

⁴ Cheyne, who places nearly all the Psalms at a late date, of course thinks it was not by David, but only "in a

high degree Davidic, . . . a symbolic term for vigor and originality of style." But Peter's whole argument is false if this Psalm was not by David.

⁵ M. R. Vincent.

26 Therefore ^{did} my heart ^{rejoice, was glad,} and my tongue ^{was glad; rejoiced;}

Moreover ^{also} my flesh ^{also} shall ^{rest dwell} in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in ^{hell, Hades,}

'Neither wilt thou ^{suffer thine give thy} "Holy One to" see corruption.

28 Thou ^{hast made made} known ^{to unto} me the ways of life;

Thou shalt make me full of ^{joy gladness} with thy countenance.

29 ^{Men and brethren, let me Brethren, I may say unto you} freely speak unto you of the "patriarch David," that he ^{is} both ^{dead died} and ^{was} buried, and his ^{sepulchre tomb} is with us unto this day.

30 ^{a Therefore being Being therefore} a prophet, and knowing that ^b God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins^c ^{according to the flesh,} he would ^{raise up Christ to sit on set one upon} his throne;

^r Rom. 4. 18. ^s ver. 31. See Matt. 11. 23. ^t ch. 13. 35. ^u See Heb. 7. 26. ^v Cp. Luke 2. 26. ^w ch. 7. 8, 9. Heb. 7. 4. ^z Cp. ch. 13. 36. ^y 1 Kin. 2. 10. ^z Neh. 3. 16. ^a Cp. 2 Sam. 23. 2 & Matt. 22. 43 & Heb. 11. 32. ^b See Luke 1. 32.

The Lord always before my face. Like an advocate at a trial standing beside his client.

He is on my right hand. "Looking forth for help in time of need, he saw the Lord before him standing at his right hand."¹

Should not be moved from his prosperity and happiness, his position as a servant of God.

26. My heart. Not only the seat of the affections, but of the whole moral and intellectual nature.

My flesh, my body, shall rest, *κατασκηνώσει*. Literally, shall dwell in a tent or tabernacle; from *κατά*, down from, from a higher to a lower place; and *σκηνή*, a tent, — shall encamp or place my tabernacle on hope, abiding there till hope shall be transformed to realization. Professor Vincent, in his admirable *Word Studies*, says: "It is a beautiful metaphor. My flesh shall encamp on hope; pitch its tent there to rest through the night of death, until the morning of resurrection."²

In hope of restoration and recovery.

27. Thou wilt not leave (give over) my soul in (to) hell, Hades, the place of the dead. In its literal meaning, "David says nothing about what shall happen to him after death, but is expressing his conviction that God will not leave him to perish — will not give him up to be the prey of the grave, nor suffer him 'to see the pit.'"² In reality all this took place in the case of Christ, only in a somewhat different form from that experienced by David.

Thine Holy One. The Hebrew is often rendered "Thy Beloved One." Both expressions apply to David, but in a far higher degree to David's greater Son.

To see corruption, Heb. "To see the pit," the grave, and Hades the place of the dead.

28. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, the recovered life of his body, and the higher spiritual life, communion with God, immortal life. "It seems impossible that David who here expresses such a fulness of confidence in God, such a living personal relationship to him, could have ever dreamed that such a relationship would end with death."³

Full of joy, *εὐφροσύνης*, of good or cheerful mind.⁴

29. Patriarch, *πατριάρχου*; from *πατρίδ*, a lineage, a family, a race, and *ἄρχω*, to begin; hence, one who begins a new family or race.

He is both dead and buried. Peter states facts known to all.

30. Therefore being a prophet. "The word is here used in the double sense of one declaring God's will, and also of one foretelling how that will would be fulfilled."⁵

"David's words, spoken of himself and his circumstances, could only be in their highest and literal sense true of the great Son of David who was to come. David often spoke concerning himself; but THE SPIRIT WHO SPOKE IN DAVID, concerning Christ."⁶

And knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him. Made a most solemn promise several times repeated (2 Sam. 7: 13, 16; Psalms 89: 3, 4, 29, 36, 37; 132: 11).

That of the fruit of his loins . . . he would raise up Christ (the best texts omit "Christ," but the argument is the same), to sit on his throne. This was completely true only through Christ, the ever-living king of the house of David.

¹ Rendall.

² Perowne on *The Psalms*. Prof. Potwin's *Here and There in the New Testament*, chapter 10.

³ Perowne, *Psalms* 16: 11.

⁴ See Arnold's *Light of Asia*. The seven fears changed to the seven joys.

⁵ Knowing.

⁶ Alford.

31 He ^{seeing this before} ^{foreseeing this} spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that ^{his soul} ^{neither} was ^{not} ^{he} left in ^{hell, neither} ^{Hades, nor did} his flesh ^{did} see corruption.

32 This Jesus ^{hath} ^{did} ^a God ^{raised} ^{raise} up, ^c whereof we all are witnesses.

33 ^{Therefore being} ^{Being therefore} ^o by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of ^a the Father ⁱ the promise of the Holy Ghost, ^j he hath ^{shed} ^{poured} forth this, which ye ^{now} see and hear.

34 For ^k David ^{is not ascended} ^{ascended not} into the heavens: but he saith himself, ^l The ^{LORD} ^{Lord} said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 ^{Until} ^{Till} I make ^{thy foes thy} ^{thy enemies the} footstool^m of thy feet.

36 ^{Therefore let} ^{Let} all the house of Is'ra-^{el} ^{therefore} know assuredly, that ⁿ God hath made ^{that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.} ^{him both a Lord and Christ, this Jesus a whom ye crucified.}

37 Now when ^p they heard ^{this}, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and ^{to} the rest of the apostles, ^{Men and brethren, a} ^{Brethren,} what shall we do?

^c ver. 27. ^d ver. 24. ^e ch. 1. 22 & 4. 33. See ch. 1. 8 (for mg.) & Luke 24. 48. ^f ch. 5. 31. Eph. 1. 20. Phil. 2. 9. Heb. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22. ^g Ex. 15. 6. Ps. 98. 1. See Mark 16. 19 (for mg.). ^h ch. 1. 4. Cp. John 16. 7. ⁱ Gal. 3. 14. ^j ver. 17. ^k Cp. John 3. 13. ^l Cited from Ps. 110. 1, which see. ^m See Matt. 23. 18. ⁿ Rom. 14. 9. 2 Cor. 4. 5. Phil. 2. 9, 11, *al.* ^o ver. 23. ^p Cp. ch. 5. 33 & 7. 54. ^q ch. 16. 30. Luke 3. 10.

31. He seeing this before, *προϊδὼν*, foreseeing, as a prophet. He foresaw the fact, but he probably had no clear idea of the way or the date of the fulfilment.

Spake of the resurrection of Christ, through which alone this prophecy could be fulfilled. "What was true of David in the lower sense was true in the fullest and highest sense of Christ."¹ If Christ had not been raised, this promise and prophecy must have failed.

32. This Jesus hath God raised up, and therefore the prophecy is fulfilled in him, and he is the Messiah.

33. By the right hand, the symbol of power. Exalted by the ascension to his throne in heaven.

Having received . . . the promise, that which was promised, of the Holy Ghost, as given in Joel 3:28, and recorded in John 14:26; 15:26. This was a proof that Jesus was the Messiah. He hath shed forth this, the Holy Spirit and the results of his coming, which ye now see and hear.

34. All this was in accordance with the scriptures, for David, to whom he had just referred (vers. 25-31), is not ascended into the heavens, but was buried and his sepulchre was well known to them (ver. 29). He did not return to life, and ascend with his whole being, as Jesus did. The Lord (Jehovah) said unto my (David's) Lord. The Messiah seen in prophetic vision. This passage, quoted from the Greek translation of Psalm 110, was applied to the Messiah by Jesus himself in his argument with the Pharisees, in Peter's presence only a few weeks before (Matt. 22:41-45). As this could not possibly refer to David himself, it must refer to "great David's greater

Son," the Messiah, and was so regarded by the Jews.

35. Until I make thy foes thy footstool, till he has the final victory, and eternal reign. The expression refers to the fact "that formerly kings were accustomed to place their feet upon the necks of their conquered enemies."²

CONCLUSION. 36. Let all the house of Israel. Who believe and cherish these divine promises, and are looking forward with hope to the Messianic times.

Know assuredly, *ἀσφαλῶς*, from *ἀ*, not, and *σφάλω*, to cause to fall, as in wrestling; to overthrow, as a ship by a storm, or as an army by the enemy; to defeat, to delude, to cause to err, or go wrong. Hence, the compound word means to know with such certainty that there can be no falling, no defeat, no mistake.

God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified. They had rejected Jesus; many of them had joined in the cries of "Crucify him." They thought he was destroyed.

Both Lord, your King in David's line, and Christ, the promised Messiah.

APPLICATION. THE WAY TO BE SAVED. FIRST STEP. 37. They were pricked, *κατενύγησαν*; from *κατά*, intensive, and *νύσσω*, to prick with a sharp point. Hence, they were pricked deeply, intensely, with the sharp point of his discourse. In their heart. Consciences, moral nature, as with a scorpion's sting, "as with a two-edged sword." "So, Homer, of the puncture of a spear; of horses dinting the earth with their hoofs, etc. Here, therefore, of the sharp painful emotion, the sting produced by Peter's words. Cicero, speak-

¹ Perowne.

² Prof. Blass.

38 ^{Then} ^{And} Peter ^{said} ^{said} unto them, "Repent^{ye}, and ^{be} baptized every one of you 'in the name of Jesus Christ' ^{for} ^{unto} the remission of ^{your} sins: and ye shall receive ^{the} gift of the Holy Ghost.

r ch. 3. 19 & 20. 21 & 26. 18, 20. Luke 24. 47. s ch. 22. 16. Cp. ch. 8. 12. See Mark 16. 16. t ch. 10. 48. See ch. 8. 16. u See Mark 1. 4. v ch. 10. 45. Cp. ch. 8. 15, 20 & 11. 17. See John 7. 30.

ing of the oratory of Pericles, says that his speech left stings in the minds of his hearers (*De Oratore*, III. 34).¹ "No word could better make known that the sting of the last word had begun to work."²

They saw that they had committed an awful crime against God and the nation and themselves. They were in danger of the judgment to come. They had rejected their best friend and Saviour. They had done despite to the Son of God.³

THE NEED OF CONVICTION OF SIN. (1) It leads men to seek the Saviour. If one does not feel guilty, why should he seek forgiveness? If one imagines he is well, why should he go to the physician? (2) The greatest means for the conviction of sin is a view of Jesus Christ and him crucified. His perfect life shows us the imperfection of ours. That he should come from heaven to suffer and die to save us proves the exceeding evil and danger of sin. (3) The presence and power of the Holy Spirit make these means effective. For men may know they are sinful, and not feel it, or seek to escape. They may excuse themselves and be utterly careless under the most vivid presentation of Christ, and the most fervent appeals.

SECOND STEP. And said . . . Men and brethren, showing how kindly they felt toward Peter. Apparently the meeting broke up into fragments, and different persons not only asked publicly of the speaker, but held conversation with the apostles and other disciples who mingled with the crowd. **What shall we do?** The sin had been committed; the penalty overhung them. They could not undo the deed. What could they do in reference to it? How could they themselves escape from their guilt; how could they ward off the doom of their nation? Their guilt, as to this deed, awakened their conscience as to other sins, and made them feel the depth of their sinful character. Very often it occurs that some one overt act, with its train of consequences, reveals the sinful nature, and makes men cry out for salvation from all sin.

THIRD STEP. 38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, μετάνοιατε. "A word compounded of the preposition *μετά*, after, with, and the verb

voéō, to perceive and to think, as the result of perceiving or observing. In this compound the preposition combines the two meanings of time and change, which may be denoted by *after* and *different*; so that the whole compound means to think *differently after*. *Μετάνοια* (repentance) is therefore, primarily, an *after-thought*, *different* from the former thought; then, a *change of mind*, which issues in *regret* and in *change of conduct*.⁴ Sorrow for sin is not repentance, but leads to repentance. One may be sorry on account of sin for various reasons, and not repent. But one cannot repent and not be sorry for the sin. Repentance implies a change of mind and heart, of controlling motive and purpose.

NOTE the difference between resolving to do some single act, or to change some small purpose or habit, and the resolve to change the great aim and purpose of the whole life.

FOURTH STEP. Believing in Jesus, as Master, Saviour, and Guide—a faith which trusts the whole life to his guidance and control. This is implied in the requirement to be baptized.

FIFTH STEP. And be baptized . . . in (rather, *unto*, *ἐν*) the name of Jesus Christ. This was the rite by which they publicly confessed their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, their trust in him, and their consecration to his service. It was like taking an oath of allegiance when one becomes a citizen of a country.

CONFESSION OF CHRIST BY BAPTISM. This is (1) a duty commanded by Christ. It is of the utmost importance. It is binding on all. (2) It is a test of faith and obedience. A faith that is not willing to confess publicly the Saviour is not strong enough or of the right kind to save the soul. (3) Public confession confirms and strengthens the disciple. It commits him to the side of Christ. It is like enlisting in the army. It is Cortes's burning the ships that brought his army to Mexico; there is no retreat. It is like wearing the white ribbon, or the blue; people expect you to live up to your principles. (4) It gives power over the world; it is a continual sermon proclaiming the gospel, and testimony that you believe Christ. (5) It is a means of organization, and

The last chapters of Joseph Cook's *Boston Monday Lectures*, "Conscience." The poem "I sat alone with my conscience," in *Suggestive Illustrations on John*, p. 451. Dr. Bonar's hymn "I see the crowd in Pilate's hall" is very effective.

⁴ M. R. Vincent.

¹ Prof. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

² Prof. Knowling.

³ Compare the effect of the Palmer's speech upon Lord Marmion, in Scott's *Poems*. Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Jean Valjean, "The laughter of the soul at itself." Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and *Mucheth*, and *Richard III*.

39 For ^w the promise is unto you, ^{to you is the promise,} and ^x to your children, and ^y to all that are afar off, ^{even} ^z as many as the Lord our God shall call ^{unto him.}

40 And with many other words ^{did} he ^{testify} ^{testified,} and ^{exhort} ^{exhorted} them, saying, ^a Save yourselves from this ^b untoward ^{crooked} generation.

41 ^{Then they} ^{They then} that ^{gladly} received his word were baptized: and ^c the same day there were ^{added unto them} ^{there were added unto} about three thousand souls.

^w Rom. 9. 4. ^x ch. 3. 25. ^{Isai.} 54. 13. ^{Cp.} ^{Isai.} 44. 3. ^y ch. 22. 21. ^{Isai.} 57. 19. ^{Eph.} 2. 13, 17. ^z Joel 2. 32. ^{Rom.} 8. 30. ^a Cp. vers. 21, 47. ^b Deut. 32. 5. ^{Matt.} 17. 17. ^{Phil.} 2. 15. ^c ver. 47.

unity, and fellowship, adding greatly to power and usefulness. A thousand separate individuals are weakness itself, compared with a regiment or an organization of a thousand men.

SIXTH STEP. For (unto) the remission of sins, *eis ἄφεσιν*; from *eis*, unto, as the end to be reached; *ἀφέναι*, from *ἀφίημι*, to send away, to discharge. The sins are sent away, the debt is removed, and the sinner is discharged as from bondage or from the court and place of punishment. Here was the way in which their guilt, on account of which their consciences were disturbed, could be removed. Sins are remitted, first, by forgiveness, taking away the penalty, and treating the sinner as if he had not sinned; and second, by taking away sin itself, the disposition to sin, the love of sin, the practice of sin. Men are saved, "not in sin, but from sin."¹

SEVENTH STEP. Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, sometimes in the same form in which they had just seen it manifested; and always in his abiding presence, dwelling within them as a fountain of life (John 7:38), as the Comforter, teaching, guiding, inspiring, helping, purifying, giving peace and hope and joy, according to the promise (John 13-16).

THE WELCOME. 39. For the promise, of the Messiah, and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and of salvation as foretold by Joel (vers. 16-21) and other prophets. It included all the hopes and blessings which the Messiah was to bring. Is unto you, in spite of your sins and your crucifying the Messiah. He was the expression of God's love to you. He died that you might be saved. Therefore he wants to save you. The promise is yours. And to your children. No one wants to be saved alone. Your being saved from sin is the nearest and surest way to the salvation of your children, all down the ages. And to all that are afar off. All Gentile nations. The near are Jews, the afar off, Gentiles (Isa. 57:19; Zech. 6:15; Eph. 2:13, 17). Even as many as the Lord our God shall call. The Greek word implies that the call is "unto him" (R. V.).

It does not declare that every one who is called accepts the call, but that this promise is for all, Jews and Gentiles. It reaches as far as the invitation. None are called to less than this; and all that are called may claim this promise as theirs. God's welcomes are heart-felt, warm, earnest, sincere, wide-reaching, all-inclusive. No one is left out. No one is too far away. "There is frozen music in many a heart that the beams of encouragement would melt into a glorious song."

40. And with many other words. With every persuasive argument, presented in every attractive form. Did he testify. Bear witness that the promise was being fulfilled from his own experience of what Jesus had taught and done, proving him to be the Messiah. Save yourselves. By repenting and believing on Jesus. From this untoward, *σκολιάς*. Lit., crooked; hence, metaphorically, perverse, intractable. "Toward" is to-ward, inclined towards; hence, gentle, docile; as "froward" is from-ward, turned from, averse.

"T is a good hearing when children are toward,
But a harsh hearing when women are froward."²

The untoward generation was one turned away from God and from the right. They were to save themselves from the influences and from the condemnation that were coming upon that generation. One of the chief hindrances to becoming disciples, and one of the chief dangers to which the new disciples were exposed, came from their environment, from the perverse generation which surrounded them. They had to resist these plausible and cunning and powerful men, to break away from false doctrine, defy selfish authority, to forsake old friends, to endure derision, hatred, and persecution. This was no small thing to do. It acted as a sieve to sift out false disciples, and keep the church sincere and pure.

THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH, ver. 41.

41. They that gladly received his word. The R. V. omits *gladly*, as do the oldest MSS. All who received the word were baptized, but doubt-

¹ Moore's *Paradise and the Peri* furnishes a good illustration concerning forgiveness, by way of contrast as to the way of remission. The Peri

"at the gate
Of Eden stood disconsolate."

² *Taming of the Shrew*, V. ii.

42 And "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' ^{doctrine} and ^{teaching} fellowship, and in the ^{the} breaking of bread and ⁱⁿ the prayers.

^d Cp. Heb. 10. 25. See ch. 1. 14.
Cp. ver. 46. See ch. 20. 7.

^e See 1 Cor. 14. 6.

^f Gal. 2. 9. Phil. 1. 5. 1 John 1. 3.

^g Luke 24. 35.

less they did it gladly, freely, joyfully. It was the most joyful act of their lives. Compulsory religion is no religion. It was esteemed a great *privilege* to be a Christian. The people were enthusiastic on the subject. "Receiving the word" implies that they received Jesus as their Messiah, Lord, and teacher; they committed themselves to serve him, to obey his teachings, to live according to the principles of his kingdom, to devote themselves to the task of carrying out the mission of the Christ.

Were baptized, not necessarily on the day in which they believed, nor by the apostles alone.

BAPTISM is (1) the appointed method of making a profession of religion, and, therefore, every disciple of Christ should be baptized. No one can find a simpler, a more significant, or better method of confessing Christ. Jesus himself was baptized, as an example to all his followers. (2) Baptism is a public renunciation of sin, and profession of cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ. It is a perfect symbol of the putting away of the defilement of sin, and of the cleansing of heart and life. (3) It is a symbol of the new, the risen life with Christ Jesus. (4) It is a symbol of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

There were added, to the number of Christians. Three thousand souls. This was a glorious beginning for the new church. The numbers added greatly to the power of the movement. Each person was a centre of influence. Three thousand burning and shining lights were scattered over the city. There are some great ad-

vantages in a slow and steady growth. There are other and great advantages in powerful revivals, which impress a community in a way that the same number unfolding like the lilies of spring could not do.

A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF THE FIRST CHURCH, vers. 42-47.

This picture of the early church is so attractive, so beautiful, so ideal, that some commentators have felt that it was idealized by late writers and was not literally true. But as a matter of fact it has been repeated over and over again, for short spaces of time.¹ Our own eyes have seen it. This picture, like the times of true and deep revival, like the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation, is a perpetual ideal before the church, and one that can be attained because it has been. "God never permitted us to form a theory too beautiful for his power to make practical."

"And God shall make divinely real
The highest form of thy ideal."²

THE CHURCH LEARNING. 42. And they continued stedfastly, *προσκαρτεροῦντες* (from *πρός*, to, and *καρτερός*, strong), *adhering strongly to, persisting against all adverse influences.* It is steady, persistent work that tells. No one can be a good scholar who is fitful and irregular in his attendance at school. In the apostles' doctrine, *διδασχῇ* (*didachē*), *teaching*, in the truths of their religion, and in the words and life of Jesus, and in the practical duties of religion.³ Teaching implies

¹ See the account of Savonarola at the height of his power in Florence; and the revival under Edwards.

Carlyle, speaking of the Reformation, says: "Once risen into this divine white heat of temper, were it only for a season and not again, it is henceforth considerable through all its remaining history. Nations are benefited for ages by being thrown once into divine white heat in this manner. And no nation that has not had such divine paroxysms at any time is apt to come to much." So revival experiences help us all the rest of our lives. Revival heights bless us evermore; and when they have passed away, and we have come down into the valleys, the blessings have not left us.

The Palace Beautiful of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is the most perfect picture of the church and its ordinances in all literature. The lions in the way before coming; the porter, Watchful, welcoming the pilgrim at the door; the examination by the gentle maidens, Piety, Prudence, and Charity, with their discourse at the supper; the sleeping in the Chamber of Peace; the study of the records of the place; the vision of the Delectable Mountains; and the putting-on the armor for future warfare—

make altogether a fitting picture of the "house built by the Lord of the hill, for the relief and security of pilgrims."

² Mrs. Preston's *Poems*, "The Ideal and the Real."

VISION OF THE IDEAL CHURCH. "No poet's dream has ever yet embodied the climax and consummation of human capabilities; but each new dream is a prophecy of the future, and is freshly watering the seeds of realization. It has been truly said, 'The poetic idealism of to-day will be the prose reality of to-morrow.'" — *Maxwell*.

"Still, through our paltry stir and strife,
Glows down the wished Ideal,
And Longing moulds in clay what Life
Carves in the marble Real."

Lowell.

³ THE DIDACHĒ (*διδασχῇ*). We obtain some knowledge of the instruction given by the apostles from an ancient manuscript discovered at Constantinople in 1873 by Bp. Bryennios, called *The Didachē*, or *Teaching of the Apostles*, the longer title being, *The Teaching of the Lord, through the Twelve Apostles, to the Nations.* It was a

43 And fear came upon every soul: and ^h many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

^h See Mark 16. 20.

something taught, and that is doctrine. One of the best marks of a Christian life is the desire to learn. "Disciple" means a learner. Conversion wakes up the mind as well as the conscience. They went to school to the apostles. They would be intelligent Christians, because thus they would (a) be better themselves, (b) be kept from error, (c) be fitted to spread the gospel to others.

The whole body of Christians should attend the TEACHING SERVICES of the church. The Sunday-school should be the Bible school for all. Christianity is the natural ally of learning.¹

THE CHURCH AS A UNITED FAMILY. And fellowship, *κοινωνία* (from *κοινός*, common), which is the Latin *communis* (from *con*, together, and *munia*, service), hence, *function, duty together* (or from *con*, together, and the root *mu*, to bind), hence, *bound together, belonging to all*.²

The disciples were like one loving family. "May not a good parallel be found in Phil. 1: 5, where *fellowship*, whilst it signifies coöperation in the widest sense, including fellowship in sympathy, suffering, and toil, also indicates the special and tangible manifestation of this fellowship in the ready almsgiving and contributions of the Philippian church."³ Personal influence is one of the strongest factors in education, in the formation of character, and the guidance of life. No hermit life can be as effective in Christian growth and usefulness as a life of fellowship with the true saints.

THE CHURCH WORSHIPPING. And in breaking of bread. Apparently this refers to the *agapæ* or love-feasts of the early Christians, followed by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, just as at its institution by Jesus the Lord's Supper followed the social Passover feast. The love-feast "was a custom in the primitive church, according to which all the members of a congre-

gation, even the master and his slaves, met together at a common meal. . . . Originally the character of the *agapæ* was strictly devotional: the feast culminated in the celebration of the Eucharist. At the same time it was a social symbol of the equality and solidarity of the congregation. Here all gave and received the kiss of love."⁴

"The Holy Communion was at first, and for some time, till abuses put an end to the practice, inseparably connected with the *agapæ*, or love-feasts, of the Christians, and unknown as a separate ordinance. To these *agapæ*, accompanied as they were at this time by the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the 'breaking of [the] bread' refers, — from the custom of the master of the feast breaking bread in asking a blessing."⁵

And in prayers. "Christian prayers at stated hours, answering to Jewish prayers, and perhaps replacing the synagogue prayers."⁶ It included also stated prayers at the Temple (3: 1) and prayer-meetings at private houses (4: 24-30). "In Greek cities members of the church met for worship in the houses of Christians."⁶

THE CHURCH AT WORK. 43. And fear. Reverential awe in the presence of the mysterious power, working such wonders of grace and love. Only very dull or very wicked people could help feeling this awe. It doubtless terrified men who knew the evil of their lives, but would not repent; like Macbeth, who "retained enough of goodness to make him a haggard, miserable criminal; never enough to restrain him from crime." For they "must serve the devil as slaves, if they will not decide to serve God as freemen."⁷ They feared God, and therefore feared nothing else. A noble fear expels all base fears, as sunlight extinguishes firelight.⁸ Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. This general de-

manual of instruction in Christian morals and religious duties, and belongs to the early part of the second century (120-160).

There are several editions: *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (Greek and English), by Profs. Hitchcock and Brown (Scribners). Another by Prof. Schaaf, *facsimile*, translation and notes (T. and T. Clark).

¹ "The riches of our Commonwealth
Are free, strong minds, and hearts of health;
And more to her than gold or grain,
The cunning hand and cultured brain.

"Nor heeds the sceptic's puny hands,
While near her school the church spire stands;
Nor fears the blinded bigot's rule,
While near her church spire stands the school."

J. G. Whittier in *Our State*.

The Persian princes, according to Xenophon, had for their teachers the wisest man, the bravest man, the most temperate man, and the most just man in the kingdom. We have all four in the most perfect degree in our one teacher, Jesus Christ.

² See Lowell's *Vision of Sir Launfal*: —

"Not what we give, but what we share;
For the gift without the giver is bare.
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three, —
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

³ Knowling.

⁴ Schaaf-Herzog *Encyclopedia*.

⁵ Afford.

⁶ Rendall.

⁷ Prof. E. Dowden, LL. D.

⁸ See Stanley Hall's *A Study of Fears*.

44 And all that believed were together, and ⁱ had all things common ;

45 And they ⁱ sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, ^{men,} according as ^{every} man had need.

46 And day ^{they} by day, ^j continuing ^{daily} stedfastly ^k with one accord in the temple, and ⁱ breaking bread ^{from house to house,} ^{at home, they} did ^{eat} take their ^{meat} food ^m with gladness and singleness of heart,

ⁱ ch. 4. 32, 34, 35. Cp. Matt. 19. 21.
^m Cp. ch. 16. 34. See John 16. 22.

^j ch. 3. 1 & 5. 21, 42. Luke 24. 53.

^k See ch. 1. 14.

^l Cp. ver. 42.

scription includes the miracles described more in detail in subsequent chapters (Acts 3 : 1-8 ; 5 : 12, 15, 16). "The term 'wonders' refers to their effect on the minds of eye-witnesses ; 'signs,' to the purpose which they were intended to serve as proofs of the divine mission (John 5 : 36 ; 10 : 25 ; Heb. 2 : 4.)"¹ Thus the apostles proved themselves the true successors of their Master, by doing the same kind of deeds in his name, illustrating the Gospels, and by realizing the promise Jesus gave them that they should be able to do great miracles. The greatest of all miracles was the conversion of three thousand in a day, and the change made in these men. Such great marvels still follow the preaching of the gospel.

THE CHURCH BENEVOLENT. 44. And all that believed were together, ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ, emphasizing more the unity of spirit than of place. They had one central home ; they "constituted a social community by themselves, separated from the rest of the people, not by local and physical barriers, but by their own mutual sympathies." "It cannot mean that all the believers were always assembled in one and the same place. . . . There may be a reference to their assembling together in the temple (ver. 46)."²

Had all things common. They were members of one family and held things in common just as members of a family do. Everything was for the good of all. No one "said that anything was his own," but all was for the use of friends and of whatever Christian had need.³

45. And sold, "were selling," their possessions, κτήματα, things acquired, in ordinary usage always of real estate, lands, houses, and goods, ἐνδραχίς, things ready at hand, belonging to

one. Used of property in general, but especially of personal property. They were sold in order to be able to impart them to all men, as every man had need. All did not give away everything they had, for then they would have been compelled to ask some of it back again. But everything was free. Rich and poor were alike. There was need of this, for there were many strangers away from home, and they needed to remain awhile where they could earn nothing, in order to be trained and educated and filled with the new spirit, so that they could be prepared to witness to the gospel in their distant homes. Others, like the apostles, had to be supported while they gave themselves up wholly to preaching and spreading the gospel. (See note on *Community of goods* below.)

THE CHURCH GROWING. 46. With one accord, ὁμοθυμαδόν, see on 1 : 14. In the temple, "the one natural and national place of worship. The Christians did not reject the temple worship, but filled it full of spirit and meaning. So Jesus went into his Father's house. The gospel was not opposed to the temple and its services any more than a rose is opposed to the stem that holds it, or the new shoot to the acorn from which it springs." And breaking bread. See on ver. 42. From house to house, κατ' οἶκον, either "at home," R. V., i. e., at private houses, or from house to house, in different homes.⁴ Did eat their meat, i. e., "took their food, their ordinary meals." With gladness, ἀγαλλιδσσει, exulting, abounding joy. The gospel pervades the whole life with gladness. Gloom is not the fruit of religion, but of sin and disease ; every heavenly emotion and act is joyous in its nature.⁵ They

¹ Canon Cook.

² Knowing.

³ R. Talbot Kelly, speaking of the Bedonin of the desert, says, "Conducting me to my tent he added, This house is yours, and all it contains ; do what you will with it, and with us your servants." *Century*, Feb., 1897, p. 556. All true Christian hospitality is filled with the same spirit.

⁴ See Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, pp. 259, 260.

⁵ "Once as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God as Mediator

between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure, and precious grace and love and meek and gentle condescension. This grace, that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception. This view continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour, and kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated, to lie in the dust and to be full of Christ alone, to love him with a holy and pure love ; to trust in him, to live upon him, to serve and follow him,

47 Praising God, and "having favour with all the people. And the Lord added ^{to the church daily such as should be} ^{them day by day those that were being} saved.

n ch. 5. 13. o ver. 41. ch. 5. 14 & 11. 24. p ch. 16. 5. q 1 Cor. 1. 18. Cp. vers. 21, 40 & ch. 16. 31.

were glad of the goodness of God which provided the food. Every good gift was a mark of God's love to them. They were glad because they had enough to give to others. They enjoyed the food more by enjoying it together with hearts of love, with "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" concerning the spiritual blessings of God.

Singleness of heart, ἀφελότητι, from ἀ, not, and φελλεύς, stony or rocky ground; hence, plain, smooth, straightforward, opposite to deceit, hypocrisy or crooked ways. The corresponding adjective was used to describe a smooth road, free from stones. The word "denotes evenness of temper, unruffled cheerfulness in social intercourse." It "marked a harmony of Christian life undisturbed by discord or unkindness."¹ "Every feeling is excluded which could mar the picture of exquisite but childlike happiness."

47. Praising God. "The praise refers not merely to their thanksgivings at meals, but is characteristic of their whole devotional life, both in public and private."²

And having favour with all the people.³ In contrast with the ecclesiastics. Like Jesus in his youth, having favor with God and man, so the youthful church was in favor with God and man. Their joyous graces, their generous living, their noble lives, were attractive.

And the Lord Jesus the real source and power, added to them, to the number of the disciples. To the church is omitted in the R. V., because omitted from the best manuscripts. But the meaning is the same. Such as should be saved. Better, such as "were being saved," or "were saving" themselves "from this untoward generation," as Peter had exhorted them to do (ver. 41).⁴

NOTE ON COMMUNITY OF GOODS.

1. ANCIENT SYSTEMS. Plato in his *Republic*, the vision of an ideal state, advocated the community of goods. He "condemns private ownership of property as tending to dishonesty and greed, and allows it to the lowest class of persons, who are denied any share in the government of his ideal republic. No one who possessed private property could be a true citizen, in Plato's

view." The women were to be educated like men, but there was to be a community of wives and of children, thus destroying the family life.

Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia* pictures an ideal state, one feature of which was the community of goods. "In More's *Utopia* community of goods did not extend to wives, but all disagreeable work was to be done by slaves, — a strange class, contrary to the Christian ideal state or community."

"Among the Jews there were two sects or parties, the Essenes and the Therapeutæ, which practised community of goods as early as the reign of the Herods."⁵

"Whilst the Essenes dined together, owing to their scrupulosity in avoiding all food except what was ceremonially pure, the Christians saw in every poor man who partook of their common meal the real Presence of their Lord. Of all contemporary sects it may no doubt be said that the Christian society resembled most nearly the Essenes, but with this admission Weizsäcker well adds: The Essenes, through their binding rules and their suppression of individualism, were, from their very nature, an order of limited extent. In the new Society the moral obligation of liberty reigned, and disclosed an unlimited future."⁶

2. THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNISM. This differed very materially from the other plans in that (1) it was entirely voluntary. (2) It was the application to peculiar circumstances of the great eternal principle of love and brotherhood, proceeding from a noble devotion to a common Lord, to his disciples and his cause. There was no compulsory virtue. (3) The key to the right understanding of the two passages (2: 45; 4: 32-35) lies in the words common to both, "as every man had need."

"Such expressions indicate, as we have seen, not reckless, but judicious charity. . . . They show wise management, as in early days St. Chrysostom noted in commenting on the words, so that the Christians did not act recklessly like many philosophers among the Greeks, of whom some gave up their lands, others cast great quantities of money into the sea, which was no contempt of riches, but only folly and madness (*Hom.*, vii.)."²

(4) The account in the Acts plainly implies that

and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure with a divine and heavenly purity. I have several other times had views very much of the same nature and which have had the same effects." — Pres. Jonathan Edwards.

¹ Rendall.

² Knowing.

³ Rendall says, "the regular meaning of this phrase is giving thanks," before all the people. But Knowing

shows that χάρις is frequently used of finding favor, and gives instances of the exact phrase in this verse, used in this sense.

⁴ See Burton's *Moods and Tenses in N. Test. Greek*, pp. 57, 58.

⁵ Rev. Edwin Rice, D. D., Appendix to his *Com. on Acts*. See Josephus, *Antiq.* 18: 1, 5; *Wars*, 2: 8, 3.

⁶ Knowing. See, also, Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, 1: 58.

the possession of property did not cease among Christians, as we learn from the fact that "some fourteen years later (Acts 12: 12) we find Mary, the mother of John Mark, — evidently a person of consideration and authority in the church, — possessing a house of her own in the city." Mnason would seem to have possessed a house in Jerusalem (Acts 21: 16); Tabitha helped the poor from her own resources; Paul urges the disciples to give as they are prospered; there is no implication that Barnabas sold all that he had.

"The case of Ananias and Sapphira clearly shows that the whole thing was voluntary, not required, while in communism in the strict sense no room is left for individual generosity. The fact that Barnabas is especially commended for selling his field also suggests that such generosity was uncommon."¹

"Neither passage at all implies systematic community of goods: the property of members remained still their own, though men counted the needs of the Church more pressing than any personal want, and owners sold property from time to time to meet them."²

(5) Its origin. "The common fund of the Church, like the common meals, was sanctioned by the example of the Lord. He and the Twelve depended for their maintenance on a common fund supported by voluntary ministrations. The Church continued to recognize the claim of her ministers for maintenance. But the relief of the poor, which under former circumstances had been

only occasional, became, on the formation of a distinct community largely recruited from amidst the poor, the most prominent object of the fund. The claims of widows and orphans, of sick and destitute, were the heaviest burden on the relief fund administered first by the Twelve, then by the Seven, and later by elders."²

(6) The eternal principle. "The principle underlying Christian communism, viz., that all possessing goods and industries are to be consecrated to God in the service of humanity, is a fundamental Christian principle (Matt. 25: 14-30; Luke 13: 6-9), but neither experience nor Scripture indicates that selling all and dividing to the poor is the best method calculated to serve humanity, or even the poor."³ Christian love and Christian principles are to abolish poverty and want, and spread the gospel over the earth, and we are to live daily according to the brotherly principle exemplified in this early church, "where the poor man knew no shame, the rich no haughtiness."

"Renan and Pfleiderer alike have recognized the beauty of St. Luke's picture, and of the social transformation which was destined to renew the face of the earth, which found its pattern of serving and patient love in Jesus, the friend of the poor, whose brotherhood opened a place of refuge for the oppressed, the destitute, the weak, who enjoyed in the mutual love of their fellows a foretaste of the future kingdom of God in which God himself will wipe all tears from their eyes."⁴

¹ McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*.

² Rendall.

³ Abbott.

⁴ Knowling.

CHAPTER 3.

THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

AN INCIDENT, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

A LAME MAN HEALED.	Peter and John entering the Temple. A Lame Man begging at the Beautiful Gate. The Apostles cure his Disease. Gathering Crowds in Solomon's Porch. Audience. Place. Text. Purpose.	DATE. Summer, A. D. 30.
PETER'S ADDRESS.	Argument. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The healing not from themselves. 2. It was the work of Jesus. 3. They rejected and crucified him. 4. God raised him from the dead. 5. Objection. How could such a man be the Messiah? 6. Answer. Their own scriptures so declare. Application: Repent. Closing Appeal.	PLACE. The Temple Courts, Jerusalem.

1 Now Peter and John ^{r went} ^{were going up} ^{together} into the temple at the hour ^s of prayer, *being the ninth 'hour.*

r See Luke 18. 10. *s* Ps. 55. 17. *t* ch. 10. 3, 30. Matt. 27. 46. Cp. 1 Kin. 18. 29.

PETER AND JOHN ENTERING THE TEMPLE FOR EVENING SERVICE.

Of the many miracles of loving help wrought through the apostles, one is selected because of its far-reaching consequences. Two effects are sure to follow such an inflow of new spiritual life as that which came on Pentecost. On the one hand the changed character, the peace, the joy, the great generosity, the uplifting of the lives of the disciples into a heavenly sphere, described at the close of the last chapter, attracted many of the people. It was what they needed and longed for. It awakened their souls, it filled them with the hope of better things.

On the other hand, there was certain to arise opposition from those whose character and lives were reprovéd, but who did not want to change them; and from those whose lives and fortunes and power depended on the continuance of the old régime.

But the very opposition spread the truth, strengthened the character of the church, and increased its numbers.

1. Now Peter and John. Two chiefest among the apostles, and most advanced in the knowledge of Jesus. "The eldest and the youngest, probably, of the noble twelve." Widely different in character, they were closest of friends, alike

in principle, devotion, and purpose. Went up. "Were going up," as in R. V. From their homes, or some meeting-place of the disciples, they ascended the temple hill, and were going up from one terrace to another in the temple courts. For each inner court was on a higher level than the adjoining outer one. They had come into the temple. That is, into the great Court of the Gentiles, and were crossing toward the Court of the Women, which, according to Kitto, "was the common place for worshippers, both men and women." It was the custom of the early Christians to worship in their old accustomed way, as well as in the new ways taught them by the Spirit. If they broke "the old bottles" before the new were prepared, they would lose the very spirit and power of worship. As it was, they filled the old forms full of the spirit of worship.

At, *etl*, *for*. So as to be there at the hour of prayer. The hours of incense and of sacrifice were hours of prayer. See Luke 1: 9, 10, where it is said that the people were praying while the priest offered the incense. Being the ninth hour. Or about three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the evening sacrifice.¹

WORKING TWO BY TWO. There was great increase of power by working two by two. So Christ had sent out the disciples. So went out

¹ Edersheim's *Temple, its Ministry and Services*, pp. 115, 116.

2 And a certain man that was "lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the ^{gate} ^{door} of the temple which is called Beautiful, " to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

u ch. 14. 8. v Cp. Luke 16. 20. w Cp. John 9. 8.

the first foreign missionaries, Paul and Barnabas, from Antioch. So Paul ever wanted a companion. So men best live and work now. Two souls cemented together are far more than twice one. "A friend," says Bacon, "not only gives much needed counsel, but a man's friend bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not."

"So when two work together, each for each
Is quick to plan, and can the other teach;

"But when alone one seeks the best to know,
His skill is weaker and his thoughts are slow."

The best and strongest friendships are usually between those whose differences make them complements one of the other, and each one a help to the other by developing those qualities which the other lacks. "As one diamond polishes another," says Rieger, "so each of these precious stones may have aided in imparting an additional value to the other." There must be essential similarity of principles, and sympathy, the same general trend and quality of life, with such differences as make it a harmony, not identity.

Two friends must be set to the same key, and each note must harmonize with the others. They form two parts to the same tune. They are like complementary colors, — very different, and yet both formed by rays of light, and so adapted one to the other that they belong together, and each is brighter and better for the presence of the other.¹

ROUTINE AND SPIRIT. The spiritual life is not confined to routine, but at times bursts all such bounds. And yet regular hours of worship and prayer and reading of the Bible are a great help toward a high, spiritual daily life, just as regular hours for meals are best for bodily health. The author of *Blessed be Drudgery* shows how valuable in the discipline of life is regular, compulsory routine. Habits may become a chain, but they also may become a golden stairway to heaven.²

THE LAME MAN AT THE GATE BEAUTIFUL.

2. And a certain man (that was) lame. The Greek for "that was" is *ἐνδράχων*, from *ἐνδρ*, under, and *ἄραω*, to begin, expressing the fact that he came into being lame. All we know of his history is (1) that he was born with the cause of his lameness, making the cure more wonderful; (2) that it was caused by a weakness of the feet and ankles (ver. 7); (3) that it was so bad that he could not walk, but had to be carried; (4) that he was poor; (5) that he was over 40 years old (Acts 4: 22). **Was carried.** Was being carried, at the same time that the two apostles were going into the temple. **Whom they laid daily.** Were accustomed to lay. The two parties may have met as they approached his usual place, or at the gate of the temple, *τοῦ ἱεροῦ*, the sacred enclosure including the courts and their buildings as well as the temple proper, *ναός*.

Which is called Beautiful. No gate of this name is mentioned by other writers. It may have been (1) the *Shushan* gate, from the outside on the east, into the Court of the Gentiles, through Solomon's porch. It may have been so called because over it was placed a picture of the Persian capital Susa (Hebrew, *Shushan*), "the town of lilies" (Hamburger); or because the decoration of the pillars was lily-work (Wendt). Or, (2) it was more probably a popular name given to the magnificent doors of Corinthian brass described by Josephus,³ leading from the Court of the Gentiles into the Court of the Women, which was reserved for the ordinary religious offices of the Jewish people. "The folds of this brazen gate were seventy-five feet high and sixty broad, and were adorned with plates of gold and silver."⁴

Every one on the continent of Europe has noticed how much expense and beauty have been lavished on doorways and gates. Michael Angelo said of the splendid bronze doors of the Baptistery at Florence that they were fit to be the gates of paradise. See *Psa. 24: 7*. The expensive architecture of ancient gates is seen in the enor-

¹ "The heroic companions celebrated by Homer and others seem to have but one heart and soul, with scarcely a wish or object apart, and only to live, as they are always ready to die, for one another. . . . The idea of a Greek hero seems not to have been thought complete without such a brother in arms by his side." — *Thirlwall's History of Greece*.

² See chapter on "Habit," in Professor James' *Psychology*.

³ *Wars*, v. 5, 3.

⁴ See Wright's *Some New Testament Problems*. Ederheim's *The Temple, Its Ministries and Services*. Canon Tristram favors a tradition that the Gate Beautiful was "what is now called the 'Bab-es-Silsileh,' at about the centre of the west wall of the temple area. . . . As at this spot was evidently the principal entrance from the most popular part of the city, we have good reason for accepting the tradition." *Sun. School Times*, Jan., 1897.

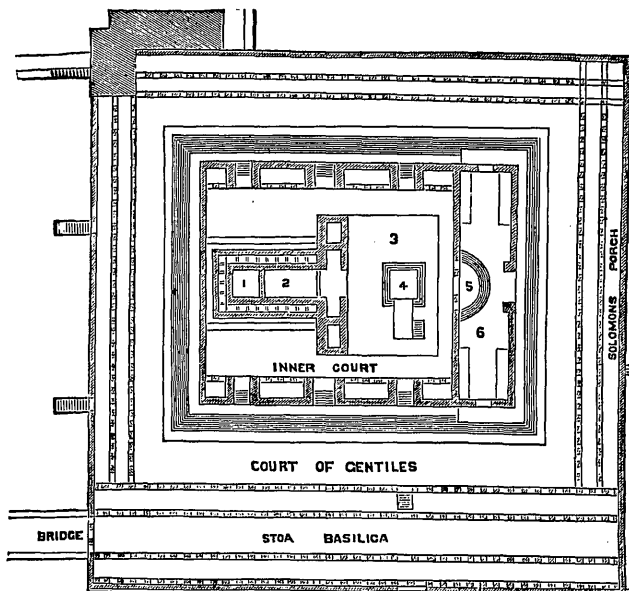
3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us.

mous gates of Karnak, in Egypt, and in the Propylæon, at Athens. The gates of the temple were made so beautiful and magnificent in order

ber, and was in early times spelt *almesse*, which is derived from the Greek, ἐλεημοσύνη (ἐλεῆμοσύνη, the word used here), which in German becomes

almsen, — a gift of charity.² Of them that entered into the temple. It was common then for beggars to frequent the temple, as now they do the Continental cathedrals and the gates of Oriental cities.³ The kindest and most sympathetic people in the world are praying people. Persons who obey the first table of the law are most likely to obey the second. Nine tenths of all the money raised for benevolent purposes, and for the support of our charitable institutions, comes from the pockets of those who go "up to the temple at the hour of prayer." Giving is a part of worship, one way of expressing love and devotion to God.



PLAN OF THE TEMPLE IN THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES.

1. Holy of Holies. 2. Holy Place or Sanctuary. 3. Court of the priests. 4. The great altar. 5. Gate between the court of the women, 6, and the inner court of Israel, approached by 15 steps. Nicanor's gate was between the court of the women, and the court of the Gentiles.

to attract men, and to express the greater glories within, and "to symbolize the entrance into heaven."¹ To ask alms. *Alms* is singular num-

¹ Phillips Brooks has a most helpful sermon on "The Beautiful Gate."

THE GATE BEAUTIFUL. There are many beautiful gates in life to higher and better things. The Gate of Hope, the Gate of Love, the Gate of Character, the Gate of Faithfulness, the Gate of Prayer. Jesus Christ is the Beautiful Gate to eternal life.

The temple of religion has a beautiful gate in it; but in one important respect it differs from the beautiful gate of the Jewish temple. On the pillars on either side of that gate were engraved in Greek letters the words, *Let no stranger pass beyond this on pain of death*. But through the beautiful gate of the gospel every one is free to enter into the holiest place, and that at all times.

² Cambridge Bible.

³ "As this gate was the principal entrance, fortunate was the beggar who could secure a seat there. The same

THE CURE OF THE LAME MAN.

3. Who seeing Peter and John. As these were well-known men frequenting the temple, where this man was wont to be brought, it would seem that he must have known something about them. About to go into the

temple. From the noisy court of the Gentiles into the inner courts with the worshippers.

4. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him,

custom continues without the slightest change throughout the East. The lepers, the blind, the cripples, have each their accustomed spot in the thoroughfares, but especially outside the city gates, and outside the doors of the mosques, to which they are led or carried daily by their friends, and where they sit, with their wooden bowls in front of them to receive the alms of the passers-by, uttering their piteous, ceaseless wail. . . . To relieve these miserable objects is an acknowledged religious duty in lands where no organized system of relief or of hospitals exists; and, I must add, from personal observation, that it is a duty not neglected, even by the poorest, especially when on their way to worship." — Canon Tristram. See Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraeæ* (Acts 3 : 2). Dr. Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*. Van Lennep's *Bible Lands*, vol. ii. p. 754.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something ^{of} from them.

6 ^{Then} ^{But} Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but ^{such as} ^{what} I have ^{that} give I thee." In the name of Jesus Christ of Nāz'ā-rēth, ^{rise up and} walk.

x 2 Cor. 6. 10.

y Cp. ch. 9. 34.

ἀνέλκας, from *τείνω*, to stretch, and *α*, intensive; hence, *fastening the eyes* on anything with earnest attention. Our word "attention" has the same literal meaning. Peter looked at the man with intense gaze, as if to see into his very soul, whether he was one in whom faith could be awakened, and to whom it would be wise and safe to impart the blessing of healing. It has been said that no faith was required of the lame man; but the call to rise and walk, in the name of Jesus, was a test of faith, and the man's acting upon Peter's word was an act of faith. **Look on us.** Calling his attention to what they were about to do, and awakening faith and obedience. He probably knew something of the divine power working through them, and was thus ready to believe in their Master.

5. And he gave heed. Because their intense gaze showed him that they had more than a hasty gift. He probably knew something of the generosity of the Christians described in the last chapter. So the Israelite bitten by the fiery serpents looked upon the brazen serpent held up for his healing (Num. 21: 9. See Isa. 45: 22).

NOTE the guiding providence of God, and how great the outcome of this seemingly accidental meeting. Every life is full of these providences. A very small thing has changed the whole course of our lives. The career of the famous preacher F. W. Robertson was changed by the barking of a dog.¹

6. Then. Better "but." Silver and gold have I none. Peter had left all to follow Jesus, and was dependent on others for his support, as Jesus had commanded (Matt. 10: 9). The statement shows that the apostles had not enriched themselves by the generosity of the new converts, but joined with them in their benevolence. No one had given up more for Jesus than they; but they asked for themselves no more than the most obscure believer.² But such as I have give I thee. What did he have? He had the power to heal in the name of Jesus. He had the gospel with all its blessings; he had the knowledge of the way of salvation; he had the presence of the

Holy Spirit; he had an experience of the love of God, and the teachings of Jesus, and the way to eternal life.

Peter had greater gifts to bestow than if he had possessed "the wealth of Ormus or of Ind," or had "Affluent Fortune emptied all her horn" into his cup.

NOTE that only such as a person has can he give to others, and only in so far as he really possesses it. If one has courage, hope, love, goodness, he can infuse them into other souls. If he himself is full of doubts, hate, ill-temper, bad passions, it is these he will impart to those around him, and by no means can such a one impart to others the good he has not himself. Hence it is that the most important element in teaching and in preaching is the man behind them.

NOTE that the best gifts to the poor, or to any one, are not the exact things they want, but the power to obtain them; not merely a cup of water, but an overflowing fountain; not a basket of fruit, but a fruit tree; not mere money, but the power and opportunity to earn a living; not a definite amount of truth, but the means of searching for truth. This is now generally accepted as the best and most effective method of bestowing charity.

In the name. The name expresses his whole being,—his character, powers, and heart. Of Jesus Christ. As the efficient cause, as the real living giver, for Christ healed in his own name, the apostles in Christ's name. Because this expressed the real facts of the case. And because if the apostles worked miracles in their own name, it would have drawn attention to themselves, and not to the Saviour; while now, both Jesus and the apostles pointed men to the Messiah, and thus to God. Of Nazareth. This is added to make perfectly clear to whom he referred. This one, so despised by the Jews, proves himself to be the Messiah, and to be now living, by doing now the same works he had done when in the flesh. Rise up and walk. The R. V., as in the best MSS., has simply "walk."

THE TEST OF FAITH. "The man's part has sometimes been represented as passive, as if no

¹ *Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson*, p. 13. See, also, E. E. Hale's story of "Hands Off" in his *Christmas in a Palace*. Condensed in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, p. 417.

² Many commentaries repeat the story of Cornelius à Lapide, who beautifully relates how Thomas Aquinas once came to Pope Innocent IV. at Rome and was shown through all the sumptuously furnished rooms of the Papal

Palace. He became almost as much fatigued and dazed as was the Queen of Sheba, when she had been dazzled with the riches of Solomon's kingdom. "See, Thomas," said Innocent, "see, the Church can no more say as it did in those first days, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "True, holy father," replied Thomas Aquinas, "but the Church of the present day can hardly say to a lame man what the Church of the first days said, 'Arise and walk.'"

7 And he took him by the right hand, and ^{lifted him} ^{raised him} up: and immediately his feet and ^{his} ankle bones received strength.

8 And ^{he} ^{leaping up,} ^{he} stood, and ^{walked,} ^{began to walk;} and ^{he} entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And ^{all} the people saw him walking and praising God:

10 And they ^{knew} ^{took knowledge of him,} that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful ^{gate} of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

z ch. 14. 10. Isai. 35. 6.

a ch. 4. 16, 21.

appeal of any kind were made to his faith." But a test of faith was made (1) in the command to rise up and walk, to make an effort on his own part; and (2) to do this in the name of Jesus, a "name which a short time before had been placed as an inscription on a malefactor's cross;" (3) and more than this, in the name of a dead person whom Peter declared was now alive, and was the Messiah.

HELPS TO FAITH. 7. And he took him by the right hand. To strengthen his faith, to encourage the man to make the needed effort, and to help him to use his feet in rising and standing, for one has to learn the art of standing and walking even when he has strength to do it. "It is said of Kaspar Hauser, who was confined in a German prison from birth till he was 17 years old, that when he first came out he could not walk without stumbling."¹ The man's faith was strengthened by the miracles the apostles had already wrought, by the marvellous change in those who had become Christians, and by the gift on Pentecost. Perhaps he recalled stories of healing by Jesus, as in John 5:2-14. The Holy Spirit wrought directly on his soul.

His feet and ankle bones received strength. "The language denotes with medical precision the nature of the restoration; the tread gained muscular firmness; the ankle joints new strength and play."²

THE CURE. 8. And he leaping up, ἐξελόμενος, from ἐξ, from, up, and ἀλλομαι, to spring up, like water from a fountain (the second leaping up in this verse). The compound is used in medical language "of starting from sleep, or of the sudden bound of the pulse." He stood, first to get his balance, and then walked. (In the Greek "stood" is in the aorist tense, and "walked" in the imperfect, "began to walk.") Entered with them into the temple. That is, into the sacred enclosure, either from the outside into the Court of the Gentiles, through the Shushan gate, or into the Court of the Women from

the Court of the Gentiles, through the Beautiful Gate.

Walking and leaping. "Commentators from the days of St. Chrysostom have noted that by no act or in no place could the man have shown his gratitude more appropriately."

Kitto suggests that as he never till this time had put one foot before another, the phrase may denote the peculiar movement characteristic of his first efforts in the unknown art of walking. "The leaping may, however, have been a spontaneous act expressive of his gladness, and calculated to satisfy himself, and to show others, that he was perfectly healed."³ **And praising God.** His first thought was to return thanks to God for his great deliverance. This shows that he was cured in soul as well as body. Praise is as natural to a child of God as his morning song to a bird; or the gushing of the waters to a fountain.⁴

9. And all the people saw him. The miracle was public, before crowds of people, and his ecstatic expressions of joy called their attention to him. At this hour, the time of the evening service of sacrifice, the courts of the temple would be full of worshippers. They would also see that the change in Peter was as great a miracle as the change in the lame man.

10. And they knew, etc. They recognized, identified him. There was no mistake that this man who was walking and leaping was the very man who had been born lame. So that even the bitterest opposers were compelled to admit the fact (Acts 4:16). They had seen him often, and his face was a familiar sight. **Filled with wonder,** θαμβους, "used from Homer downwards, of amazement allied to terror or awe."⁵ **Amazement,** ἐκστασεις, from ἐκ, out of, and ἵστημι, to put or place; hence, of a man put out of his senses, out of his normal condition; transported, as with joy or wonder; rapt, from earthly things, as in a trance. Our word "ecstasy" is a transcript of the Greek. The great design of the miracle seems to have been to arouse the attention of the

¹ R. R. Doherty, Ph. D.

² Rendall.

³ Kitto, *Daily Bible Illustrations*.

⁴ COMPARE the poem, "The Two Baskets;" one for

petitions and one for praises. *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, p. 85.

⁵ Knowing.

11 And as ^{the lame man which was healed} ^{he} held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in ^c the porch that is called Sôl'ô-môn's, greatly wondering.

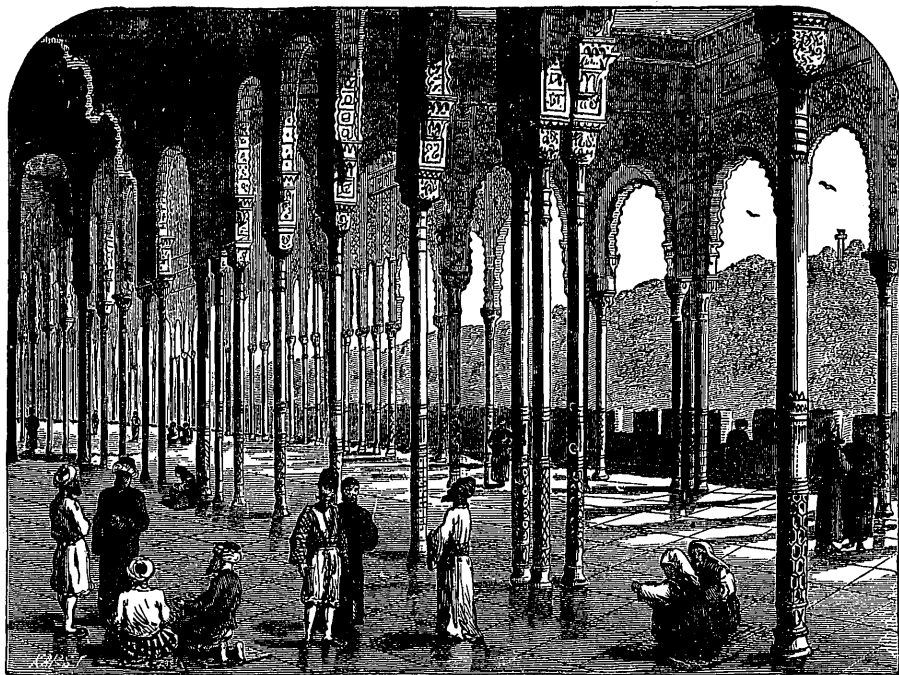
b ch. 4. 14. c ch. 5. 12. John 10. 23.

multitude, — to convert them into inquirers, by calling to their notice the fact that Jesus was alive, for only a living Saviour could exert such power; and also to the kind of blessings the gospel was bringing to men, as a type of spiritual healing.

As has been well said, "miracles are bells to

call the people to worship." "Of course, over and above this, they are also the divine credentials of the messengers, — of those who are to conduct the worship."¹

A PARABLE OF REDEMPTION. This miracle is an acted parable of redemption; the helplessness



SOLOMON'S PORCH.

A portico, or cloister, extending along the whole eastern side of the temple court, 600 feet long, 25 feet wide, with the arched gateway *Shushan* running through it.

and the need; the desire for bodily healing and help, leading to the spiritual; the gospel offering gifts beyond all silver or gold in value; the command in Jesus' name; the faith that led to obedience, and to doing what seemed impossible; the joy in the new-found life; the wonderful change; the amazement of the people.

PETER'S SERMON.

THE AUDIENCE. 11. The lame man . . . held Peter and John, *κρατούντας*, from *κράτος*, strength,

hence, took a firm hold of, held faithfully to, "in a physical sense, although it is possible that it signifies that the healed man joined himself to the Apostles more closely as a follower (4: 14), fearing like the demoniac healed by Christ (Luke 8: 38) lest he should be separated from his benefactors. Compare Cant. 3: 4."² (1) In loving gratitude; (2) to show who had done such great things for him; (3) as a testimony that he accepted their Saviour and Master; (4) as a means of continued strength and grace.

¹ Gloag.

² Knowing.

12 And when Peter saw ^{him}; he answered unto the people, Ye men of Isrā'el, why marvel ye at this? ^{man?} or why ^{look} fasten ye ^{so earnestly} your eyes on us, as though by our own power or ^{holiness} ^{godliness} we had made ^{this man} ^{him} to walk?

13 The "God of Ābrāhām, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the "God of our fathers, hath ^{glorified} his ^{Son} servant Jesus; whom ^{ye} delivered up, and ^{denied} him in the presence ^{before the face} of Pīlāte, ^{when he} ^{had} determined to ^{let him go} ^{release him}.

d Matt. 22. 32. e ch. 5. 30 & 22. 14. Cp. ch. 7. 32. f Isai. 55. 5. Cp. Isai. 52. 13. See John 8. 54. g See Matt. 20. 19. h ch. 13. 28. John 19. 7, 12, 15. i Luke 23. 14, 16. John 19. 12.

THE PLACE. Ran together. After the regular service was over, returning through the Gate Beautiful, down its fifteen steps to the outer Court of the Gentiles, into the porch that is called Solomon's, a cloister extending along the eastern side, nearly six hundred feet. It was built on an artificial embankment which was the work of King Solomon; hence, perhaps the name. The porch was fifteen cubits (22 to 26 feet) wide, and its roof of cedar was supported by two rows of marble columns, twenty-five cubits (38 to 43 feet) high.¹

Greatly wondering, ἐκθαμβοί, ἐκ, out of, and θαμβός, wonder (ver. 10), astonished beyond measure.

THE TEXT was the restored man standing by Peter's side, and his marvellous cure.

THE PURPOSE AND AIM of Peter's address was to show that Jesus was the Messiah, and to persuade the Jews to repent, and believe in him.

THE ARGUMENT. I. The apostles were not the power, but the instruments through which this wonderful work was wrought.

12. When Peter saw it. The rush of the crowds into Solomon's porch. He answered the wonder of the people. Peter was a great fisher of men, and he used the cure and the wonder as his bait. **Why marvel ye at this?** When you understand, you will see that such a cure is just what you ought to expect from such a Saviour. **Look ye so earnestly,** ἀτενίζετε, see on ver. 4. **As though by our own power.** That would have been marvellous indeed. Peter proved his sincerity and true piety by leading the people away from himself to the Saviour. Selfishness and hypocrisy call attention to self; godliness, always to God.

Or holiness, εὐσεβεία, piety toward God, godliness, as always in the Bible.

II. But the good deed was wrought by Jesus whom you crucified, but whom your God glorifies by raising him to life again.

13. The God of Abraham. In whom all the Jews believed. Peter presented no new religion, but only the workings of the same God who had done wonders for their ancestors, to whom he had

made the promises which were being fulfilled through Jesus. **Hath glorified his Son Jesus.** By working miracles through him, by raising him from the dead, and making him a living Prince and Saviour, by the transformations of character in his disciples.

His Son, παῖδα, used for both *child* and *servant*. It is applied to Moses and David and other prophets. This whole passage will be shown in its true force as an argument by turning to the chapters of Isaiah that describe the servant (παῖς) of Jehovah, which were familiar to the Jews as a description of the Messiah, almost parallel to the one Peter here presents. The Messianic "servant of Jehovah" in Isaiah is (1) "the personification of the ideal Israel, the pious nucleus of the nation," (2) the realization of this ideal in the person of the Messiah. Delitzsch employs the figure of a pyramid to describe the use of the term "servant" in this prophecy. "The conception of the term servant of Jehovah is, as it were, a pyramid, of which the base is the people of Israel as a whole, the central part Israel 'according to the Spirit,' and the summit the person of the Mediator of salvation who arises out of Israel."²

(1) The divine spirit comes upon him (Isa. 42 : 1; 44 : 3).

(2) His high calling (Isa. 42 : 6-9; 45 : 5, 6).

(3) He is despised, humiliated, rejected, slain (Isa. 53).

(4) He bears the sins of his people, in order to redeem them (Isa. 53 : 10-12).

(5) He is to be successful. Death does not prevent, but aids his great work of redeeming Israel. He will bring the most glorious times the world has ever known (Isa. 58 : 8-14; 59 : 16-21).

(6) With these prophecies comes the call to repentance, and a holy, heavenly life (Isa. 55).³

Recalling this description, Peter's audience would be prepared to receive Peter's words about crucifixion and death not as an argument against, but as one in favor of the Messiahship of Jesus.

Whom ye, as a nation. It is quite probable also that many of them may have joined in the shouts of "Crucify him."

¹ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20 : 9, 7; Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 2 : 184; Edersheim, *Temple and its Services*, 20-22.

² Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, vol. ii. p. 174.

³ See Prof. Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*, "The Prophecy of the Servant of Jehovah," and his *Messiah of the Apostles*, pp. 31, 32.

14 But ye denied ^j the Holy ^{One ^k and the Just, and ^l desired} a murderer to be granted unto you;

15 And killed ^m the Prince of life; ⁿ whom God ^{hath} raised from the dead; ^o whereof we are witnesses.

16 And ^{his name, through ^p faith in} ^{by faith in his name hath} ^q his name ^{hath} made this man strong, whom ye ^{see} ^{belold} and know: yea, the faith which is ^r ^{by} through him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 And now, brethren, I wot that ^{through} ^s ignorance ye did ^{it}, as ^{did} also your rulers.

^j Cp. ch. 4. 27, 30. See Mark 1. 24. ^k ch. 7. 52 & 22. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 18. 1 John 2. 1 & 3. 7. Cp. James 5. 6. ^l Luke 23. 18, 19, 25. ^m ch. 5. 31. Heb. 2. 10 & 12. 2 (for mg.). ⁿ See ch. 2. 24. ^o See ch. 1. 8 (for mg.) & Luke 24. 48. ^p Cp. John 1. 12. ^q Cp. ver. 6. ^r Cp. 1 Pet. 1. 21. ^s ch. 13. 27. Cp. ch. 26. 9 & Luke 23. 34 & John 16. 3 & 1 Cor. 2. 8 & 1 Tim. 1. 13.

Whom ye delivered up, and denied. "The picture Peter paints to the Jews of their guilt is exceedingly vivid. He piles up the terrible contrasts. This Jesus God hath glorified, but ye despised. Pilate, the mocking, careless Roman, desired to release him, but ye clamored for his blood. Ye were offered (ver. 14) the choice between a murderer and the Holy and Righteous One, and ye chose the murderer (Mark 15: 7; Luke 23: 19)."¹

14. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just. A description of their expected Messiah. How they saw in this picture their crime and their folly, when in contrast they desired a murderer. Their choice showed their character.

15. The Prince of life. In contrast with "killed" and "murderer." He offered them life, but they did all they could to destroy the hope of Israel, to thrust from them God's best gifts.

Prince, ἀρχηγόν, from ἀρχή, *beginning, origin, source, chief*; and ἄγω, *to bring*. Hence, both the *leader, captain, prince, and author, source*. So the Latin *princeps* (first) signifies both the first in order, the chief, leader, prince; and the first as originator, founder, as of a family. Jesus was both the Prince of Life and the Source of life.

"The name Jesus (Joshua) has suggested the title here applied to the second Jesus. As Joshua was the captain of Israel and led them across the Jordan into the land of promise, so Jesus was the captain of the living army of the Resurrection, and leads them across the river of death into the promised heaven."²

Whom God hath raised. Their efforts were in vain, for they were fighting against God. Jesus was still alive. Whereof, or rather, *of whom, we are witnesses*. Of his resurrection, and also of all he did and said, as the Messiah. They were willing to stake their lives on this fact.

Jesus is not a dead malefactor, but a living Saviour, reigning in heaven, and showing that he is alive by doing these deeds of healing, and these wonders of Pentecost, and proving thus that he is the Messiah, the ever present though unseen King of the Jews.

16. And his name. The name stands for all the person is and has, his character and his possessions. **Through faith.** Both on the part of the apostles and of the man. Here he shows the means of salvation, as well as the Saviour.³ **Whom ye see and know.** The facts are before you. You have seen this man a lame beggar for years, and you see him now strong and well.

Perfect soundness, δολοκληρίαν, from ὅλος, *entire*, and κληρος, *a lot*. Denoting, therefore, the condition of one who has his *entire allotment*.⁴

III. A brotherly, conciliatory appeal to his audience, preparing the way for his exhortation, and for their obedience to the divine call, vers. 17, 18.

NOTE: (1) That Peter's excuse for the people was the truth, and one therefore that should be spoken. (2) That speaking this truth prevented the people from obtaining a wrong opinion of the gospel, as if it were harsh and vindictive; and thus helped them to repent. (3) That it gave them hope, and aided their repentance. (4) That at the same time it did not ease their conscience, nor detract from the necessity of repentance. (5) That it appealed to their Scriptures, pointing out truth they had probably overlooked or neglected. (6) That Peter's appeal grew out of his own experience. He recalled how difficult it had been for himself and the other apostles to understand the Scriptures, and to reconcile their expectations concerning the Messiah with the fact of his sufferings and death (Matt. 16: 21-23).

17. And now. In view of these things. **Breth-**

¹ Schaff, *Revision Com.*

² Rendall.

³ See Whittier's *Poems*, "Our Master."

"The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;

We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again."

⁴ Prof. M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

18 But ^{those} ^{the} things which God ^{before had shewed} ^{foreshewed} "by the mouth of all ^{his} ^{the} prophets, that ^{his} "Christ should ^v suffer, he ^{hath} ^{so} fulfilled.

19 ^x Repent ye therefore, and ^y be converted, ^{turn again,} that ^z your sins may be blotted out, ^{when the times of refreshing shall come} ^{that so there may come seasons of refreshing} from the presence of the Lord;

^t See ch. 2. 23. ^u ch. 17. 3 & 26. 22, 23. Cp. Heb. 2. 10. See Luke 24. 26, 27. ^v See Luke 9. 20. ^w Matt. 17. 12. Luke 22. 15 & 24. 46. Heb. 13. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 21, 23 & 3. 18 & 4. 1, *al.* ^x See ch. 2. 38. ^y See Luke 22. 32. ^z Ps. 51. 1, 9. Isai. 43. 25 & 44. 22. Col. 2. 14.

ren. A conciliatory and affectionate word, as contrasted with the severe but necessary arraignment of the previous verses. Peter shows that the Christians have no hard feelings toward those who had so wronged their Master.

I wot. First and third persons singular indicative present of *wit*, Old English for "know," "to be aware of."

That through ignorance ye did it. They did not recognize Jesus as the Messiah. They did not understand the Scriptures concerning him. The picture in their minds of their promised Messiah was entirely different from that presented by a humble teacher crucified as a malefactor.

Their sin therefore was not so great or so hardening as wilful sin (Heb. 10: 26). There was vastly more hope of their repenting of their sin. It is far easier to remove ignorance than a perversee will.

Compare the prayer of Christ on the cross, Luke 23: 34. Also Acts 13: 27; 26: 9; 1 Cor. 2: 8; 1 Tim. 1: 13.

18. Which God before had shewed. God was not disappointed, or his plans frustrated. By the mouth of all his prophets. By the prophets as a whole, in the book of the prophets. "Peter speaks of them all as *one* body and actuated by *one* spirit; and as a body, their testimony is concurrent and harmonious, in pointing to a Messiah suffering, and triumphing in and by suffering. See Num. 21: 9, with John 3: 14, 15; Ps. 22: 16; Isa. chap. 53; Dan. 9: 26; Zech. 11: 13."¹

He hath so fulfilled. God caused your deeds to work out his will. So Joseph comforted his brethren, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good" (Gen. 50: 20).²

THE APPLICATION, A CALL TO REPENTANCE AND A NEW LIFE.

19. Repent ye, μετανοήσατε, change your mind, your purpose, the direction of your life.

And be converted, ἐπιστρέψατε, in the active voice turn yourselves to God, turn yourselves about,

away from your old opinion and your former life, into the new life. You have been going in the wrong direction; turn around.

(1) **That your sins may be blotted out.** "Many Oriental merchants kept their accounts on little tablets of wax. On these tablets they indented marks which recorded the debts, and when these debts were paid, they took the blunt end of the stylus or pencil, and just flattened down the wax, and the account entirely disappeared. Now he that repents and is pardoned is, through the precious blood of Christ, so entirely forgiven that there is no record of his sin left. If we blot out an account from our books, the record is gone, but there is the blot; but on the wax tablet there was no blot. But sin cannot be removed except by repentance and conversion."³ Sins are blotted out when they are forgiven, and when the sinful nature is taken away by divine grace.

(2) **When, ὅπως ἂν, in order that, the times of refreshing, ἀναψύξεις, reviving, refreshing, from ἀνα, anew, over again, and ψύχω to cool by blowing; hence, to refresh as with cool winds after parching heat. New life, spiritual refreshing, as the fresh life of youth comes to one recovering from sickness, as new life comes to the earth with spring sunshine and rain, or to the parched fields after a shower. These come to the individual and to the nation as fast and as far as by repentance and faith they are willing to receive it. Had the whole nation repented there would have been such a new life among the Jews as was foretold in Isaiah.**

Lightfoot, Meyer, Plumptre, Abbott, take this view. On the other hand Gloag, Alford, Schaff, refer it to the Second Coming of Christ and the restoration of all things, "the great season of joy and rest which it was understood the coming of the Messiah in his glory was to bring with it." From my point of view concerning the Second Coming, both views are correct, one including the other. On the 120 first disciples, and the 3000 converts, times of refreshing had come, and all who

¹ Lyman Abbott.

² "Let me go where'er I will,
I hear a sky-born music still.

'Tis not in the high stars alone,
Nor in the cups of budding flowers,

Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers;
But in the mud and scum of things—
There alway, alway, something sings."

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

³ Charles Spurgeon.

20 And that he ^{shall} send ^{Jesus} Christ, ^a which before was preached unto ^{you}: ^{even} Jesus:

21 ^b Whom the heaven must receive until the times of ^c restitution of all things, ^{whereof} ^d God ^{hath} ^{spoken} ^{by} the mouth of ^{all} his holy prophets ^{which} have been since the world began.

22 ^{For} ^{Mō'sēs} ^{truly} said, ^{unto} the fathers, ^e A prophet shall the Lord ^{your} God raise up unto you ^{from} ^{among} your brethren, like unto me, ^f to him shall ye ^{hear} ^{harken} in all things whatsoever he shall ^{say} ^{unto} you.

^a ch. 22. 14 & 26. 16. ^b Cp. ch. 1. 11 & Luke 24. 26. 7. 37, cited from Deut. 18. 15, 18, 19. ^f Matt. 17. 5.

^c Cp. Matt. 17. 11 & Rom. 8. 21.

^d Luke 1. 70.

^e ch.

repented thereafter should enjoy them. And this process will go on till these times shall at last embrace the whole world. That which blesses the individual will also bless the world. That which fulfilled the personal hope and desire of each, then, will fulfil at last their hope for their nation and the world.

From the presence of the Lord as the giver of every good and perfect gift, as was realized in the sending from him the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. That visible gift expressed the fact that all revivings through the Spirit are gifts from on high.

(3) Jesus is alive and will return.

20. And he shall. The right construction is with *ἄνω ἔν*, above, "that he may," send Jesus Christ. Most critics refer this to the return of Jesus at his Second Coming. Dr. Abbott refers it to the "spiritual sending of the Son by the Father to the individual soul on condition of its repentance and conversion."

The fact is that both are literally true. Jesus promised that he would be with his people always, even unto the end of the world; a personal coming to each soul, his continued presence by the Holy Spirit; and he will come also at the end of the world. Both are parts of the one great coming, extending from Pentecost to the new heavens and new earth.

Which before was preached unto you, foretold by the prophets. The better reading is, "the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus." "The Christ, the Messiah, had been appointed and promised unto the Jewish nation, and now the promise of the covenant is fulfilled in Jesus."¹

Appointed in the Greek is *προκεχειρισμένον*, from *πρό*, for, at, and *χείρ*, the hand; hence, ready at hand, prepared. "The proper meaning of *προχειρίζειν* seems to be the shaping of a tool by the craftsman for the express use for which it is designed. The life of Christ on earth, with his appointed sufferings and death, is regarded as a

preparation for his eventual return to reign as King Messiah, just as the early life of Paul is viewed in 22:14 as a preparation for his apostleship."²

(4) The golden age is coming, the millennial days are sure.

21. Whom the heaven must receive. The apostles were witnesses of his ascension to heaven. The Jews expected the Messiah to abide forever (John 12:34). Peter shows that this is true of Jesus. He is living; they had seen him. He had done his work of suffering on earth, and they had seen him go to heaven. There he was still the Messiah; there he was still working for his kingdom; thence he was still manifesting himself to his people. He was the living, abiding Messiah, enthroned in heaven. Here he must remain their unseen Saviour and Lord until the times of restitution, *ἀποκαταστάσεως*, fr. *ἀπό*, from, back again, *κατά*, down, down from, and *ἵστημι*, to set, or place, hence, to put back from its wrong place back again into its right place, to restore to its former state—as to complete health, or from disorder to order, of a kingdom to its rightful ruler, of a dislocated joint to its place.

"In Josephus, *Ant.*, xi. 3, 8, 9, it is used of the restoration of the Jews to their own land from the captivity, and also in Philo, *Decal.*, 30, of the restoration of inheritances at the Jubilee."³

So here the restoration is that of all things lost by the fall; the making of this world into the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; and bringing that glorious redemption pictured in the last chapters of Revelation. It is the complete restoration of the world to the life for which it was created. The Bible is full of hope. The history of God's people is a stream ever flowing onward to the divine ideal."⁴

(5) All this is in accordance with your own Scriptures.

22. For Moses truly, *μὲν*, indeed, said, Deut. 18:15, 18, 19.

¹ Cambridge Bible. ² Rendall. ³ Knowling.

⁴ "For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years
Shall come the time foretold,

When the new heaven and earth shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing."

E. A. Sears.

23 And it shall ^{come to pass, that} every soul, which ^{will} not ^{hear} that prophet, ^{shall be} ^{utterly} destroyed from among the people.

24 Yea, and ^{all} the prophets from Sām'ū-ēl and ^{those} that ^{follow} after, as many as have spoken, ^{have likewise foretold} of these days.

25 ⁱ Ye are the ^{children} ^{sons} of the prophets, and of ^j the covenant which God made with ^{our} fathers, saying unto Abraham, ^k And in thy seed shall all the ^{kindreds} ^{families} of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you [']first God, having ^m raised up his ^{Son Je'sus,} ^{Servant,} sent him ⁿ to bless you, ^o in turning away every one of you from ^{his} iniquities.

g Lev. 23. 29. *h* ch. 13. 20. *i* Sam. 3. 20. Heb. 11. 32. *j* See ch. 2. 39. *k* See Rom. 9. 4, 5. *l* Cited from Gen. 22. 18. See Gen. 12. 3. *m* ch. 13. 46 & 28. 17 (mg.). Rom. 1. 16 & 2. 9 & 15. 8. Cp. Mark 7. 27. *n* ver. 22. *o* Rom. 11. 26. Cp. Ezek. 3. 19. See Matt. 1. 21.

Like unto me, or as he raised up me. Wetstein refers this to the succession of prophets, but "the words in Deuteronomy were fulfilled in Christ alone, the new Law-giver; the Revealer of God's will, of grace and truth, 'Whom the Lord knew face to face,' Who was from all eternity 'with God.'"¹

Him shall ye hear. Therefore in obedience to your scriptures you should hear Jesus just as your fathers were to hear and obey Moses. These words and the rest of this verse are not in the Hebrew, but are the natural and necessary inference made by Peter.

(6) If you refuse you must perish.

23. Every soul which will not hear that prophet. Listen to and obey his teachings. **Shall be destroyed**, ἐξολοθρευθήσεται, shall be destroyed, ἐκ, out of existence, utterly, from among the people of God.

This was true of each individual in its spiritual sense. It was true of the nation which in A. D. 70, forty years after this appeal of Peter to his countrymen, was destroyed. And one cannot read the story of that destruction without seeing that it was the refusal to obey Jesus and his principles that made the destruction possible.

24. Yea, and all the prophets, the prophets as a body, the book of the prophets. **Have likewise foretold of these days** promises of salvation — the Messianic times, and the glorious age to come.

THE CLOSING APPEAL. **25. Ye are the children of the prophets.** (1) Their disciples and pupils, instructed by them. (2) As children inherit from their fathers, so do you inherit the promises made to the prophets, and all the blessings that flow from them, as an inheritance may become richer, more fruitful, more valuable, as the generations flow on.

And of the covenant, διαθήκης, from διὰ, through, indicating distribution, and τίθημι, to place, to establish; hence, something arranged

between persons, therefore an agreement, a covenant.

Which God made with our fathers, Abraham (Gen. 12: 3), Isaac (Gen. 26: 4), Jacob (Gen. 28: 13-15), David (2 Sam. 23: 5).

Saying unto Abraham, mentioned because he was the founder of the nation, and the first with whom the covenant was made (Gen. 12: 3; 22: 18).

And in thy seed, descendants, shall all the kindreds, πατριαί, families, races running back to a common ancestor, nations.

Be blessed. This was true all through the existence of the nation; but it culminated in Jesus Christ, the greatest descendant of Abraham, through whom most of the world has already been blessed, and the blessing is rapidly extending to all the world.

The blessing is of every kind and degree, temporal and spiritual, earthly and heavenly.

26. Unto you first. So that you, receiving the blessing yourselves, may extend it to all the rest of the world.

God, having raised up his Son Jesus, referring to the incarnation, not to the resurrection. It includes the coming of Jesus as a whole.

Sent him to bless you, αὐτὸν εὐλογοῦντα, in the act of blessing, "the present participle, expressing that the Christ is still continuing his work of blessing on repentance; but see, also, Burton, *N. T. Moods and Tenses*, p. 171."¹

In turning away. (1) The blessing consisted in the deliverance from sin and its consequences. (2) It came, in "turning away," as the instrument, the means, by which the blessing came. The forgiveness of sin, and deliverance from its nature and power, is an unspeakable blessing in itself. Then all the larger blessings — the heavenly life, eternal life in the world to come, and the best blessings of this world — can come only to those who turn away from sin. The saving of their nation depended on it. The redemption and transformation of the world depends upon it.

¹ Knowing.

CHAPTER 4.

THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM (*Continued*).

TIME: A. D. 30.

THE FIRST PERSECUTION.

REJOICING IN PERSECUTION.

RENEWED PROGRESS.

Peter and John imprisoned.
Great increase of disciples.
Trial before the Sanhedrim.
Peter's defence.
Consultation among the leaders.
The apostles released.
Report to the disciples.
Their song of triumph.
Their prayer.
Fresh Baptism of the Spirit.
Characteristics of the Church.
Joseph Barnabas.

1 AND as they spake unto the people, the priests and the ^pcaptain of the temple and ^athe Sād'dū-çēēs came upon them,

2 Being ^{grieved that} sore troubled because they taught the people, and ^{preached through} proclaimed in ^rJesus the resurrection from the dead.

p ch. 5. 24, 26. Luke 22. 4, 52. Cp. 1 Chr. 9. 11 & Neh. 11. 11.

q See Matt. 22. 23. r ch. 17. 18. Cp. ch. 3. 15.

THE FIRST PERSECUTION, vers. 1-22.

I. PETER AND JOHN ARRESTED AND IMPRISONED, vers. 1-3. And as they spake. While they were speaking, λαλούντων δὲ αὐτῶν, the present participle, implying that they were interrupted. The plural implies that John spoke as well as Peter, either following him, or to another part of the crowd. There was a great crowd in Solomon's Porch on one side of the court of the Gentiles. The restored lame man was standing with the apostles, and there was no little excitement. Those who spoke had no raised platform, but stood on a level with the people.

The priests, whose temple services had been interfered with by the withdrawal of the crowds into another part of the temple, and their attraction to the strange event and the new teachings. The priests would naturally resent any usurpation of their place as the leaders of worship and instruction, and any lessening of their influence. The captain of the temple was the captain of the guard of Levites and others, whose duty was to protect the temple, and prevent disorder and any interruption of the services. He was under the direction of the priests. And the Sadducees. These were rather a party than a sect. They did not believe in the future life, or angels or spirits or the resurrection, "but their real bond of union was political; . . . they were supporters of the existing system in alliance with Roman authority,

and monopolized public offices in the Sanhedrim, the priesthood, and the magistracy. . . . They were on principle bitterly opposed to the enthusiasm which Jesus had kindled, as a revolutionary force."¹

"At this time, as Josephus informs us, however strange it may appear, the high priestly families belonged to the Sadducean party. Not that the Sadducees are to be identified entirely with the party of the priests, since the Pharisees were by no means hostile to the priests as such, nor the priests to the Pharisees. But the Sadducees were the aristocrats, and to the aristocratic priests, who occupied influential civil positions, the Pharisees were bitterly opposed."²

Came upon them, ἐπέστησαν, stood by them, suddenly, as a dream or vision comes.

2. Being grieved, διαπονούμενοι, from δίδ, through, thoroughly, and πονέω, to labor, to be at pains, hence, worked out laboriously; pained or troubled all through, thoroughly worked up.

That they taught the people. Different parties had different reasons for their displeasure. The temple police would avoid disorder and unauthorized gatherings. The priests were angry at the interference with their functions of worship and teaching; and the Sadducees, because the miracle and the preaching were a flat contradiction of their religious opinions, and favored their enemies, the Pharisees; and all because the growth of the

¹ Rendall.

² Knowing. See Josephus, *Antiquities*, xvii., 10, 6;

xviii., 1, 4; xx., 9, 1. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, div. ii., vol. ii. pp. 29-43, and div. ii., vol. i. p. 178 ff

3 And they laid hands on them, and ^s put ^{them} ⁱⁿ ^{hold} ^{ward} unto the ^{next day:} ^{morrow:} for it was now eventide.

4 ^{Howbeit} ^{But} many of them ^{which} ^{that} heard the word believed; and 'the number of the men ^{was} ^{came to be} about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes' were gathered together in Jerusalem.

^s See Luke 21. 12.

^t Cp. ch. 2. 41.

new sect would interfere with their worldly interests and peace. Their power, their wealth, their dues from the temple sacrifices, would be reduced. **Preached.** Proclaimed, published abroad. **Through Jesus.** Rather "in" Jesus, in the case of Jesus, by the fact of Jesus' resurrection, that there is a resurrection from the dead, and therefore a future life, and a judgment to come.

3. And they laid hands on them. Arrested them. Put them in hold, *i. e.*, in prison. The word means "ward," under guard, and the place of custody. It was not a punishment, but a means of having them on hand for their trial. The man they had cured was probably with them (ver. 14). **Unto the next day.** Because it was too late to assemble the Sanhedrim, who could not lawfully sit except by daylight. **Eventide.** Near six o'clock, for the preaching and other events must have taken some time since the healing of the lame man, about three o'clock P. M.

II. INCREASED GROWTH OF THE CHURCH, ver. 4. **Howbeit.** In spite of the opposition and persecution, the deeds and teachings of the apostles had their due effect. **And the number of the men,** *ἀνδρῶν*, "a word distinctly restricted to men," and the word for women "is added to it where it is intended to denote a mixed body of men and women (5: 14). In 2: 41, the computation (3000 souls) includes both."¹

Was, *ἐγενήθη*, *came to be*, the 3000 men and women increased till the total number became 5000 men in addition to women, who may easily have been as many more.

Note that while these five thousand were all Jews, they were something more, a new stamp was on them (Stifler), a new perfume, a new atmosphere was around them, a new light shone in their characters. They became new forces in the world. There was some such change in them as transformed Peter and John, the fishermen, into apostles who changed the face of the world.

NOTE, too, how persecution, instead of destroying the new religion, caused it to grow.

(1) It called wider attention to its claims, and caused discussion, which is always favorable to the truth. It rang, as it were, the church bell, so that all the city had to know what was going on.

(2) It strengthened the disciples in the faith, compelling them to take sides, increasing their courage, confirming their decision.

(3) It enabled the apostles to gain a hearing before the rulers and chief men of the nation, whom otherwise it would have been almost impossible to reach. In the Interpreter's house described in *Pilgrim's Progress*, one of the scenes is a blazing fire which Satan is trying to put out by pouring on water. But the more furiously he poured on the water, the more brilliantly the fire burned. To show the Pilgrim the secret, the Interpreter took him to the other side of the wall against which the fire was burning, and there was a man pouring oil on the flame, as the Lord sent his Holy Spirit on the disciples during this persecution, ver. 31.

III. TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM, vers. 5-7. 5. **Their rulers, and elders, and scribes.** These were the different orders composing the Sanhedrim, the great council or senate of the Jewish commonwealth. "Even under the Roman government, the Sanhedrim possessed considerable independence of jurisdiction, both civil and criminal. Not only could it order arrests to be made by its own officers, but it could dispose, on its own authority, of cases where the death penalty was not involved."² "The Sanhedrim really became the supreme civil court. It decided all difficult points of law about betrothals, marriage, divorce, inheritance, contracts, and deeds of gift."³

Their rulers, chief priests, heads of the twenty-four courses, official rulers, aside from the fact that being members of the Sanhedrim made them rulers. These belonged chiefly to the Sadducean party.

The elders, *πρεσβυτέρους*, were leading citizens, heads of families, who were chosen to a seat in the council, including all who were not chief priests or scribes.

The scribes were professional lawyers, recognized teachers and interpreters of the Bible and the Jewish Law. "The classes of men which composed this great tribunal of the Jews were probably distributed as follows: 24 priests, 24 elders, and 22 scribes or lawyers. Only men who

¹ Rendall.

² Knowling. See Schürer's *Jewish People in the Time of*

Christ, p. 187; Edersheim, *History of the Jewish Nation*, p. 103, etc.

³ Prof. Lindsay, D. D.

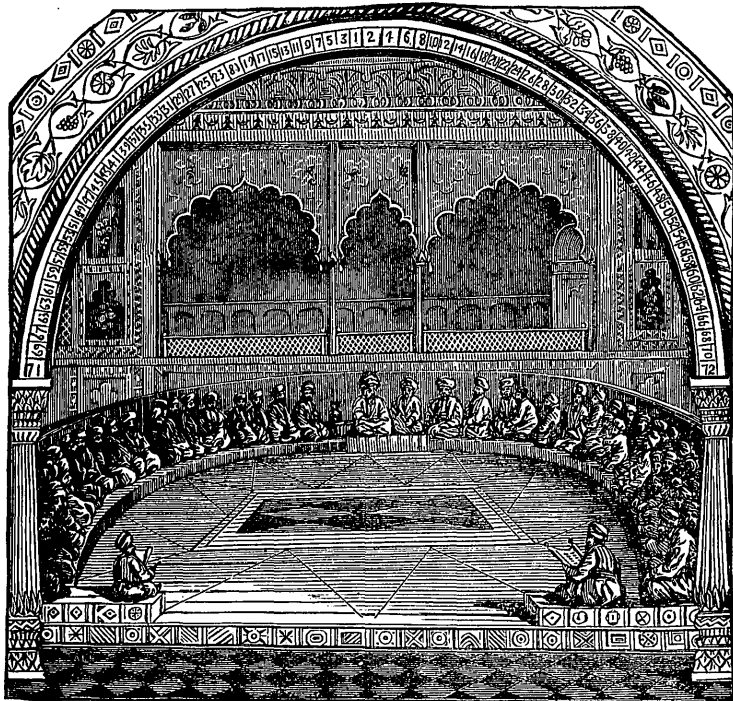
6 And "Ān'nās the high priest" *was there,* and "Caī'ā-phās, and John, and Āl-ē-ān'dēr, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest;" *were gathered together at Je-ru'sa-lem.*

u Luke 3. 2. John 18. 13, 24. *v* See Matt. 26. 3.

were morally and physically without fault were eligible to membership. They must be middle-aged, tall, good-looking, wealthy, and learned. They must also be fathers, and must have passed through various lower offices."¹

6. And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas.

Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Annas had been high priest, but had been deposed by the Roman civil power. The Jews, however, did not believe in its right to interfere, and held that Annas was still the rightful high priest, although the Romans had appointed Caiaphas in his place.



COUNCIL HOUSE OR HALL OF THE SANHEDRIM. (In session.)
Sited in the city, adjoining the west wall of the Temple Courts.

Annas was the actual head of the Jewish hierarchy. He was a man of great ability, and force of character and "perhaps the most influential person among the Jews at this time." Like other retired high priests, he retained not only the title, but many of the rights and duties of the office. Caiaphas was practically subordinate to him during the twelve years of his high priesthood.²

John and Alexander. Nothing is known cer-

tainly about these men; but Meyer regards them as among the relatives of Annas.

As many as were of the kindred of the high priest. "The same phrase is used by Josephus (*Ant.*, 15: 3, 1), and may mean either those who were personally related by ties of blood to the high priest for the time being, or the heads of the four-and-twenty courses of priests. See Matt. 2: 4; 26: 3; Luke 1: 5. All these had probably

¹ Prof. Alvah Hovey, D. D.

² See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18: 2, 12; 20: 9, 1. And "Annas" in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they ^{asked,} ^{inquired,} ^w By what power, or ^{by} ⁱⁿ ^x what name, have ye done this?

8 Then Peter, ^y filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders, ^{of Israel,}

9 If we this day ^{he} ^{are} ^{examined} ^z ^{of the} ^{concerning} a good deed done to ^{the} ^{an} ^{impotent} man, by what means ^{this} ^{man} ^{is} ^{made} ^{whole};

w Cp. Matt. 21. 23.

x Cp. ver. 10.

y See Matt. 10. 20.

z ch. 3. 7, 8.

taken part in our Lord's condemnation."¹ The Sanhedrim, but especially the relatives of the high priest, who was a Sadducee, would be opposed to Jesus. The summoning of the whole



HIGH PRIEST. Drawn from Biblical description.

From Dr. Davis' *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

The Mitre, or turban, was, at least in later times, surmounted by a triple crown of gold. *The Breastplate* was set with twelve precious stones, bearing the names of the twelve tribes. *The Ephod*, to which the breastplate was fastened, was a small garment of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet. *The Robe of the Ephod* was much longer than the ephod, and entirely of blue, with a fringe of alternate pomegranates and golden bells.

council indicates that they felt the importance of putting a stop to the new doctrine, and to the charges against themselves that they had murdered their Messiah and the Son of God.

Were gathered together at (eis, to) Jerusalem. They were suddenly summoned, some from their country residences, to come in haste to the city.²

7. And when they had set them in the midst. "The two apostles and the lame man (ver. 14). The Sanhedrim sat in a semicircle, with the president in the centre, while opposite were three benches for the scholars of the Sanhedrists, who thus practically learned law."³

They asked. The imperfect tense, "were asking," implies that this question was put repeat-

edly. By what power, or by (Gr. "in," under the influence of) what name. Power is force, name is authority. By what magical power did you do this, and what right had you to use such power? They wanted to convict Peter and John of sorcery, by having worked a miracle, not in the name of God, but of a crucified malefactor. They hoped to bring the apostles under the awful death sentence pronounced in the law (Deut. 13), which especially provides for the case when the sign or the wonder comes to pass. See also Ex. 22: 18; Lev. 19: 26. It was of the utmost importance to them that Jesus should not be alive again, and thus all their trouble in putting him to death should be in vain. The fact of the cure they did not attempt to deny.

IV. PETER'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM, vers. 8-12. 8. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost. In fulfilment of Christ's promise (Matt. 10: 19, 20). Thus Peter was given courage to speak the truth, and guided to the choice of the right things to say, and the best way of saying them. This was his first experience in speaking before this august assembly, and he, an unlearned fisherman, may well have quailed before such a tribunal with such power over his fortunes, even while he rejoiced at the opportunity to preach the gospel to them. "Peter, 'filled with the Holy Ghost,' is a thousand Peters: Peter multiplied by the very Deity. Peter?—a straw blown away by the mocking wind, by himself. But Peter 'filled with the Holy Ghost' was a man of war, a mighty captain, a soldier not to be put down; clothed with heavenly panoply, eloquent with heaven's thunder, gracious with heaven's love."⁴

Note how Peter lives up to his own precepts in his first epistle (2: 12-17), to have your behavior beautiful, noble, becoming, among the Gentiles, that wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works, which they behold, glorify God; and to honor all men.

Ye rulers . . . and elders. Peter is respectful, but these very titles imply that they should be leaders in every good work, and favor all that would help the people.

9. If, ei, "chosen not without oratorical nicety:

¹ E. H. Plumptre.

² So Wendt and Holtzmann.

³ Prof. Stokes, *Expositor's Bible*.

⁴ Joseph Parker, D. D.

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that ^a ^{by} the name of Jesus Christ of Nāz'ā-rēth, whom ye crucified, ^b whom God raised from the dead, ^{even} ^{by} him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 ^c ^{This} ^{He} is the stone which was ^d set at nought of you ^{the} builders, which ^{is} ^{was} become ^{made} the head of the corner.

a ch. 3, 6.

b See ch. 2, 24.

c See Ps. 118, 22.

d Mark 9, 12. Luke 23, 11.

if, as is the case."¹ We this day be examined, ἀνακρινόμεθα, by looking through a series (ἀνὰ) of objects or particulars, to distinguish (κρίνω) or search after. Hence, to examine, investigate, inquire into. The corresponding noun was a law term among the Greeks, for the preliminary investigation held for the purpose of gathering evidence for the information of the judges. Here it was the judicial examination for the same purpose.¹

Of (concerning) the good deed. A strange charge to make against any one! But they hated the good deed because of the necessary inferences and results that grew out of it. The expression itself is an answer to the charge. There is an unconscious irony in it. By what means, ἐν ᾧ, in what or in whom, by what person. The two together correspond with the double question of verse 7.

He, now standing before you, is made whole. Complete, perfect in body, the normal condition. It includes, according to Knowling, "the pregnant meaning of health for body and soul alike."

10. Be it known unto you all. Clearly, boldly, Peter tells the simple truth without fear or favor.

That by (in, more than by), "under his direction, in his spirit, surrounded by his influence and presence." See, also, on ver. 12.

The name of Jesus of Nazareth. Peter speaks to the hated word, so that there can be no doubt as to whom he means.

Whom ye crucified. Reminding them that they had fought against God in vain. It was an arraignment of Peter's accusers. They, not the apostles, are the criminals. They are on trial for murdering their Messiah. The day of judgment has come for them. Their prisoner becomes their Elijah, saying, "Thou art he that troubleth Israel;" their Nathan, saying, "Thou art the man." Whom God raised from the dead. God counteracted their wickedness by doing exactly the opposite of what they had done. This fact convicted them of sin. They were arrayed against God. Moreover, Peter insists on the fact of the resurrection because that was the crowning proof that Jesus was the Messiah, and was then living in heaven. Doth this man stand here before you whole. The man himself was Peter's witness. The irrefutable fact stood before the court.

NOTE. Facts are the irrefutable evidence of Christianity. They are like Joseph's wagons. The words of Jacob's sons could not convince him that Joseph was alive, but when he saw the wagons his son had sent, then he believed. So the religion of Jesus is not a mere theory; it is proved abundantly by facts. The lives that have been made better, the fact that it does change for good all those who receive it into their hearts, that wherever it enters a community or a nation it elevates them — these are the unanswerable witnesses to Christ and Christianity. When some one said to Wendell Phillips that the religion of India is as good as Christianity, he replied, "The map of India is the answer." The map of the world is the proof of Christianity; for wherever is the most and purest Christianity, there are the most happiness, the highest morality, the fullest manhood and womanhood.

11. This was the stone which was set at nought of you builders. Peter applies to the Sanhedrim the Psalm (118: 22) which a few weeks or months before he had heard his Master apply to a deputation of this same Council, when they demanded the authority with which he acted (Matt. 21: 42), as now they demanded of Peter. The Psalm is evidently post-exilic.

The symbolic imagery "seems to have been drawn from one of the stones, quarried, hewn, and marked, away from the site of the temple, which the builders, ignorant of the head architect's plans, or finding on it no mark (such as recent explorations in Jerusalem have shown to have been placed on the stones of Solomon's Temple in the place where they were quarried, to indicate their position in the future structure of the fabric), had put on one side as having no place in the building, but which was found afterwards to be that on which the completeness of the structure depended, — on which, as the chief corner-stone, the two walls met and were bonded together."²

The historical circumstances belonged probably to the period of rebuilding the temple after the Exile, when "the intrigues of the Samaritans, the hostility of the neighboring peoples, and the capriciousness of the Persian kings" interfered with the building of the temple and with the building up of the nation. Israel was the stone rejected by the builders. In the completed temple

¹ Thayer, *Greek-Eng. Lex.*² F. H. Plumptre,

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: ^{And in none other is there} for ^{there} ^{neither} is ^{there} ^{any} other ^{name} under heaven ^{that is} ^{given} among men, ^{whereby} ^{wherein} we must be saved.

e Cp. 1 Tim. 2. 5. f ch. 13. 26 & 28. 28. John 4. 22. Heb. 2. 3. Jude 3. g Cp. Gal. 1. 7. h ch. 10. 43. Luke 24. 47. John 20. 31.

the rejected stone was seen nobly supporting and protecting the building, "an emblem of the might and dignity to which Israel, now gathered again round the temple as its national centre, has

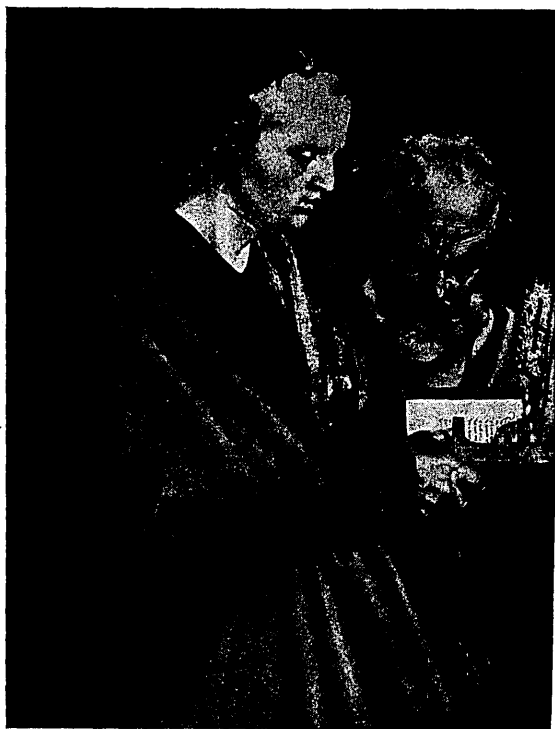
in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

"That which the Psalmist had spoken of the second temple, that which was a parable of the history of Israel, had its complete and ideal fulfilment in Him who, despised and rejected of men, had become the chief corner-stone of a spiritual temple, in whom both Jew and Gentile were made one (1 Cor. 3: 11; Eph. 2: 20)."²

This truth Peter applied to the audience before him:—You who were set to build up God's spiritual temple, the kingdom of heaven, have rejected and tried to destroy the very foundation stone, without which it could not be builded. But in spite of your efforts, that rejected stone has become the head of the corner.³

12. Neither is there salvation in any other. Not only from disease and ills of the body, as in the case of this lame man, but from sin, spiritual disease, of which bodily disease was the type; and from the destruction of the nation. Salvation. Greek, *the salvation*, that which the Jewish nation were looking for. They saw only the shadow, the distorted image of the reality which Jesus was to bring. It was the preservation of the nation; but that was but a type of the spiritual salvation which was in Jesus Christ. The last chapters of Revelation give a picture of the national salvation; and this is made up of the salvation of individuals, and is

a type of the transformation Jesus will work in every believer. There is none other name. *Name* here stands for Jesus Christ himself, and all there is in him of wisdom, power, love, divineness; just as a man's name to a note stands for all a man is and has,—his property, his character, his ability, his integrity. Under heaven. Equivalent to, In all the earth. Given among men. Made known among them. Whereby (in which) we (all members of the human race) must be saved (see). It



PETER AND JOHN. From Dürer, in the old Pinacothek, Munich.

attained out of its deep humiliation among the peoples of the world."

Or "if it is Israel's own despising of the small beginnings of a dawning new era that is expressed, we can better understand how, when this statement is referred to Jesus the Christ, the builders are . . . the heads and members of Israel itself."¹ The prophecy in Isa. 28: 16, familiar to the members of the Sanhedrim, connects the Psalm with Christ: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay

¹ Delitzsch on Ps. 118.

² Knowing.

³ See the legend of the Rejected Stone, told in many places, including *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, p. 97.

13 'Now when they ^{saw} beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and ^{had} perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

† Cp. John 7. 15.

is necessary, with an absolute necessity, to be saved in this way, if saved at all. There is no other power under heaven that could have saved the Jewish nation from the destruction that came upon them thirty-five or forty years later, as there is no other power that can save each soul from sin and death.

WHY IS JESUS THE ONLY NAME? 1. Because he has brought the good news from God of his fatherhood and tender love and forgiveness.

2. Because he lived the heavenly life on earth, and only so far as we consciously or unconsciously have the same life principle, and seek to live according to his example, can we be fitted for heaven.

3. All the elements of power that can save men from sin are found in Jesus Christ and him crucified, — the atonement for sin, the consciousness of the need of forgiveness, the way of forgiveness, every motive of love and fear and duty and hope that can move the soul to a better life.

4. The essential peculiarity of Christ's religion is that it is a system of redemption. Other religions try to tell us what we ought to be; this gives the power and inspiration and new life which enables men to be what they ought. Other religions express our needs; Jesus satisfies them. Other religions point to some ideals; Jesus gives us truer and nobler ideals, and is the way by which we can reach them. Others talk of heaven; Jesus fits us for heaven, and brings us there.¹

NOTE ON WHEREBY AND WHEREIN. We are saved *through* Jesus, as in Rom. 6: 23, but in this verse the true reading is *in* him. We live and move as Christians *in* Christ. "Eternal life is not anything apart from himself." Bishop Westcott says, "Am I wrong in saying that he who has mastered the meaning of the two prepositions *into* the name (for *in the name* in the baptismal formula, Matt. 28: 19) and *in* Christ has found the central truth of Christianity? Certainly I

would have gladly given the ten years of my life spent in the Revision to bring only these two phrases of the New Testament to the heart of Englishmen."

V. PRIVATE CONSULTATION OF THE SANHE-DRIM, vers. 13-17. Two unanswerable facts attested the truth of what Peter and John had said, (1) the change wrought in the apostles by Jesus; and (2) the lame man restored in his name.

13. Now when they saw, θεωροῦντες, not merely seeing, βλέποντες of ver. 14, but seeing in which is included the notion of contemplating with attention or astonishment.² The present participle "describes the continuous observation of the fearless bearing of Peter and John during the trial."³

The boldness. Both of speech and bearing, growing out of confidence in their Master, and the righteousness of their cause.

And John, who in his quiet way was quite as bold as Peter. The change in Peter himself was as great a miracle as that wrought in the lame man. Perceived, καταλαμβάνει. The verb means to lay hold of, to grasp, hence, to grasp mentally, to comprehend. That they were unlearned, ἀγράμματοι, unlettered, uneducated in the schools, and in Rabbinic literature. A fact that no such person can hide, if he speaks. And ignorant, Ἰδιῶται, literally, a private person, a man occupied with τὰ ἴδια, his own affairs, as opposed to one who holds office; a layman, in distinction from those who had a professional training, as scribes, physicians, or prophets. They were common uneducated men in the ordinary walks of life. The translation "ignorant" is somewhat unfortunate. But, as Knowing observes, since the Greeks held that without political life there was no true education of a man, it was not unnatural that Ἰδιότης (a private person) should acquire a somewhat contemptuous meaning.⁴ Others take

¹ "While the old Hindu Scriptures have given us some beautiful precepts of living, the New Dispensation of Christ has given us grace to carry these principles into practice, and that makes all the difference in the world. The precepts are like a steam engine on the track, beautiful and with great possibilities; Christ and his gospel are the steam, the motive power that can make the engine move." — Pundita Ramabai, in *The Story of My Life* (1900), p. 35.

² *Synonyms of the New Testament*.

³ Rendall. "When pressed to stay away from the Diet at Worms, where he was to be tried for heresy, Luther said to the messenger, 'Go, tell your master that though

there should be as many devils as there are tiles on its roofs, I would enter it.' And again of his mortal enemy, Duke George, 'If I had business at Leipzig, I would ride into Leipzig, though it rained Duke Georges for nine days running.' " See Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*, "The Hero as Priest." See article in the *Century* for June, 1888, on the "Physical Basis of Courage" (very good).

⁴ So Plato, Plutarch. "The word is applied by Philo to the whole congregation of Israel, as contrasted with the priests, and to subjects as contrasted with their prince." — Knowing.

14 And ^{beholding}_{seeing} the man which was healed ^j standing with them, ^k they could say nothing against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, 'What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a ^m notable miracle hath been ^{done by}_{wrought through} them, ^{is}_{is} manifest to all ^{them} that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny ^{it}.'

17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us ^{straitly} threaten them, ⁿ that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

j ch. 3. 11.

k Cp. Luke 21. 15.

l Cp. John 11. 47 & 12. 19.

m ver. 21.

ch. 3. 9, 10.

n ch. 5. 28, 40.

the word here as referring to the social rank of the apostles (as Olshausen, Hackett).

They marvelled.¹ Whence such men could gain such power and freedom of speech, "for there was then probably an even more marked distinction than at the present day between the speech and thought of a fisherman or shepherd and of an educated person."² They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. This does not mean that the members of the Sanhedrim had just become aware that Peter and John were disciples of Jesus, for they had seen them with Jesus at different times in the temple. But they showed by their bearing, and boldness, and doctrine, and works, that they had been under the training, teaching, and influence of Jesus. They came to the conclusion "that these illiterate fishermen had acquired the art and power of effective oratory through their having been the disciples of Jesus, and through the divine grace and power communicated to them."²

14. And beholding the man, etc. There was no use in arguing against an acknowledged fact. Could say nothing against it, *ἀποτεινέιν*, denoting not an argument against the reality of the miracle, but a reply to personal antagonists.³

NOTE ON BEING WITH JESUS. What is it to be with Jesus? (1) To be with him in our thoughts, — communion of spirit; (2) in our hearts, — loving and trusting him; (3) in our motives, — doing all for his sake; (4) in our actions, — working with and for him; (5) in person, — having the real abiding presence of Christ according to his promise.

This makes us like Jesus. Abiding with the Beautiful, the Good, and the True transforms the soul, as the Lamp in the fisherman's hut, in Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, transformed its rough

boards and beams into an exquisitely wrought temple of solid silver. He that walks with the Lord Jesus Christ, he that makes him one of his family, his daily companion, beholding him in the Scriptures as in a mirror, dwelling on what is Christlike in his disciples, meditating on his goodness, his love, his activity, must become more and more like him. This daily companionship, this shining of his life upon ours, will change us into the same image from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord.⁴

15. They conferred among themselves, *συνέβαλον*, from *σύν*, and *βάλλω*, to throw or bring together the various facts and reasons of the case; or to bring together the opinions of the different members. Luke probably heard what these private deliberations were, from some of the priests present who afterwards joined the church (chap. 6: 7), or very possibly from Paul himself, who was probably a member.

16. What shall we do. In the subjunctive to denote utter perplexity. A notable, *γυνώσκον, well known, a notorious fact. Miracle, sign.*

17. But that it spread no further, *διανεμηθῇ*, from *διά*, thoroughly, throughout, and *νέμω*, to spread over, to occupy as a country by an army; hence, distributed thoroughly among the people. "This is a figurative term which compares heretical teaching with a cancer which spreads and feeds (*νέμεται*) upon the flesh, on account of its spreading and corroding effects."⁵

Let us straitly, lit., with a threat, strictly, threaten them. "Straitly" is omitted from the best manuscripts. Speak henceforth to no man in this name, about, *ἐπί*, this name. "Impotent device! Little knew they the fire that was burning in the bones of those heroic disciples."⁵

¹ Compare Cassius' marvel about Cesar's greatness, in Shakespeare's *Julius Cesar*.

² Prof. Ramsay, *St. Paul*, p. 371.

³ Rendall.

⁴ See Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, the strange story called "Rappacini's Daughter." Dr. Gordon's *How Christ came to Church*. Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, especially as interpreted by Carlyle in his *Essays*.

In *Suggestive Illustration on Acts*, the Persian Fable of the clay that had been with the rose.

"Dear Lord, abide with us that we
May draw our perfume fresh from thee."

⁵ Jamieson.

Dr. John Hall, in one of his sermons, compared the attacks of infidelity upon Christianity to a serpent gnaw-

18 And they called them, and ^{commanded} ^{charged} them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, ° Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you ^{more} ^{rather} than unto God, judge ye:

20 For ^p we cannot but speak the things which ^q we ^{have seen} ^{saw} and heard.

21 ^{so} And they, when they had further threatened them, ^{they} let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, ^r because of the people; for all ^{men} glorified God for ^s that which was done.

22 For the man was ^{above} ^{more than} forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing WAS ^{showed,} ^{wrought.}

o ch. 5. 29. p Cp. Amos 3. 8 & John 15. 27 & 1 Cor. 9. 16. q ch. 22. 15. 1 John 1. 1, 3. r ch. 5. 13, 26. Cp. Matt. 21. 26, 46 & Mark 11. 32 & Luke 20. 6, 19 & 22. 2. s ch. 3. 7, 8.

VI. THE APOSTLES RELEASED, vers. 18-22.

18. Not to speak, μή φθέγγεσθαι. "The verb denotes the utterance of a sound or voice, not only by man, but by any animal having lungs." Not to speak, not to utter even a sound or whisper.

In, ἐν, on, or with reference to, the name of Jesus.

19. But Peter and John answered the mandate of the Sanhedrim to cease from preaching the gospel. Both joined in the answer, though one may have been spokesman. They were agreed as to the course they would take. The gentle John was just as firm and true as the more impulsive Peter. Whether it be right, etc. The point of the apostles' reply was that they were not teaching as self-appointed rabbis, but were only acting as witnesses of Jesus. So when the high priest of the golden calf at Bethel bade Amos to stop his preaching there, and go home and be at peace, Amos replied in effect that he could not stop. He did not come because he wanted to, but because God sent him, and he must utter his message; and he did (Amos 7).

Unto you more than (better, rather than) unto God. The meaning is not as in the Authorized Version, that they should hearken unto God more than they hearken unto man; but in this matter, they should hearken unto God, and not to man at all.¹ Judge ye. Your own consciences approve the principle on which we act.

The words of Socrates, perhaps the greatest of the Greek philosophers, when he was pleading before his judges who condemned him to death, bear a striking resemblance to this bold utterance: "Athenians, I will obey God rather

than you; and if you would let me go, and give me my life on condition that I should no more teach my fellow-citizens, sooner than agree to your proposal I would prefer to die a thousand times."²

20. We cannot but speak. For it would be ungrateful to our Master, a crime against the people, disobedience to God, contrary to our conscience, a wrong to the kingdom of heaven.

Compare Mahomet's answer, when his uncle, Abu Thaleb, pressed him to be silent, and not anger the chief people by his utterances, that if the sun stood on his right hand and the moon on his left, ordering him to hold his peace, he could not obey.³ Much of Socrates' defence before the Athenians, in Plato's *Apology*, is a commentary on these verses, and a fine illustration.

21. Further threatened them, in addition to what they had said before.

Because of the people. With whom they would become unpopular. The people were independent and sometimes turbulent, and any uprising against the Sanhedrim would injure their power and influence with the Roman authorities. There was a real danger line. Contrast the boldness of the apostles, who feared only to do wrong, and the fear of the judges who were afraid of the people, and of loss to themselves. See Chrysostom's *Homilies*, xi.

22. For the man was above, more than, forty years old. This is stated to show how great the miracle was, and how well known was the man who was healed. Only God could have wrought the cure; and it was to them a sign (the name here given to the miracle) of the power and love

ing at a file. As he kept on gnawing, he was greatly encouraged by the sight of the growing pile of chips, till, feeling pain and seeing blood, he found that he had been wearing his own teeth away against the file, but the file was unharmed.

Compare Dean Swift's illustration of Dame Partington trying to sweep out the Atlantic with her broom.

¹ Alford.

² Plato's *Apology*. See Livy, 39: 37. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17: 6, 3; 18: 8, 2. For other "parallel sayings from Greeks and Romans, and from Jewish sources, see instances in Wetstein."

³ See Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*. Also Hugh Latimer's sermon before King Henry VIII. *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, 109.

23 And being let go, they ^{went} ^{came} to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them.

24 And ^{they}, when they heard ^{that, they} ^{it,} lifted up their voice to God 'with one accord, and said, o Lord, ^{art} ^{God, which hast made} ^{that didst make the} thou heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is:

25 Who by the Holy Ghost, ^{by} the mouth of ^{thy servant} ^{our father} David ^{hast said,} ^{thy servant, didst say,}
^v Why did the ^{heathen} ^{Gentiles} rage,
 And the ^{people} ^{peoples} imagine vain things?

^t See ch. 1. 14. ^u Ex. 20. 11. 2 Chr. 2. 12. Neh. 9. 6. Ps. 102. 25 & 124. 8 & 134. 3 & 146. 6. ^v Cited from Ps. 2. 1, 2.

of God, for healing body and soul, not only in behalf of this man, but of all the people.

REJOICING IN PERSECUTION; vers. 23-30.

I. THEIR SONG OF TRIUMPH. 23. They went to their own company. To the place of common resort for the disciples, for there must have been some meeting-place as headquarters for the multitude of converts, where the disciples could teach them, and all could unite in praise and prayer. Doubtless the disciples had spent the night in prayer for their two leaders in prison. And reported all. Showing the feeling of the Jewish leaders toward the disciples, and the storm that was gathering; and also how the Lord had fulfilled his promises and sustained them. All this would strengthen the young church, both by means of the trial of their faith, and by the new proof of the presence and power of their Saviour.

24. Lifted up their voice . . . with one accord, *συσυμμάδων*, from *σύν*, together, and *θυμός*, ardor, feeling, from *θῶα*, to rush along. Not necessarily of one opinion, but of one zeal, feeling, desire, purpose. Our hymn books, with their hymns taken from all ages, from many differing creeds, expressing every variety and shade of experience, are the best symbols and expressions of Christian unity. "Men who have fought each other vigorously in the theological arena and ecclesiastical court dwell together in peace and harmony in the hymnal."¹

"This hymn of praise, — the earliest Christian hymn recorded, — though borrowing at first the language of Ps. 146: 6, and then quoting Ps. 2: 1, 2, was obviously composed for the occasion, and prompted by the recent triumph. As the whole assembly are said to lift up their voice with one accord, it would seem that they caught up and repeated the words of an inspired leader, and did not merely answer by a responsive Amen."²

"Another view suggested is, that the whole assembly sung together the Second Psalm, and

that Peter made it the basis of his prayer in their present perplexity. Another, and, as it seems, a more thoughtful, consideration of the passage regards verses 24-30 as part of a solemn form of prayer used by the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem, — a formula of prayer previously composed while the impression made by the sufferings of Christ was still recent. It is a beautiful thought which sees in these solemn words, where an unshaken, a deathless faith shines through the gloom of present and coming sorrow, a fragment of the oldest Christian liturgy."³

Lord, *δέσποτα*, whence our word "despot," expresses the absolute control of a master over a slave. Here it expresses God's absolute sovereignty over the world and all its nations, not as a despot, or arbitrary ruler, but one who rules with infinite power indeed, but also with infinite wisdom and love. It was a very appropriate term on this occasion.

Thou art God which hast made, etc., quoted from Ps. 146: 6. This gives the foundation of their confidence, their assurance that he can and will answer their prayers. So it is that the last clause of the Lord's prayer, "for thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever," adds infinite power and hope to all its petitions.

25. Who, through the Holy Spirit (R. V.), by the mouth of thy servant David (Ps. 2: 1, 2); showing that there may well be a meaning and prophecy in this Psalm, beyond what David may have realized at the time.

"The Second Psalm was interpreted originally by the Jews as referring to King Messiah. In the mind of the writer of the Psalm at first an earthly king is present, and the circumstances of his own chequered career supply the imagery. But his words are too great to have all their meaning exhausted in David or any Jewish monarch. Or ever he is aware, the local and the temporal are swallowed up in the universal and eternal. The king who sits on David's throne has become glorified and transfigured in the light of the promise. The picture is half ideal, half

¹ Rev. J. Q. Adams.

² Rendall.

³ Prof. Schaff.

26 The kings of the earth ^{stood up,} ^{set themselves in array,}

And the ^w rulers were gathered together

Against the Lord, and against his ^x Christ.

27 For of a truth ^{in this city} against thy ^y holy ^{child} ^{Servant} Jesus, ^z whom thou ^{hast} ^{didst} ^{anointed,} ^{anoint.} both ^a Herod, and ^b Pōnt'iūs Pilāte, ^c with the Gēn'tiles and ^d the ^{people} ^{peoples} of Israel, were gathered together,

28 ^e For ^{to} do whatsoever thy hand and ^f thy counsel ^{determined before to be done,} ^{foreordained to come to pass.}

^w ver. 5. ^x ch. 10. 38. Luke 4. 18. Heb. 1. 9. Cp. Dan. 9. 24 & Rev. 11. 15. ^y ver. 30. See ch. 3. 13 (mg.), 14. ^z ver. 26. ^a Luke 23. 7-11. ^b Matt. 27. 2. ^c See Matt. 20. 19. ^d Matt. 26. 3. ^e Cp. Isai. 46. 10. ^f See ch. 2. 23.

actual; it concerns itself with the present, but with that only so far as it is typical of greater things to come."¹

Why did the heathen, the nations. "The nations are not merely those who are mustering now for the battle, but whatsoever opposeth and exalteth itself against Jehovah and against his Anointed."²

Rage, *ἔρῳαζαν*, primarily of the snorting of a high-spirited horse, prancing and stamping the ground. Hence, *to behave arrogantly, to rage, acting and speaking insolently*. A proud man is described by Philo as "walking on tiptoe, and bridling (*φρουαττόμενος*), with neck erect like a horse."

And the people imagine, scheme, plot, plan for, vain things. Things (1) that cannot succeed, cannot be accomplished; (2) things that would do no good if they were accomplished, "castles in the air," without foundation, bubbles that burst into nothingness, or that bring harm instead of good.

Arnot compares the conduct of the rulers in trying to stop the apostles from preaching Christ, to some ignorant savages who thought to stop the ball from a cannon by ramming the mouth of the cannon full of stones and clay, which only increased its terrible power.

"Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 't is Truth alone is strong,

And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng

Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne;

Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown,

Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."³

"There is an old Huguenot device representing men around an anvil striking it with their hammers, and others handing them new ones as fast

as the ones used are broken on the anvil. Underneath is this legend: 'Strike away, ye rebels; your hammers may break, but the anvil of God's word endures.'"⁴

"Hammer away, ye hostile hands!

Your hammers break, God's anvil stands."

26. The kings of the earth stood up, *παρέρσησαν*, presented themselves, set themselves in array. Against the Lord. Whose cause and kingdom were assailed, and against his Christ, his anointed, the one he had sent to accomplish his purpose. Spoken first of David and Solomon, God's anointed rulers, but fulfilled completely only in Christ. "Thus the gathering together of the nations and their fruitless decrees find their counterpart in the alliance of Herod and Pilate, and the hostile combination of Jew and Gentile against the holy Servant Jesus, the anointed of God, and against his followers; although the words of the Psalm and the issues of the conflict carry on our thoughts to a still wider and deeper fulfilment in the final triumph of Christ's kingdom."⁵

27. For of a truth. They now apply the Psalm to the present occasion.

28. For to do whatsoever thy hand, *i. e.*, power, through its natural instrumentality, and . . . counsel, *i. e.*, wisdom, purpose, determined before to be done. The R. V. is better, *To do whatsoever . . . thy counsel foreordained to come to pass*. God had ordained the end, but not the means which men used. "God had indeed appointed that Christ should die for all men. But he had not foreordained or decreed the means by which his death was brought about. No doubt the evil was overruled for the greatest possible good, but it remained evil still, and they who did the evil were responsible for it."⁶ Examples of this are found in Old Testament history. Jacob tried to fulfil God's promise to him in a wrong way. God had plenty of better ways, but Jacob did not see them, and he suffered all his life for

¹ Prof. Schaff.

² Perowne.

³ Lowell, *The Present Crisis*.

⁴ John Cotton Smith.

⁵ Knowling. See Edersheim, *Jesus the Messiah*, ii.

716 (appendix on Messianic passages); and Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 132-140, and 492, 493.

⁶ Bishop Williams.

29 And now, Lord, ^o behold ^{look upon} their threatenings : and grant unto thy servants, that with all ^h boldness they may speak thy word, to speak thy word with all boldness,

30 while thou ^{by stretching} stretchest forth ^{thine} thy hand to heal ; and that signs and wonders may be done ^j through the name of thy ^h holy ^{child} Servant Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, ⁱ the place was shaken ^{where} wherein they were ^{assembled} gathered together ; and ^m they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and ⁿ they spake the word of God with boldness.

g Cp. 2 Kin. 19. 16. *h* vers. 13, 31. *ch.* 9. 27, 29 & 13. 46 & 14. 3 & 18. 26 & 19. 8 & 28. 31. *Eph.* 6. 19. *i* Cp. Ps. 138. 7 & Prov. 31. 20 & Isal. 1. 25 & Zeph. 1. 4. *j* *ch.* 3. 6. *Cp.* Matt. 7. 22 & Mark 9. 39 & 16. 17. *k* ver. 27. *l* Cp. *ch.* 2. 2 & 16. 26 & Ps. 77. 18. *m* See *ch.* 2. 4. *n* Cp. Phil. 1. 14.

doing in a wrong way what he had God's promise should be done. On the other hand, David refused to kill Saul, and become king in that way, although he had the promise of becoming king. The statement of this verse was made in order to show that, however evil may be in the world, evil does not rule the world. Even man's wrath is made to work out God's will, and the remainder he will restrain. God's use of man's acts, whether they be good or bad, in no wise destroys man's free choice or his responsibility. But God governs in this world. He is taken by no surprises. He will carry out his plans by man's good acts, if he will do good ; but by his bad acts, if he persists in being bad. Here is the hope and comfort of the Christian.

II. THEIR PRAYER. 29. And now, at this present time, and in view of their threatenings.

That with all boldness they may speak thy word. Especially noteworthy is the object for which the disciples prayed. It was not for a change of circumstances, it was not that they might escape trouble or persecution ; all these things they committed entirely to their heavenly Father. But that with which their own will and character had to do, they prayed for, that their courage might not fail, their faith might not falter. They were in the position of many of the prophets of old ; Daniel facing the den of lions, Jeremiah looking into a dungeon ; and they prayed that they might have the courage and faith of the prophets — boldness to speak and power to work.

What we need is *fire-proof principles*, that no flames of opposition or persecution can harm.

30. That their preaching might have due effect, they asked divine help, — help which could come from no other source. By stretching forth thine hand to heal. Helping men thus to realize the divine presence, the truth of the gospel they preached, and its beneficent effects.

And that signs. Of God's presence, and power,

and goodness, endorsing the truth about Jesus and his resurrection.

And wonders. To call the attention of the people to Jesus, and to prove his divine Messiahship. Miracles were a great and essential power in giving success to the gospel. Wondrous works, in changing the characters of men, in reforming and blessing the people, are still essential accompaniments to the successful preaching of the gospel.

THE ANSWER TO SONG AND PRAYER, vers. 31-37.

I. A NEW BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT. 31. And when they had prayed. Following close upon the prayer the answer came.¹

The place was shaken, *ἐσαλεύθη*, shaken, as by winds, storms, or waves. In order to give some sensible proof of the reality of the coming of the Holy Spirit.² "The place was shaken, and that made them all the more unshaken."³ Another proof that they were filled with the Holy Ghost, was that they spake (the imperfect, implying that they continued to speak) the word of God with all boldness. "Feine sees in the narrative a divine answer to the Apostles' prayer, so that filled with the Holy Ghost they spoke with boldness. And he adds, that such divine power must have been actually working in the Apostles, otherwise the growth of the church in spite of its opposition is inexplicable — a remark which might well be considered by the deniers of a miraculous Christianity. It is in reality the same argument so forcibly put by St. Chrysostom : 'If you deny miracles, you make it all the more marvellous that they should obtain such moral victories — these illiterate men !' "⁴

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH. 32. Of one heart and one soul, *καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία* : "it is difficult to distinguish precisely between the two words, but they undoubtedly imply entire harmony in affection and thought according to a

¹ Compare Longfellow's *Legend of Prague*, besieged by an army of evil spirits, driven away by prayer : —

"The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away."

² For instances of an earthquake regarded as a token of the presence of deity, compare Vergil, *Æneid*, III. 90 ; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV. 672.

³ Chrysostom.

⁴ Knowing.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of ^{of one} one heart and ^{of one} soul: ^{neither said any} ^{and not one} ^{of them} said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but ^a they had all things common.

33 And with great ^r power gave the apostles ^{their} witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and ^s great grace was upon them all.

34 ^{Neither} ^{For} ^{neither} was there ^{any} among them ^{any} that lacked: for ^a as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And ^v laid ^{them down} ^{them} at the apostles' feet: and ^w distribution was made unto ^{every man} ^{each,} according as ^{he} ^{any one} had need.

^o 2 Chr. 30. 12. ^{Ezek.} 11. 19. ^p Phil. 1. 27. ^q ch. 2. 44. ^r See ch. 1. 8, 22. ^s Cp. ch. 11. 23.
^t Cp. 2 Cor. 8. 14, 15. ^u ch. 2. 45. ^v ver. 37. ^{ch.} 5. 2. ^w Cp. ch. 6. 1.

common Hebrew mode of expression."¹ Although they had increased to five thousand men, they were still a unity, not necessarily in opinions, but in love, in affection, in purpose, in devotion. The church possessed the true unity, that of heart and soul; the unity of the same spiritual life in all; the unity of one great master and head for all; the unity of love and sympathy; the unity of aim and purpose; the unity of one kingdom, with one law and gospel; one government under one Invisible King. It is the unity of an army, with one leader, loyal to one cause, but with many departments and companies and organizations. It is the unity of nature, with one law and principle, but with an infinite variety of forms. It is the unity of an anthem—several parts, many notes, many voices, an infinite variety of sound-waves, but in perfect harmony, under one leader, with one purpose.

All things common. See on 2: 44.

33. And with great power. This may include miraculous power of healing, as well as convincing power in speaking. Gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. "We may think of these devoted men, day after day in the thronged temple courts, the popular favor supporting them, speaking their blessed message for a time unhindered. 'The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is again and again mentioned as the groundwork of the apostolic teaching; it was the column upon which their strong patient faith rested; they knew they had seen their Master after he had risen; they told it out to others that men might grasp the mighty issues which this victory of Jesus over death involved for every man and woman.'"²

And great grace (*χάρις*) was upon them all. Both from God and man, as in the case of the child Jesus (Luke 2: 52). Grace is originally that which gives pleasure and delight, as loveliness of form (the Greek Graces) or character (the

Christian Graces); hence, the favor of men, which brings expressions of good-will; but above all, the favor, the loving-kindness of God, which is the most perfect delight in the universe, bringing the favor of man, and the graces of character and life, virtues in their lovely aspect.

Luke seems to love to dwell on the charming picture, a garden of Eden in a wilderness world; an oasis in the desert, an Elim with its palm-trees and wells of water on the rough and arid way from Egypt to the Promised Land. We can easily see that a church of such a character would make rapid advances, and hasten on the day of the Lord's victory over the world.

34. Possessors of lands or houses sold them. For the need was greater than could be supplied by their income. This made the Jerusalem church poor, but it was a noble poverty. Human nature is ennobled by this example of generosity. If poor toward man, they were rich toward God, rich in Christian graces and usefulness. Helpfulness toward the poor and needy is still the characteristic of the Christian spirit and Christian church.

Sold . . . and brought. Both verbs are in the imp. tense, denoting continuous and repeated action.

35. Laid them down at the apostles' feet. "The apostles are represented as sitting, perhaps as teachers, and also as an indication of their authority: the expression in the Greek conveys the thought of committal to the care and authority of any one, or that of reverence and thankfulness."¹

"The apostles, like the Roman magistrates,³ probably sat amongst their own people on a raised seat, on the steps of which, at their feet, the money thus devoted for the service of the Lord's people was laid in token of respect. This seems to have been the customary way of the solemn dedication of property to the use of the

¹ Knowing.

² Schaff.

³ "Compare Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 28, where we read

how a sum of money was laid at the Prætor's feet in the Forum."

23 And being let go, they ^{went} ^{came} to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them.

24 And ^{they}, when they heard ^{that}, ^{they} lifted up their voice to God 'with one accord, and said, o Lord, "thou ^{art} ^{God, which hast made} ^{that didst make the} heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is:

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"Why did the ^{heathen} ^{Gentiles} rage,

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24. Lifted up their voice . . . with one accord, *ὁμοθυμαδὸν*, from *ὁμός*, together, and *θυμός*, ardor, feeling, from *θύω*, to rush along. Not necessarily of one opinion, but of one zeal, feeling, desire, purpose. Our hymn books, with their hymns taken from all ages, from many differing creeds, expressing every variety and shade of experience, are the best symbols and expressions of Christian unity. "Men who have fought each other vigorously in the theological arena and ecclesiastical court dwell together in peace and harmony in the hymnal."¹

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² Renhall.

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30 While thou ^{By stretching} stretchest forth ^{thine} thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done ^j ^{hy} through the name of thy ^{child} ^{Servant} holy Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, ^{where} the place was shaken ^{wherein} they were ^{assembled} gathered together; and ^m they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and ⁿ they spake the word of God with boldness.

g Cp. 2 Kin. 19. 16. *h* vers. 13, 31. ch. 9. 27, 29 & 13. 46 & 14. 3 & 18. 26 & 19. 8 & 28. 31. Eph. 6. 19. *i* Cp. Ps. 138. 7 & Prov. 31. 20 & Isai. 1. 25 & Zeph. 1. 4. *j* ch. 3. 6. Cp. Matt. 7. 22 & Mark 9. 39 & 16. 17. *k* ver. 27. *l* Cp. ch. 2. 2 & 16. 26 & Ps. 77. 18. *m* See ch. 2. 4. *n* Cp. Phil. 1. 14.

doing in a wrong way what he had God's promise should be done. On the other hand, David refused to kill Saul, and become king in that way, although he had the promise of becoming king. The statement of this verse was made in order to show that, however evil may be in the world, evil does not rule the world. Even man's wrath is made to work out God's will, and the remainder he will restrain. God's use of man's acts, whether they be good or bad, in no wise destroys man's free choice or his responsibility. But God governs in this world. He is taken by no surprises. He will carry out his plans by man's good acts, if he will do good; but by his bad acts, if he persists in being bad. Here is the hope and comfort of the Christian.

II. THEIR PRAYER. 29. And now, at this present time, and in view of their threatenings. That with all boldness they may speak thy word. Especially noteworthy is the object for which the disciples prayed. It was not for a change of circumstances, it was not that they might escape trouble or persecution; all these things they committed entirely to their heavenly Father. But that with which their own will and character had to do, they prayed for, that their courage might not fail, their faith might not falter. They were in the position of many of the prophets of old; Daniel facing the den of lions, Jeremiah looking into a dungeon; and they prayed that they might have the courage and faith of the prophets—boldness to speak and power to work.

What we need is *fire-proof principles*, that no flames of opposition or persecution can harm.

30. That their preaching might have due effect, they asked divine help,—help which could come from no other source. By stretching forth thine hand to heal. Helping men thus to realize the divine presence, the truth of the gospel they preached, and its beneficent effects.

And that signs. Of God's presence, and power,

and goodness, endorsing the truth about Jesus and his resurrection.

And wonders. To call the attention of the people to Jesus, and to prove his divine Messiahship. Miracles were a great and essential power in giving success to the gospel. Wondrous works, in changing the characters of men, in reforming and blessing the people, are still essential accompaniments to the successful preaching of the gospel.

THE ANSWER TO SONG AND PRAYER, vers. 31-37.

I. A NEW BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT. 31. And when they had prayed. Following close upon the prayer the answer came.¹

The place was shaken, *εσαλεύθη*, shaken, as by winds, storms, or waves. In order to give some sensible proof of the reality of the coming of the Holy Spirit.² "The place was shaken, and that made them all the more unshaken."³ Another proof that they were filled with the Holy Ghost, was that they spake (the imperfect, implying that they continued to speak) the word of God with all boldness. "Feine sees in the narrative a divine answer to the Apostles' prayer, so that filled with the Holy Ghost they spoke with boldness. And he adds, that such divine power must have been actually working in the Apostles, otherwise the growth of the church in spite of its opposition is inexplicable—a remark which might well be considered by the deniers of a miraculous Christianity. It is in reality the same argument so forcibly put by St. Chrysostom: 'If you deny miracles, you make it all the more marvellous that they should obtain such moral victories—these illiterate men!'"⁴

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH. 32. Of one heart and one soul, *καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία*: "it is difficult to distinguish precisely between the two words, but they undoubtedly imply entire harmony in affection and thought according to a

¹ Compare Longfellow's *Legend of Prague*, besieged by an army of evil spirits, driven away by prayer:—

"The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away."

² For instances of an earthly ke regarded as a token of the presence of deity, compare Vergil, *Æneid*, III. 90; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV. 672.

³ Chrysostom.

⁴ Knowing.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of ^{of one} one heart and ^{of one} soul: ^{neither said any} ^{and not one} of them ^{said} that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but ^{they} they had all things common.

33 And with great ^{power} power gave the apostles ^{their} witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and ^a great grace was upon them all.

34 ^{Neither} ^{For neither} was there ^{any} among them ^{any} that lacked: for "as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And ^v laid ^{them down} ^{them} at the apostles' feet: and ^w distribution was made unto every man ^{each,} according as ^{he} ^{any one} had need.

^o 2 Chr. 30. 12. Ezek. 11. 19.
^t Cp. 2 Cor. 8. 14, 15.

^u ch. 2. 45.

^p Phil. 1. 27.
^v ver. 37.

^q ch. 2. 44.

^r See ch. 1. 8, 22.

^s Cp. ch. 11. 23.

^{ch.} 5. 2. ^w Cp. ch. 6. 1.

common Hebrew mode of expression."¹ Although they had increased to five thousand men, they were still a unity, not necessarily in opinions, but in love, in affection, in purpose, in devotion. The church possessed the true unity, that of heart and soul; the unity of the same spiritual life in all; the unity of one great master and head for all; the unity of love and sympathy; the unity of aim and purpose; the unity of one kingdom, with one law and gospel; one government under one Invisible King. It is the unity of an army, with one leader, loyal to one cause, but with many departments and companies and organizations. It is the unity of nature, with one law and principle, but with an infinite variety of forms. It is the unity of an anthem—several parts, many notes, many voices, an infinite variety of sound-waves, but in perfect harmony, under one leader, with one purpose.

All things common. See on 2: 44.

33. And with great power. This may include miraculous power of healing, as well as convincing power in speaking. Gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. "We may think of these devoted men, day after day in the thronged temple courts, the popular favor supporting them, speaking their blessed message for a time unhindered. 'The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is again and again mentioned as the groundwork of the apostolic teaching; it was the column upon which their strong patient faith rested; they knew they had seen their Master after he had risen; they told it out to others that men might grasp the mighty issues which this victory of Jesus over death involved for every man and woman.'"²

And great grace (*χάρις*) was upon them all. Both from God and man, as in the case of the child Jesus (Luke 2: 52). Grace is originally that which gives pleasure and delight, as loveliness of form (the Greek Graces) or character (the

Christian Graces); hence, the favor of men, which brings expressions of good-will; but above all, the favor, the loving-kindness of God, which is the most perfect delight in the universe, bringing the favor of man, and the graces of character and life, virtues in their lovely aspect.

Luke seems to love to dwell on the charming picture, a garden of Eden in a wilderness world; an oasis in the desert, an Elim with its palm-trees and wells of water on the rough and arid way from Egypt to the Promised Land. We can easily see that a church of such a character would make rapid advances, and hasten on the day of the Lord's victory over the world.

34. Possessors of lands or houses sold them.

For the need was greater than could be supplied by their income. This made the Jerusalem church poor, but it was a noble poverty. Human nature is ennobled by this example of generosity. If poor toward man, they were rich toward God, rich in Christian graces and usefulness. Helpfulness toward the poor and needy is still the characteristic of the Christian spirit and Christian church.

Sold . . . and brought. Both verbs are in the imp. tense, denoting continuous and repeated action.

35. Laid them down at the apostles' feet.

"The apostles are represented as sitting, perhaps as teachers, and also as an indication of their authority: the expression in the Greek conveys the thought of committal to the care and authority of any one, or that of reverence and thankfulness."¹

"The apostles, like the Roman magistrates,³ probably sat amongst their own people on a raised seat, on the steps of which, at their feet, the money thus devoted for the service of the Lord's people was laid in token of respect. This seems to have been the customary way of the solemn dedication of property to the use of the

¹ Knowing.

² Schaff.

³ Compare Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 28, where we read

how a sum of money was laid at the Prætor's feet in the Forum."

36 And ^{Jo'ses, Jo'seph,} who by the apostles was surnamed Bār'nā-bās, (which is, being interpreted, ^{the son of consolation, exhortation,} a Lē'vite, ^{and of the country of Cy'prus, and a man of Cy'prus by race,} 37 Having ^{land, a field,} sold ^{it,} and brought the money, and ^{laid it} at the apostles' feet.

z Cp. Mark 3. 17.

y ver. 35.

church, as it is mentioned again in the case of Barnabas (ver. 37).¹ "The words are a vivid picture of one phase of Eastern life. When gifts or offerings are made to a king, or priest, or teacher, they are not placed in his hands but at his feet."²

III. JOSEPH BARNABAS. 36. *Joses*. Another form of *Joseph*. Surnamed Barnabas. Commonly derived from the Hebrew *bar*, son, and *nabua*, prophecy, *pouring out words as from a fountain*, the impelling force being the divine inspiration; hence, *son of prophecy*, and because Barnabas' gift of consolation "was one of the threefold uses of prophecy" (1 Cor. 14 : 3), *Son of Consolation*.

Consolation, *παράκλησις*, the same word as that given to the Holy Spirit by Jesus (John 14 : 16), "the Comforter," "Paraclete," from *παρά*, to the side of, and *καλέω*, to call or summon, for comfort or help, as an advocate, counsellor, comforter.

What Barnabas, filled with the Holy Spirit, did for others was similar, at least in most respects, to that which the Holy Spirit does for us. His work was far greater than that implied by the familiar definition of comforting,—to soothe, to bring tranquil enjoyment. He was like the advocate in Greek and Latin courts, a powerful friend in whose wisdom, knowledge, influence, and affection the client had confidence, and who advised, aided, strengthened, and comforted him. Barnabas had a great gift by his words, character, and personality of comforting others by invigorating them, inspiring them with new life, strengthening their faith and hope, giving them fresh courage. He was like a fountain of the water of life.³ His power was less in doctrine and teaching, but more in spiritual uplift and inspiration. Hence he was a specially good companion of Paul, as we shall see later on.

A SON OF CONSOLATION. "Who is the man who, in his bereavement or pain, receiving comfort from God, radiates it, so that the world is richer by the help the Lord has given him? It is the reverent, the unselfish, and the humble man. The sunlight falls upon a clod, and the clod drinks it in, is warmed by it itself, but lies as black as ever, and sheds no light. But the sun

touches a diamond, and the diamond almost chills itself as it sends out in radiance on every side the light that has fallen on it. So God helps one man bear his pain, and nobody but that one man is the whitest richer. God comes to another sufferer, reverent, unselfish, humble, and the lame leap, and the dumb speak, and the wretched are comforted all around by the radiated comfort of that happy soul."⁴

POSSESSING BY GIVING. "To possess consolation is to give it; not to give it is not to possess it. The more of it you have, the more you may give; and the more you give to others, the more you retain for your own use. This circle, when it is set a-going, moves perpetually, like the sea giving out its waters to the sky, and the sky sending back the boon by rain and the rivers to the sea again."⁵

A Levite. One of the priestly tribe, who had no tribal inheritance, but could possess property.

Of the country of Cyprus. This accounts for his having land which he could sell. In Cyprus were the famous copper mines which Augustus Cæsar leased to Herod the Great. His Jewish subjects naturally flocked thither. "According to Metaphrastes, an ancient Greek writer, Barnabas was born in Cyprus, of rich parents, who sent him to be trained at Jerusalem under Gamaliel. There he formed an early friendship with St. Paul. He was a witness of our Lord's miracles, and was converted by the healing of the impotent man at Bethesda. He then was the means of converting his sister (aunt) Mary and her son Mark."⁶ Others think that Barnabas became acquainted with Paul at the University of Tarsus. Barnabas at Jerusalem would be intimate at the house of his aunt Mary and his cousin John Mark, who appear to have been a family of some wealth.⁷

37. Having land, *ἀγροῦ*, a field. If this was situated in the rich and productive Cyprus or near its mines, it may have been of considerable value. "In connection with this passage, and 9 : 26, see Renan's eulogy on the character of Barnabas. In him Renan sees the patron of all good and liberal ideas, and considers that Christianity has done him an injustice in not placing him in the first rank of her founders (*Apostles*, p. 191, Eng. translation)."⁸

¹ Schaff.

² Ellicott.

³ See Aldis Wright's *Bible Word Book*, pp. 146, 147, for examples of this use of the word Comfort. And William Burnett Wright's *Master and Men*, chap. vi.

⁴ *Biblical Illustrator*.

⁵ William Arnot, D. D.

⁶ Prof. Stokes (see, also, Lightfoot in *Expositor*, 1885, vol. i. 3, and Ramsay in number for 1889, vol. ix. 265).

⁷ See "Barnabas" and "Mark" in *Hastings' Bib. Dic.*

⁸ Knowing.

CHAPTER 5.

THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM (*Continued*)

ATTACKS FROM WITHIN. vers. 1-10.	{ False Disciples. Crime and Death of Ananias. And of Sapphira.	
GREAT INCREASE OF THE CHURCH. vers. 11-16.	{ In Spirit. In Miracles of Healing and Health. In Numbers.	
THE SECOND PERSECUTION. vers. 17-42.	{ The Apostles imprisoned. Released by an Angel. The Sanhedrim puzzled. The Apostles brought before them. Gamaliel's Argument. The Apostles beaten and released. Rejoicing and preaching.	TIME. A. D. 30-34. PLACE. Jerusalem.

1 BUT a certain man named Ān-ā-nī'ās, with Sāpph-ī'rā his wife, sold a possession,

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA, vers. 1-10.

In this chapter we come to a new crisis in the history of the church. There are two sources of danger to any church: one from without, and the other from within.

1. In the last chapter we studied the first attempt from without to destroy the church. The fires of persecution were kindled to consume it. But the kingdom was like the three heroes in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace: the flames did not harm them, and with them was one like the Son of God. The light from them caused men to see more clearly the true God and the gospel. It advertised the Good News; it scattered the seeds of truth broadcast; it led to more prayer, a stronger faith, a firmer courage, more generous giving, more fervent preaching; it proved that the piety of the church was no temporary excitement, but a steady burning and shining light.¹

2. We now come to a more dangerous attack, from false disciples within the fold.

Fire cannot burn the church, but a church can commit suicide. The real danger to a church is from within. The engine is powerless if the fires go out. The light goes out when the electric current ceases to flow. Satan entered this Paradise regained in the disguise of a disciple, that he might ruin it as he had Eden ages before; introducing evil motives, pride, ambition, falsehood, covetousness, and hypocrisy into the very church itself. There was a Judas among the twelve apostles of Jesus, and an Ananias among the first disciples. But we see how God overruled even this, by victory over the evil, for the advancement of the gospel.²

As Arnot says, "Barnabas is a light at the pier-head, streaming outward through the night, marking for the mariner the way of life; Ananias, dying with a lie on his lips, buoys a rock where many have perished and warns the way-farer from the place of doom. Though the two men are not alike good, both examples are for us alike useful."

NOTE how the Bible history reports both the good and the bad. It tells the whole truth, and this is what we need to know. It is never wise to measure the good of any cause by the weeds. To do so is to make Sahara better than the finest garden in the world; nor is it well to picture the past as a garden of Eden without any struggle with weeds. That would destroy hope and courage.

In judging of human nature, we must put this story of the early church into the picture, if we would see it as it is. We should always write up the credit page as well as the debit. The world has periods of darkness, but he that leaves out the sunshine does not tell us the truth about the world.

1. But. In striking contrast with the self-sacrifice of Barnabas. "The little word 'but' is the hinge on which great issues turn."³ **Ananias**, "*Favored of the Lord*," or "*To whom Jehovah has been gracious*." His character was in intense contrast with not only his name, but his namesake, "**Hananiah**" (the Hebrew form, as Ananias is the Greek), one of the three men who in Daniel's time were cast into the fiery furnace rather than deny their God (Dan. 3). **Sapphira**. If a Syriac name, "*Beautiful*" (Blass); if Greek, the gem "*Sapphire*." Sold a possession, κτήμα, any possession.

¹ See Bunyan's *Capture of Mansoul*. No outward attacks could destroy the fortress of the soul, unless there was a traitor within.

² See Spurgeon's *Sermons in Candles*, pp. 121, 122.

³ Arnot,

2 And ^z kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy ^{to it}; and brought a certain part, and ^a laid ^{it} at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ἀν-ἄ-ν-ῆ-ς, *why* hath ^b Sa'tān filled ^{thy} heart ^{to} lie ^{to} the Holy Ghost, and ^d to keep back *part* of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, ^{was} it not ^{remain} thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in ^{thy} ^{own} power? ^{how} ^{is it} ^{that} thou hast ^{thou} conceived this thing in ^{thy} heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but ^e unto God.

^z ver. 3. ^a ch. 4. 35, 37. ^b Cp. Luke 22. 3 & John 13. 2, 27. ^c Cp. vers. 4, 9. ^d ver. 2. ^e Cp. vers. 3, 9.

Here the possession consisted of landed property (ver. 3).

2. **Kept back**, ἐνοφλόατο, from νόσφι, *afar, apart, aloof*; hence, in the middle voice, to *set apart for one's self secretly, to withdraw covertly and appropriate to one's own use*.

His wife also being *privy to it*, συνειδύλας, from συν, *with*, and εἶδω, *to know*. She knew what her husband was doing, and agreed to it. This was an aggravation of the crime, for it proved that it was deliberate. See on ver. 9. **Brought a certain part**, representing it as the whole. **Laid it at the apostles' feet**. Apparently at some public religious service, where they could be seen of men (see on 4: 35). Hypocrites blow the trumpet, or how could people know their virtues (Matt. 6: 2)? Calvin says, "So it came to pass that he honored the feet of the apostles more than the eyes of God."

3. **But Peter said**. How did Peter know the truth? How could he see into their hearts? (1) The Spirit must have revealed it to him. (2) This was more natural from the heart of Peter being clarified and quickened by the indwelling Spirit. There comes to some men under certain influences a spiritual insight into the heart, like the kathode rays which reveal through the flesh, as light passes through a glass of water, the bones, and obstructions like bullets or needles which are causing hidden disease.¹

Why, διατί, *how is it that*, Satan (hath) filled *thy* heart? This is the exact opposite of the case of the apostles. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, so that there was no room for Satan. Ananias was filled with Satan, so that there was no room for the Holy Spirit.²

To lie to, ψεύσασθαι. "Rather, to deceive. The design of Satan was to *deceive* the Holy Ghost. To lie to would require a different case in the noun, which occurs in ver. 4, where the same verb is properly rendered *lie* (unto God). Satan fills the heart to *deceive*. The result of the attempt is merely to lie."³

To the Holy Ghost. The lie was both an acted and a spoken one (ver. 8). "They lied to the Holy Ghost, because the offering was made, not to the apostles, nor to the church, but to God, and the act was thus a direct falsehood addressed to him."⁴ And it was in direct contravention of the presence, the works, and the power of the Holy Spirit. **And to keep back part of the price**, while representing it to be the whole.

KEEPING BACK PART OF THE PRICE. There still exist those who keep back part of the price. Like Festus they are almost persuaded, but something holds them back. They will give up all to Christ except some one thing. They will do every duty but one. Even as to things of this life, many fail because they are willing to pay only part of the price of success.

4. **Whiles it remained, was it not thine own?** οὐχὶ μένον σοὶ ἔμενε. There is a play upon the words, as shown in the R. V.

Was it not in thine own power. No one compelled him to sell it, or to give it away after it was sold. But it was necessary that he should act and speak the truth about it. This statement of Peter shows that the community of goods was not compulsory.

Why has thou conceived this thing in thine heart? What caused you to form such a plan? **Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God**. That is, the real force of the lie was against God more than man. So David said to God, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned." The sin against man was nothing in comparison to the sin against God. It was unknown to man. It did not harm any man, except indirectly, because it was a sin against God. The injury was to his kingdom. It misrepresented God and his church. It tended to make others think that there was no real piety. The sin was against the teaching and influence of God. There was no sin that Jesus condemned so severely, with so many "woes," as hypocrisy.

THE CRIME of Ananias and his wife was very

¹ In the *Expositor* for August, 1891, is an article by Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, D. D., LL. D., on the Lost or Latent Powers of the Five Senses, illustrating such cases as Elisha's seeing the angelic armies unseen to common eyes, and similar cases in the Bible, and in biography.

² See George Eliot's *Romola*, the chapter on "Tito's Dilemma." Rogers' *Greyson Letters*, "The Madman and the Devil."

³ Prof. Vincent, *Word Studies*; see Burton, *New Test. Moods and Tenses*, pp. 148, 154. ⁴ Abbott,

5 And Ἀν-ἄ-νί-ᾱς hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost:
and "great fear came ^{on} upon all ^{them} that heard ^{these things.} it.

f Cp. Ezek. 11. 13. g ver. 11.

much more than lying, or hypocrisy, or fraud, because of the circumstances. It was a complex crime, woven of many strands. (1) There was a selfish, ambitious desire to be highly regarded by their fellow-disciples, to be popular beyond their deserts. They saw how the generous Barnabas was loved and esteemed, and they envied him and coveted the same honor. On the other hand, it was a discredit to their piety, and a disgrace for a rich family to keep all their property for themselves, while every one else was giving largely.

(2) At the same time they were covetous and avaricious. They were unwilling to pay the price for the coveted reputation. They were too stingy to do that which they wanted the credit of doing.

Hence (3) they were hypocrites, covering their self-seeking vanity and covetousness under a mask of generosity.

This led (4) to *lying*, deliberate falsehood of the most unprincipled kind, and to

(5) *Sacrilege*, an open treason to the Spirit of God, since they sinned in the brightest light that ever shone upon the earth, under the strongest possible influences for good, and where the sin was an insult to God, and might be an unspeakable injury to his cause.

(6) At the same time there were probably mingled with these motives some desire to help the poor and some admiration of the devotion and generosity of the others. They may have feared lest if they gave all they would have to live in poverty. Jerome says that they kept back a part of the price "through fear of famine which true faith never fears."¹ There was probably at least enough of these to salve their consciences and to veil themselves in a measure from themselves. Only devils have no mixture of higher motives. That is the most dangerous hypocrisy that deceives even ourselves.²

HYPOCRITES, ὑποκριταί, actors, those who play a part upon a stage, usually, in ancient times, in

a mask. The player appears in one character, while he is really another; the beggar may be dressed like a king, and a fool act the part of a wise man. Hence, the word came to mean *the assuming of a false appearance of virtue and religion*. "Some hypocrites were like the little images that they place in the very bowing of the vaults of churches, that look as if they held up the church, but are only puppets."³

"He was a man
Who stole the livery of the court of heaven
To serve the devil in."⁴

"Oh, what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side."⁵

No sin did our Lord condemn more severely than hypocrisy, for that sin destroys the very foundations of character, and renders goodness and heaven impossible.⁶

COMPARISONS. Christ compares hypocrites to wolves in sheep's clothing; sepulchres adorned above, but full of corruption; to dishes cleansed without, but foul within. St. Jude likens them to clouds without rain; St. Peter (2 Pet. 2: 17), to wells without water. William Secker says that hypocrites resemble looking-glasses which present the faces which are not in them. How desirous are men to put the fairest gloves upon the foulest hands, and the finest paint upon the rottenest posts! Hypocrites are like counterfeit coin; a curious cloth on a dusty table; a sailor in a leaky ship; a lamp without a light.⁷

"The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan," in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, when he took off his silver veil before his victim, Zelica, in a chancel house, and showed his distorted and hideous features, exclaimed, —

"Here judge if hell with all its power to damn
Can add one curse to the vile thing I am."

5. Ananias . . . fell down and gave up the

Terrestrial goods, the goblet and the knife;
The knights and ladies, all whose flesh and bone
By avarice have been hardened into stone."

³ Lord Bacon.

⁴ Pollok.

⁵ *Measure for Measure*.

⁶ On hypocrisy, see the story of Gyges Ring and its interpretation, in Plato's *Republic*, Bk. 2, ch. 3; William Secker's *Nonesuch Professor*, pp. 109-114; Rogers' *Greyson Letters*, letters on "What are the Best Punishments of Hypocrisy?" and "Compulsory Virtue." Dante in the *Inferno* describes hypocrites in the eighth circle and fifth pit. For an illustration see "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan" in *Lalla Rookh*; Mrs. Opie on "Lying." Bacon's *Essay* on "Dissimulation," with Whately's *Annotations*. *Sermons* by Sidney Smith on "Ananias."

⁷ *The Nonesuch Professor in his Meridian Splendor*.

¹ *Epistles*, 130.

² Longfellow's *Poems*, "Morituri Salutamus," beginning at the lines: —

"In medieval Rome, I know not where,
There stood an image with its arm in air.
And on its lifted finger, shining clear,
A golden ring with the device, 'Strike here'!"

Where the shadow of the finger fell a man dug in the ground and found a secret stairway leading to a hall containing untold wealth, but the man perished.

"The image is the adversary old
Whose beckoning finger points to realms of gold;
Our lusts and passions are the downward stair
That leads the soul from a diviner air;
The archer, Death, the flaming jewel, Life;

6 And the young men arose^h ^{wound} and wrapped him ^{up,} round, and they carried ^{him} him out and buried ^{him.} him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

h Cp. ch. 8, 2 & Ezek. 29, 5 & John 19, 40.

ghost, *ἐξέφυξε*, *breathed out his life*, a medical term, natural to Luke as a physician. His death was the direct act of God, and in no sense the act of Peter and the apostles. Very probably they were as much astonished as any one. Had Peter done this act he would have been a murderer, subject to the law of the land. But he had no hand in it whatever.

It was no stroke of apoplexy or shock to the nerves resulting from terror and amazement at the discovery of his sin, but the direct stroke of God.

THE SEVERITY OF THE PUNISHMENT. (1) It was deserved. (2) It was necessary in order to save the church from destruction from within. "It is remarkable as a historic fact that just so soon as any movement, though *beginning* with a spiritual impulse and even in a spirit of protest and reform, gets to be popular and numerically strong, its point of peril is reached."¹ (3) It was thus an act of mercy, not of revenge. "Exact justice is commonly more merciful in the long run than pity." "The inscription over the gate of hell tells us that the terms on which we receive the trust of life were fixed

"By the Divine Power, and are therefore unchangeable:

"By the Highest Wisdom, and therefore our truest good;

"By the Primal Love, and therefore the kindest."²

The mercy of this punishment is illustrated by a surgeon who cuts off a limb to save a life. In itself the act is painful and seems cruel; but in reality it is an act of the supremest mercy.

Those sins always flourish which can be practised with impunity, and are lightly regarded in the popular estimation.

(4) It was necessary to counteract the effect of his conduct upon the world. It would tend to make men believe that there was nothing in religion, that there was no such thing as conversion and true piety. And men will not seek earnestly after that in which they do not believe. Therefore it was needful that the deed and its spirit should be publicly repudiated in the most unmis- takable manner.

6. And the young men. "A society of young and able men was attached to each synagogue,

who were called the servants of the synagogue, and were held in readiness to perform any menial duties about the place. . . . These services, being connected with religious worship, were considered honorable. A similar organization exists in many Roman Catholic countries in Europe, though confined simply to the performing of burial rites. It is looked upon as an honorable function, though, as belonging to a secret society, the members are not known, and wear masks or veils, to prevent recognition, when so employed. Commentators have suggested that these young men belonged to an order of sub-deacons in the Jerusalem church; but it can scarcely be supposed that the infant community had by this time arrived at such a pitch of organization. It is enough that the younger and capable members present undertook the duty that would naturally fall to them."³ But many of them having perhaps been thus employed in the synagogues, would be prepared to undertake this service in the Christian assembly.

Wound him up. "Better as R. V. 'wrapped him round,' that is, they unfastened his girdle, and then, taking the loose undergarment and the wide cloak which was worn above it, used them as a winding sheet in which to cover the corpse from head to foot."³

Carried him out. Outside the walls of the city, "for burying places were always outside cities;"⁴ "only prophets and kings had their graves in the city."⁵ "The body was generally carried open on a bier, or else in an open coffin, the bearers frequently changing to give an opportunity for many to take part in a work deemed so meritorious."⁴

Buried him. Burials always took place on the day of death if possible, both because of the danger of defilement, and because in that hot climate decay began very soon after death. (See Num. 19 : 11, etc.) "Even among the present inhabitants of Jerusalem, says Tobler, burial, as a general rule, is not deferred more than three or four hours."⁶ As Ananias was a man of property, he probably had a private burial place, which would be either in a garden or a cave.³

7. About the space of three hours. She waited thus long anxiously for her husband's re-

¹ Dr. Arthur Pierson, *Acts of the Holy Spirit*, where a number of such sudden visitations are given.

² Lowell's *Essays*, IV., on Dante, p. 251.

³ Canon Tristram.

⁴ See Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, p. 169.

⁵ Hamburger.

⁶ Schaff.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 ^{Then} But Peter ^{said} unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together ^{to} tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband ^{are} at the door, and they shall carry thee out.

10 ^{Then} fell she ^{straightway} down ^{immediately} at his feet, and ^{yielded} up the ghost: and the young men came in and found her dead, and ^{carrying her forth,} they carried her out and buried ^{her} by her husband.

† Cp. ch. 15. 10 & 1 Cor. 10. 9. ‡ Cp. vers. 3, 4.

turn with the news of the praise and honor received for their large gift. Then, weary and puzzled at his absence, his wife . . . came in to learn the reason. "A second assembly of the church might have been sitting, if the Jewish hours of prayer were rigidly attended to; but it is more likely that the apostles, and many with them, remained together during the absence of the young men who were attending to the burial."¹

Not knowing what was done. No one, it has been suggested, who had seen her, as yet had had courage to tell her of her husband's doom. It is quite possible they did not know where she was.

8. Peter answered unto her. Answered her inquiry, shown by her looks or the fact of her coming. Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? Implying "and no more," pointing at the same time to the pile of gold Ananias had presented, or naming the sum. The question gave her the opportunity to retract and to state the truth. She could have saved her husband by refusing to join in his plan. She could now clear her own conscience by confession. But she shut the door of repentance by telling a lie. "A wilful falsehood is a cripple, and cannot stand alone. It is easy to tell one lie, hard to tell but one lie."²

9. Agreed together. Showing that the sin was deliberate, and therefore without palliation or excuse. They were not overtaken by a sudden tornado, but plotted in calm sunshine. To tempt, rather to test, to try. "It was not a temptation, but a trial of the ability of the Spirit within the apostles to discover falsehood."³ **The Spirit of the Lord.** To "tempt" God is to dare him, to put him to the test whether he will see the sin and punish it, or not, so that God and his government must be put into a false light before the world, or he must take notice of the offence. **Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door.** "As the cemeteries are always at some little distance outside the cities, the space of three hours would not be at all a long time for those engaged in the burial to be absent."⁴

10. Then fell she down straightway at his feet. The death was not inflicted by Peter, but by God.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. I. Ananias grew bad, and remained bad, under the best of influence, as Judas grew worse under the example and training of Jesus. In Retsch's illustrations of Goethe's *Faust*, there is one plate where angels are dropping roses upon the demons who are contending for Faust's soul, and every rose falls like molten metal, burning and blistering wherever it touches.

It is said that ice can be made in a red-hot crucible, and that no half-melted hailstone, but the hardest of ice. A pastor once said during a revival that his church was a mountain of ice in a sea of fire. So were Ananias and Sapphira amid the fervid religion of these early disciples. The sunshine and the rain which make the live tree flourish but hasten the dead tree to decay.

II. "God will use us to aid his kingdom, as examples or as warnings; as lifeboats or as wrecks on dangerous rocks; as Ulysses or Orpheus, showing how to escape the sirens; or as the dead men's bones whitening the shore."⁵ It is for us to decide which we will be.

III. The fact that temptation is often suggested from without gives hope in the struggle against sin, for it would prove us much more deadened to good, and pervaded with evil, if all the sin grew out of our own natures. The same being who tempted Christ took hold of the evil in Ananias' heart and kindled it to a blaze with the fires of hell, picturing the honor and happiness he would gain from his sin, having the pleasures of goodness and sin at the same time. The flames of the pit were made to seem the radiance of heaven.

A ship is safe on the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship. The Christian is safe in the world, with all its storms of temptation, so long as the world is not in the Christian.

IV. But the fact of temptation is not an excuse for the sin. The sin was their own. It was their business to resist temptation and overcome it, and grow strong thereby. It was the battle that

¹ Schaff. ² Fuller. ³ Rendall. ⁴ Tristram.

⁵ See Trench's *Poems*, "Orpheus and the Sirens."

11 And ^k great fear came upon ^{all the} the whole church, and upon ^{as many as} all that heard these things.

^k ver. 5.

made victory possible. It was the Hill Difficulty, by which alone they could climb to wider and more glorious vision. They stumbled over the very stairway to glory.

The value of this story lies not in the sin, but in the victory over the sin; not in the falling, but in the rising again. It is true of churches as of individuals.

"Saint Augustine! well hast thou said
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame."¹

But the rungs of the ladder are made, not of the vices, but of the victories over them.

V. A few counterfeit Christians do not prove that the gospel is a failure, or the church unworthy. A few dead trees in the forest, or dried stalks in the fields, do not prove that spring is a failure, or that the sun does not impart real life. The débris at the edge of the Nile floods, left high and dry and useless, does not prove that those floods do not fertilize Egypt and make it a garden of fertility. Rotten apples on the ground do not prove that the tree is not good and does not bear good fruit. Men counterfeit bank-notes because there are good ones and the bank is sound.

VI. We cannot fully understand the crime of Ananias, unless we consider that he first lied to himself before he lied to the church. He deceived himself as to his motives, offering excuses to himself in order to hide from himself the real reasons for his conduct.

"To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."²

"Friends, if we be honest with ourselves,
We shall be honest with each other."³

VII. Truthfulness is the only condition on which human intercourse is possible, and it lies at the foundation of all personal character. No matter how bad a man is, there is room for hope with respect to him if he is essentially truthful and honest; but if he is a liar, if truth and error are confounded in his own mind and character, there is nothing to build upon. Hence the terrible denunciations against liars and hypocrites in the Bible. The hypocrite is one who lies by his actions, and for a selfish purpose. Lying takes on as many forms as the old man of the sea in the hands of Hercules.

¹ Longfellow's *Poems*, "The Ladder of St. Augustine."

² *Hamlet*, I., 3.

³ George Macdonald, in *Marquis of Lossie*, chap. lxxi.

⁴ Pope's *Iliad*, 9: 412.

"Who dares think one thing and another tell
My soul detests him as the gates of hell."⁴

So in Eden, Ithuriel with his spear touched lightly the disguised tempter.

"For no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to his own likeness."⁵

GREAT INCREASE OF THE CHURCH, vers. 11-16.

God overruled this sad event so that it was compelled to aid in the building up of his kingdom. The sin itself was evil; but the overcoming it worked good in three directions.

I. IN SPIRITUAL LIFE. 11. Great fear came upon all the church. Not fear of man, but great awe in the presence of God; great reverence for the Holy Spirit, great fear of sinning, great fear lest they might themselves be deceived. This led to careful living, to heart searchings, to watching and prayer. Their eyes were opened to spiritual realities. They realized the terrible nature of sin, the power and nearness of God's judgments against it. They lived in the presence of God's all-searching eye that penetrated into the recesses of the heart. They were conscious of sin.

The church, ἐκκλησίαν, from ἐκ, out, and καλέω, to call, "an assembly of citizens called out from their homes into some public place." Hence, in the Christian sense, an assembly of Christians gathered for worship, and later, a more organized body of Christians.

This is the first use of the word in the Acts, and probably implies at least the beginning of an organization of the Christian community, as a separate body.

And upon as many as heard, but who had not become disciples. In these there would be a somewhat different phase of meaning to the word fear, see on 2: 43. They not only felt awe and reverence, but were afraid to join a community where hypocrisy could be so severely punished, and where there were eyes that could see the secret motives of the heart. This sifting process was necessary, since there was great danger that many might profess to be Christians in order to obtain a support from the fund without working. It would have been easy to gather into the fold many hypocrites who cared only for the loaves and fishes, and thus to bring disaster upon the good name of the disciples.⁶

⁵ *Paradise Lost*, Book IV., lines 810-812. (See also the following lines.)

⁶ See Stanley Hall's *A Study of Fears*. Also Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion*. Lord Marmion's fear in the presence of the holy palmer.

12 And 'by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all ^mwith one accord in "Solomon's porch.

13 ^{And} But of the rest durst no man join himself to them: ^{but} ^{howbeit} ° the people magnified them;

14 And believers ⁿ were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women;

15 ^aInsomuch that they ^r brought forth ^{even carried out} the sick into the streets, and laid ^{them} ^{on} beds and couches, that, ^s at the least the shadow of Peter passing by ^{as Peter came by, at the least his shadow} might overshadow some ^{one} of them.

l ch. 2. 43 & 4. 30 & 14. 3 & 19. 11. Mark 16. 20. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 12. 12. Heb. 2. 4. m See ch. 1. 14.
n ch. 3. 11. John 10. 23. o ver. 26. ch. 2. 47 & 4. 21. p Cp. ch. 6. 1, 2. q Cp. ch. 19. 12. r Mark 6. 55,
56. s Cp. 2 Kin. 4. 29 & Matt. 14. 36.

II. IN NUMBERS. 12. Many signs and wonders. Miracles regarded in two aspects: Signs signifying the teaching of the miracles, that they proved the divine power working through the apostles, and expressed the loving-kindness and helpfulness of Christ and his religion. Some may have misunderstood the death of Ananias as if it were characteristic of Christianity. But the great number of healings of disease would correct the impression. Wonders, expresses the marvellousness of the apostles' work, which would attract attention to the new religion.

And they, the body of believers, whoever came at any time to the gatherings. Were all with one accord, drawn by the same purpose, attracted together. In Solomon's porch (see on 3: 11). This was the regular meeting place of the Christians, for the numbers had grown so great that no private house could contain them. But in this great cloistered court open to everybody they could meet together, listen to the teaching of the apostles, and bring the sick to them for healing.

13. And of the rest, etc. "The conduct of the people is strongly contrasted with the cowardice of the rest. By the people is meant the undistinguished mass, who, safe in their number and obscurity, expressed openly their admiration of the apostles; while the rest, men of any position, as rulers, scribes, or priests, durst not openly side with the apostles."¹ This interpretation seems necessary from the contrast of "the rest" with "but the people." But this depends on the meaning of join himself, *κολλησθαι*, to join. "In all but two instances the word implies a forced, unnatural, or unexpected union." Thus the same verb is used of the prodigal when he "joined himself to a citizen of that country." "The verb means to glue or cement. Very expressive here, implying that he forced himself upon the citizen, who was unwilling to engage him, and who took

him into service only upon persistent entreaty."² Therefore the more probable meaning of the phrase is, that "the great companies of these believers in Jesus would thus meet, no one hindering them, no one crowding them or listening with jealous ears to their words. Those who made up the crowds who usually thronged those courts left them alone, reverently keeping away from the groups of the followers of Jesus, the people generally regarding them with a kind of fear mingled with admiration."³

But the people, in distinction from the rulers, magnified them, regarded them as very great and honorable.

14. And believers. From this crowd of people who did not intrude upon or interfere, but were gradually impressed with the truth and spirit of the apostles, and joined them as fellow Christians.

Both of men and women. "This constant reference to the share of women in the ministry of the gospel and the life of the church is characteristic of St. Luke in both his writings."⁴

III. IN DEEDS OF HELPFULNESS. 15. Brought forth the sick into the streets, through which the apostles would pass on their way between their homes and the temple.

On beds, *κλινῶν*, from *κλίνω*, to recline, a general word for a bed or couch, used of the couches on which the Orientals reclined at meals, implying some kind of framework. Couches, *κραββάτων*, rude pallets, merely thick padded quilts or mats.

That at least the shadow of Peter passing by. It is not said that any were healed by Peter's shadow, though the mention of the people's acts implies that they were. Compare with similar instances where the persons were cured, — Matt. 2: 20; Mark. 6: 56; Acts 19: 12. "In this and similar narratives (Acts 19: 12), Christian faith finds no difficulty whatever. All miraculous working is an exertion of the direct power of the

¹ Rendall.² M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.³ Schaff.⁴ Knowing.

16 ^{There came also a} And there also came together the multitude ^{out of} the cities round about ^{unto} Jerusalem, 'bringing sick ^{folks,} and them ^{which} were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

17 ^{Then} But the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him' (which is the sect of the "Šād'dū-qēēs), and they were filled with ^{indignation,} ^{v jealousy,}

18 And laid ^{their} hands on the apostles, and ^v put them in ^{the common prison.} ^{public ward.}

f Mark 16. 17, 18. u See Matt. 22. 23. v ch. 13. 45. James 3. 14, 16. Cp. ch. 7. 9 & 17. 5. w See Luke 21. 12.

All-powerful, . . . and whether He will use *any* instrument in doing this, or *what* instrument, must depend altogether on His own purpose in the miracle—the effect to be produced on the recipients, beholders, or hearers. Without His special selection and enabling, *all instruments were vain*; with them, *all are capable*. What is a hand or a voice more than a shadow, except that the analogy of the ordinary instrument is a greater help to faith in the recipient?"¹

WHAT IS A MIRACLE? The true definition of a miracle helps us to understand and believe in miracles. A miracle is the personal intervention of God by his will into the chain of cause and effect in nature. It is such an intervention as shows the presence and action of a supernatural power. It is not a "breaking of the laws of nature," nor "the suspension of the laws of nature," nor any change in the laws of nature, but simply God's doing with his infinite power the same *quality* of action, though vastly greater in degree, that we do every hour when we exert our personal will amid the forces of nature. I lift up a book, I turn on the water from the water-works, and make a shower on my parched lawn or garden. I stop a part of the machinery in the factory and rescue a child caught in its wheels. I turn on or turn off the electric light. These acts break no law of nature, they suspend none, they change none. They are simply the intervention of my personal will into the laws. It is the same when God, by his infinite power, lifts up a mountain or raises the dead. It is his personal will touching nature and showing that God himself is there.

16. Out of the cities round about; showing how extensive this work was. With unclean spirits. The subject of "demoniacal possession" will be found discussed in chap. 16: 6.

Were healed every one. There were no failures to mar the influence of the apostles' teaching.²

THE SECOND PERSECUTION, vers. 17-42.

I. THE APOSTLES IMPRISONED. 17. The high priest, Annas. See on 4: 6. Rose up, not from his seat, but from his inactivity and indifference.

He woke up to the situation. "It is the same Greek word that is used of the insurrections of Theudas and Judas (vers. 36, 37)."³ They rose up to attack the new religion. All they that were with him. His party, his friends and adherents. The sect, *alpeis* (of which our word "heresy" is almost a transliteration), from *alpeō*, to take, in the middle voice to take for one's self, to choose from among many things. Hence, *alpeis* is "strictly the choice of an opinion contrary to those usually received," a sect (section), a heresy.

The Sadducees "say that there is no resurrection. . . . They deny the continuance of the soul and the punishments and rewards of the world below. . . . According to their teaching, souls perish together with bodies. . . . The Sadducees, by denying the resurrection and immortality in general, renounced at the same time the entire Messianic hope, at least in that form which later Judaism had given it."⁴ "Josephus states that most of the higher class in his day were skeptics or Sadducees, though the mass of the people were Pharisees."⁵

Were filled with indignation, *ζήλου* (of which our *zeal* is a transcript), from *ζέω*, to boil with heat; hence, *ardor*, then *jealousy*, an *envious and contentious rivalry* boiling over with passion and intense feeling. What the historian is describing is an outbreak of party feeling. The whole influence of the Sadducean party is called forth by their antagonism to the doctrine of the resurrection and their envy at the growth of the new movement. They were losing their power over the people. The teaching of the apostles was a strong condemnation of their past and present conduct. If Jesus was really the Messiah, then they had virtually committed treason against their nation in crucifying him, and there was danger of an uprising of the people against them on that account. There was but one alternative for them. They must either accept of Jesus as the Messiah, or they must put a stop to the progress of the gospel.

18. Laid their hands. Omit "their." On the apostles. The apostles as a body, perhaps the whole twelve, were arrested. "It is clear from

¹ Alford.

² Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*, "Calls for Healing in the East."

³ Cambridge Bible.

⁴ Schürer, *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*.

⁵ Hackett.

19 But ^{the} ^{an} angel of the Lord by night ^{opened} the prison doors, and brought them ^{forth} ^{out}, and said,

20 Go ^{ye}, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all ^{the} words of ^{this} ^{life} ^{Life}.

21 And when they heard ^{that} ^{this}, ^{they} entered into the temple ^{early in the morning} ^{about daybreak}, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all ^{the} senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the ^{prison} ^{prison-house} to have them brought.

^x See ch. 8. 26.

^y ch. 12. 10 & 16. 26.

^z Cp. John 6. 63, 68 & Phil. 2. 16.

^a Cp. ch. 13. 46 & 22. 4 & 28. 28.

^b ch. 3. 15 & 11. 18.

^c vers. 25, 42.

^d Cp. John [8. 2].

^e Judith 4. 8.

this that, though St. Luke has only mentioned the speeches of Peter, with some slight notice that John also was a speaker, yet all the apostles were busy, and could have been quoted as preachers and teachers had it been any part of the compiler's purpose to write a history of all the apostles." ¹

Put them in the common prison, *ἐν τῇ ῥῆσει δημοσίου, in public ward or keeping*, but by means of prison, ver. 19, *τῆς φυλακῆς*. This was a temporary imprisonment, to await a summons and trial before the Sanhedrim on the following day, as it was now too late to assemble the members, and it was illegal to try any one after sunset. ²

II. THE APOSTLES RELEASED BY AN ANGEL. 19. But. This is a divine *but*, which deranges all their plans. ³ The (R. V. "an") angel of the Lord. One of the "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1: 14). "In this book of the Acts the word *angel* occurs twenty times." ⁴ "Six distinct works of angels are related (chaps. 5: 19; 8: 26; 10: 3; 12: 7, 23; 27: 23)." ⁵

"I believe that angels wait on us as truly as ever they waited on Abraham, or Jacob, or Moses, or Elijah, or Mary, or Jesus himself. The mediæval painters were fond of filling the background of the Infancy with countless angels; the representation, though literally false, was morally true. I believe that angels are encamping around them that fear the Lord." ⁶

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth

Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep." ⁷

Opened the prison doors. Silently, without the knowledge of the guards (ver. 22), who were asleep or had relaxed their vigilance, being confident of the strength of their prison.

REASONS FOR THIS MIRACLE. Objections have been made to this miracle as useless, the circumstances requiring no such divine intervention.

¹ Cambridge Bible.

² On the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim, and its right to arrest, see Schürer's *Jewish People*, div. ii., vol. i. pp. 187, 188.

³ Albert Barnes.

⁴ Wordsworth.

But 1. It was a source of strength and courage to the apostles through the assurance of God's approval of their course.

2. It was a great advantage to the cause, as they went on preaching the gospel, impressing the people that it was God's cause, and the apostles were his messengers, speaking his truth.

3. It was a direct refutation of the Sadducees' doctrine, a blow at their position.

4. It tended to impress the minds of the enemies of the apostles with respect for them as under God's special protection, and probably suggested to Gamaliel (vers. 34-39) his fear that by opposing the apostles the rulers might be opposing God himself.

5. Hence, it influenced the result of the trial, and made the escape from prison a type of their greater deliverance from the power and wicked desires of the rulers.

20. Go . . . speak in the temple. There was to be no attempt made to conceal their escape. They were simply to go about their duty, as if nothing had happened. Speak . . . to the people. Who were hungering for the words of this life. R. V. prints *Life* with a capital L (as *Way* with a capital W, Acts 19: 9, 23) to show that it was a name for the gospel. It was the life that Jesus brought to earth, spiritual life, eternal life, here and hereafter. It was the life manifested and assured in the resurrection of Jesus. It was therefore the word of salvation (Acts 13: 26).

21. They entered into the temple early in the morning, *ὅτι τὸν ὄρθρον*. "The exact meaning of the preposition is that they entered into the temple by dawn, having been set at liberty during the night and waiting for the opening of the temple doors at dawn." ⁷

III. THE SANHEDRIM PUZZLED. Called the council, *συνέδριον*, Sanhedrim, and, better "even" all the senate, *γερονσίαν*, "from *γέρων*, an old man, like the Latin *senatus*, from *senex*,

⁵ George Dana Boardman, D. D. See Whately's *Good and Evil Angels; The Angels and their Ministrations*, by R. M. Patterson, D. D., LL. D.

⁶ Milton.

⁷ Randall.

22 But ^{when} the officers ^{that} came^d and found them not in the prison; and they returned, and told,

23 Saying, ^{prison truly found we} ^{prison-house we found} shut ^{with} in all safety, and the keepers standing without before ^{at} the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when ^{the high priest and} ^{the captain of} the temple and the chief priests heard these ^{things,} ^{words,} they ^{were much perplexed concerning} ^{doubted of} them whereunto this would grow.

25 ^{Then} ^{And there} came one and told them, ^{saying,} Behold, the men whom ye put in the prison ^{standing in the temple,} ^{in the temple standing} and teaching the people.

26 Then went the ^a captain with the officers, and brought them, ^{but} without violence; for 'they feared the people, lest they should ^{have been} ^{be} stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set ^{them} ^{them} before the council: ^{and} ^{And} the high priest asked them,

f ver. 26. See ch. 4. 1.

g ver. 21.

h ver. 24.

i ver. 13. See ch. 4. 21.

old, taking on very early an official sense, the notion of age being merged in that of dignity. Thus in Homer γέροντες are the chiefs who form the king's council. Compare the Latin *patres*, *fathers*, the title used in addressing the Roman senate."¹

"Meyer, Alford, and Stier (so M. R. Vincent) understand by the words which are translated *all the senate* that a special meeting of elders was summoned to assist the Sanhedrim in this difficult matter of suppressing the teaching respecting the resurrection of the crucified Jesus; but the same word *senate*, which occurs only here in the New Testament, in the second book of the Maccabees is constantly used for the Sanhedrim. The meaning here seems to be that on this occasion there was a meeting of the whole council, including all the elders who were members of it."²—"in contrast with the hasty and informal gathering which had dealt with Peter and John, as related in 4 : 5, 6."³

22. When the officers, ὑπηρέται, from ὑπό, under, and ἐρέτης, a rower, one who rows in a galley, as distinguished from a soldier; hence, an attendant, assistant. "In medical language used of the attendant or assistant of the principal physician." These officers were probably some of the temple guard, who were at the disposal of the Sanhedrim for service.⁴

23. The prison . . . shut, . . . keepers . . . before the doors. There were no apparent signs of escape; no precaution had been relaxed.

24. The high priest, who had ordered the arrest. The captain, who was responsible for the prisoners.

They doubted of, διηπόρου, from δίδ, through, and ἀπορώ, to be without a way out. The word expresses the thought that they had searched through the whole list of possible ways of escape from their perplexity, and found no way out; no solution to their puzzle, no pathway from the wilderness of doubt in which they were lost.

Whereunto this would grow. What would be the final outcome, with the divine favor and power against them. Blass interprets the sentence as meaning that they were perplexed as to how it could be done.

25. Behold the men, instead of hiding themselves as if afraid, are standing in the temple, the most public of places, and are busy about their usual duty of teaching the people, in direct defiance of the authorities who had imprisoned them.⁵

IV. THE APOSTLES AGAIN BROUGHT BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM. 26. Brought them without violence; for they feared the people. What a contrast with the courage of the apostles! "Godliness converts men into heroes; ungodliness, into cowards."⁶ All that the apostles did was in behalf of the people. They had helped them, cured them, supplied their wants, brought them new hope and new life. It would be dangerous to arouse their passions by ill treating their friends, and especially if this were done by those who themselves lorded it over the people, and did little for their good.

27. They set them, ἔστησαν, caused them to stand. "During the investigation the judges would sit, 6 : 15; 23 : 3, the accused, the witnesses,

pressed with the scene before him, a spring is touched, the picture turns, and exposes the reverse side which completes the intended impression. So in this picture, on the one side are the rulers doing all they can to put a stop to the gospel; on the other are the angels and apostles, and the church growing stronger and larger all the time.

⁶ Starke.

¹ M. R. Vincent, in *Word Studies*.

² Schaff. See Schürer's *Jewish People*, div. II., vol. i. p. 172.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Edersheim's *Temple and its Services*, pp. 119, 120.

⁵ This word picture by Luke is constructed like those paintings in the Louvre which are mounted in frames which turn on a pivot. When the spectator has been im-

28 Saying, ^{Did not we *f* straitly ^{command} ^{charged} you ^{that ye should} not to teach in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your ^{doctrine,} ^{teaching,} and ^{intend} to bring this man's blood upon us.}

29 ^{Then} ^{But} Peter and the ^{other} apostles answered and said, 'We ^{ought to} ^{must} obey God rather than men.

30 ^m The God of our fathers ^{raised up} Jesus, ^{whom ye slew,} ^{and hanged} ^{hanging him} on ^a tree.

31 ^a Him ^{hath} ^{did} God ^{exalt} ^{exalt} with his right hand to be ^a Prince and ^a Saviour, ^{for to} "give repentance to Israel, and ^{forgiveness} ^{remission} of sins.

32 And ^v we are ^{his} witnesses of these things; and ^{so} ^{is} ^{also} the Holy Ghost, ^{whom} God hath given to them that obey him.

f ch. 4. 18. *k* ch. 2. 23, 36 & 3. 15 & 4. 10 & 7. 52. Matt. 27. 25. *l* Cp. ch. 4. 19, 20. *m* See ch. 3. 13. *n* See ch. 2. 24. *o* ch. 10. 39. Gal. 3. 13. See Luke 24. 20. *p* ch. 13. 29. 1 Pet. 2. 24. *q* See ch. 2. 33. *r* See ch. 3. 15. *s* See Luke 2. 11. *t* Luke 24. 47. See Luke 5. 32. *u* ch. 11. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 25. Cp. Rom. 2. 4. *v* See Luke 24. 48. *w* Cp. ch. 15. 28 & John 15. 26, 27 & Heb. 2. 4 & 1 John 5. 7. *x* See ch. 2. 4.

and those speaking, stood, Mark 14: 57, 60; Acts 4: 7."¹

28. Did not we should read as an assertion, not a question.

Straitly command. The Greek words are "commanded with a command," expressing intensity.

Filled Jerusalem. Showing the success of their teaching.

And intend, plan, propose. To bring this man's blood upon us. Bring on them "the vengeance of the people for the murder of Jesus." It was this charge so often repeated, branding them as traitors, and sustained by facts, that stirred them so deeply. But in reality the apostles wished not vengeance, but salvation for both the rulers and the nation.

V. PETER'S ARGUMENT. 29. Then Peter. The usual spokesman for all. He was the quickest to frame the words that expressed the thoughts of all. Many hearts, but one voice. And the other apostles. Standing by his side, praying that God will give him the right words, endorsing what he says as their own. Thus in every religious meeting all hearts should join in what one voice says.

Answered. Critics have noticed the structure of Peter's brief defence as one of the finest specimens of pleading on record, clear, direct, true, personal; an argument without a flaw. Of course only the barest outlines are given in this report. See Peter's previous addresses.

FIRST. THE PRINCIPLE WHICH SHOWED THEIR CONDUCT TO BE RIGHT. We ought to obey God rather than men. The same principle they had uttered on their former trial (4: 19). Their duty, conscience, God, the inalienable rights of men, approved of their conduct. "Soc-

rates avowed this principle in his defence; and unless the plea be valid, he died as a felon and not as a martyr."²

SECOND. THEY WERE TRUE TO THE GOD OF THE JEWS. 30. The God of our fathers. Whom the rulers professed to obey. The God who had made the nation, who had promised the Messiah. Raised up. Sent into the world. He did all that was needful for making Jesus the Messiah. Thus the God whom the rulers acknowledged as the true God was on the side of the apostles.

THIRD. THE RULERS HAD TRIED BEFORE TO PUT A STOP TO THE GOSPEL. Whom ye slew. The Greek word means "slew with your own hands." Peter tells them the simple truth without passion, but also without reserve. Hanged on a tree. On the wood; crucified. You, the leaders, arrayed yourselves against God, against your own God.

FOURTH. THEY HAD UTTERLY FAILED, FOR THEY WERE FIGHTING AGAINST GOD. 31. Him hath God exalted. By raising him from the dead, by the ascension. With his right hand. Indicating the power exerted and the divine favor. To be a Prince. To whom all Israel owes obedience. Before whom every knee shall yet bow, whose kingdom shall extend over the whole world. The humble cross has become the centre of the world; the despised one is the King of kings and Lord of lords. And a Saviour, from their sins and the consequences of their sins. Jesus is always Lord of those whom he saves. To believe on Jesus is to take him as both Saviour and Master.

FIFTH. STILL GOD DESIRES TO SAVE THEM. Peter uses his opportunity to preach the gospel of grace to these rulers. To give repentance. "The death, resurrection, ascension, and ever-

¹ Knowing.

² Hackett.

33 When they heard ^{that, they} ^{this,} ^{you} were cut ^{to the heart,} ^{to the heart,} and took counsel ^{were minded} to slay them.

34 Then stood there ^{But there stood} up one in the council, a Phār'i-see, named = Gā-mā'li-ēl, ^a a doctor of the law, had in ^{reputation among} ^{honour of} all the people, and commanded to put the ^{apostles} ^{men} forth a little ^{space;} ^{while.}

35 And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves ^{what ye} ^{as touch-} intend to do as touching these men. ^{ing these men, what ye are about to do.}

y ch. 7. 54. Cp. ch. 2. 37. z ch. 22. 3. α See Luke 5. 17.

living intercession are all part of one atoning work, having all the one object, the redemption of men from sin." To Israel. As a nation, so that they should not be destroyed, as they were less than forty years later, but would not have been if they had repented; and as individuals, so that their sins might be forgiven. And forgiveness, remission, of sins. The sin taken away, including both pardon, relief from punishment, and cleansing of the soul from sin and sinning.

VI. GAMALIEL'S ARGUMENT. 33. They were cut to the heart, "διεπlovτο, from *διδ*, through, and *πλω*, to saw; hence, to saw through, to saw asunder; tropically, in the passive, to be sawn through mentally, to be rent by passion or vocation, to be exasperated." They were in a rage because their plans were being thwarted by a common man, who was yet so bold and truthful. Their consciences were touched, and yet they were not willing to obey them. Their souls were a battlefield of conflicting passions. The voice of the spirit was speaking to them. It is not religion that disturbs the soul, but resistance to its mandates. And took counsel. Not how they might learn the truth, not how they might be saved from sin, but to slay them. As if breaking the alarm bell would put out the fire, or destroying the accuser would bring innocence to the accused.

34. Then stood . . . up one in the council, a Pharisee. Hence of a party opposed to the Sadducees, who had been leaders of this persecution. But both parties joined in it. The Pharisees' anger might be modified by the blow at the Sadducees' doctrine that there was no resurrection. "Gamaliel (son of Symeon, and grandson of Hillel), best known to Christians as the teacher of Saul, was the last rabbi who became famous at Jerusalem for wisdom and learning."¹ "He was the first teacher of the seven to whom the title of Rabban was given (higher than Rab or Rabbi); . . . and his personal influence was no doubt at its height about the time described in this chapter."² "As among the Schoolmen Aquinas and

Bonaventura were called respectively the 'Angelic' and 'Seraphic Doctor,' so Gamaliel among the Jews has received the name of the 'Beauty of the Law,' and the Talmud says, 'since Rabban Gamaliel died, the glory of the Law has ceased.'"³ "It was the tradition of the ancient Greek church from the fifth century that he was converted to Christianity, and baptized, along with his son Abibus and Nicodemus, by St. Peter and St. John. This story of Gamaliel's secret adherence to Christianity goes even much farther back. There is a curious Christian novel or romance, which dates back to close upon the year 200, called the *Clementine Recognitions*.⁴ We find the same tradition in the sixty-fifth chapter of the first book of these *Recognitions*."⁵

Put the apostles forth a little space. That the discussion might be the more unrestrained, and perhaps that the apostles might not take too much encouragement from his mild words.

35. And said. Gamaliel was not inspired; and none of his words, however wise they may be, can be quoted as words of inspiration. It is necessary to bear this in mind because his counsel "to refrain from these men, etc.," is often quoted as an inspired utterance, and his words are often spoken of as being the words of Luke. This they are in no sense any more than the words of Gallio, or Felix, or Agrippa, or the words of Satan in the book of Job, are divinely inspired.

Luke could easily have obtained his facts from Saul, a pupil of Gamaliel and perhaps a member of the Sanhedrim at this time.

THE OBJECT. To persuade the rulers to cease persecuting, and to patiently await developments.

Take heed to yourselves. Be very careful what you do. Look at the matter from every point of view.

THE ARGUMENT. Two examples from recent Jewish history from which to learn how it is wise to act in the present case. (1) The case of Theudas, — great pretensions, but utter failure.

¹ Rendall.

² So Knowling.

³ Schaff.

⁴ Published by T. and T. Clark, in *The Ante-Nicene*

Library. Knowling says that no credence whatever can be attributed to this tradition.

⁵ Prof. Stokes.

36 For ^b before these days rose up Theû'dās, ^c boasting giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were ^{scattered,} dispersed, and ^{brought} came to nought.

37 After this man rose up Jû'dās of Gāl'i-lee in the days of the ^d taxing, and drew away ^{much} some of the people after him: he also perished; and all, ^{even} as many as obeyed him, were ^{dispersed.} scattered abroad.

^b Cp. ch. 21. 33.

^c ch. 8. 9. Cp. Gal. 2. 6 & 6. 3.

^d Cp. Luke 2. 2.

36. For before these days rose up Theudas.

A Theudas is mentioned by Josephus (*Ant.*, 20: 5, 1), who revolted against the Romans; but he places him in A. D. 44 or 45, ten or twelve years after this speech was made. Either Josephus was mistaken as to the date, as Rendall and others think, or the Theudas Gamaliel mentions is a different one from the Theudas of Josephus. For "we cannot suppose that St. Luke could have made the gross blunder attributed to him in the face of his usual accuracy."¹ The supposition of a different Theudas is vastly more probable. "No one who finds Luke to be a trustworthy historian in the rest of his history will see any difficulty . . . in believing that more than one impostor may have taken the name of Theudas; that one Theudas, amid the troubles that followed the death of Herod the Great (a period about which we have no information except that there were great troubles calling for the presence of the Roman army from the province of Syria), or in some earlier time, pretended to be somebody, and found 400 followers; and that another Theudas, about A. D. 44-46, called himself a prophet, and led after him a great part of the Jewish people."²

For there were many uprisings and false Messiahs during this half century (see Christ's warning in Matt. 24: 5, 11). Moreover Theudas was a very common name, like Simon and Judas. "Josephus describes four men bearing the name of Simon within forty years, and three that of Judas within ten years, all of whom were instigators of rebellion."

Still further, the name Theudas is a contraction of Theodorus, "the gift of God," and is the Greek equivalent of several familiar Hebrew names, as Jonathan, Matthias, Matthew, which have the same meaning.

We see the probability of this more clearly from some modern instances. "The Tractarian movement is not yet (1890) quite sixty years old. It has not therefore yet passed out of the sphere of personal experience. It started in Oxford during the thirties, and there in Oxford we find at

that very period two divines named William Palmer, both favoring the Tractarian views, both eminent writers and scholars, but yet tending finally in different directions, for one William Palmer became a Roman Catholic, while the other remained a devoted son of the Reformation. Or, to come to still more modern times: there was an Irish movement in 1848 which numbered amongst its most prominent leaders a William Smith O'Brien, and there is now an Irish movement of the same character, and it also numbers a William O'Brien amongst its most prominent leaders. A Parnell leads the movement for repeal of the Union in 1890: Ninety years earlier a Parnell resigned high office sooner than consent to the consummation of the same legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland. We might indeed produce parallel cases without number from the range of history."³ There has lately occurred, in my former parish at Natick, Mass., a similar instance. A maiden lady named Mary Ann Morse left \$50,000 or more for a public library. A few years after, another lady of the same town, named Mary Ann Morse, left \$150,000 for a hospital. One was a maiden, the other married into the name, but they were not relatives even by marriage, the two Morse families having no known relationship.

Who was slain. "In both the examples furnished by Gamaliel, the ringleader was slain, — a fact which serves Gamaliel's purpose, for it reminded the council that *they* need not take counsel to slay the apostles; for if they were disturbers they would naturally come to that end."⁴

37. Judas of Galilee, with Zadock the Pharisee, during the early years of our Lord, when Quirinus ordered a census for taxation, had raised the standard of revolt, with the watchwords, "It is not lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar." "We have no Lord and Master but God." The Roman land tax was regarded as an insult. "Josephus speaks of Judas as a Gaulonite (*Ant.*, 18: 1, 1); but also he frequently, as both Belser and Wendt point out, speaks of him as a Galilean (*Ant.*, 18: 1, 6; 20: 5, 2; *B. J.*, 2: 8, 1, and 17, 8). But the name Galilean might easily be given to him,

¹ Knowing. See Blass, *Acta Apostolorum*, p. 90.

² Prof. Ramsay, *Was Christ born in Bethlehem*, p. 259.

³ Prof. Stokes in *Expositors' Bible*.

⁴ Hanna.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for ^{if this counsel or this work be of men, it will} ^{come to nought: be overthrown:}

39 But if ^{it} ^{be} of God, ye ^{will} ^{cannot} ^{be} able to overthrow ^{it:} ^{lest haply ye be found} ^{even to} ^{fight} ^{be fighting} against God.

e Lam. 3. 37. *f* Prov. 21. 30. Isai. 8. 9, 10. Nah. 1. 9. *g* 2 Chr. 13. 12. 2 Macc. 7. 19. Cp. ch. 11. 17.

because Galilee was the scene of his exploits, or because Gamala, his home, belonged to Lower Gaulonitis, which was reckoned as part of Galilee."¹

The accuracy of St. Luke in the account of Judas is remarkable, for Gamaliel speaks of his insurrection as coming to nothing. He could so speak, say in 34 or 35 A. D., but not some ten years later, when the followers of Judas had again gathered together, and formed a kind of school or party under the name of Zealots, who played an active part in the Jewish wars.² But all that is said in verse 37 is that his followers were scattered abroad.

THE APPLICATION. Therefore cease from interfering; for that is the wisest course, whatever the facts may be as to these men.

38. Refrain from these men, ἀποστήτε, stand away from them.

Let them alone, ἐδρατε, permit them to do what they wish, lay no restraints on them.

For (1) On the one hand, if this counsel. From *con*, "together," and *sulere*, "to consult together," hence, "deliberate purpose or plan." Distinguish from *council* in ver. 34, which is from *con*, "together," and *calare*, "to call," "an assembly called together." Counsel was the purpose or plan of the apostles, work was the execution of the purpose. Be of men, of human origin, of worldly purpose, carried on by only human power. It will come to nought, as in the cases of Theudas and Judas. Such work as the apostles conducted, and in the way they conducted it, could not succeed unless God was in it. The whole Roman power would rise against any insurrection or any attempt to raise up a new kingdom. The Sanhedrim could well leave the apostles to them, as the past history of the Jews proved.

(2) On the other hand, for there is only one alternative, ver. 39, if it be of God (the indicative implying that it was of God, as the subjunctive in the previous verse left room for doubt).³ "There may also be an underlying contrast between the transitoriness of all mere human schemes, all of

which would be overthrown, and the certainty of that which is 'of God,' and which has him for its Author."⁴ Ye cannot overthrow it. You will labor in vain, you yourselves will be defeated.⁵

Ye be found even to fight against God, Θεομάχοι, God-fighters. They fight against God (1) who oppose the truth, as distinguished from the forms in which men hold the truth; (2) who oppose the laws of nature whether in the soul or in physical things; (3) who are opposed to righteousness and love and the moral law, especially its application to themselves; (4) who rebel against the assured providence of God; (5) who oppose Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation.

So doing they would be as helpless as a leaf before a tornado, or an insect in the way of an express train. "One with God is a majority;" but the whole world against God is a hopeless minority.

GAMALIEL'S PLAN FOR THE TREATMENT OF ERROR. The sentiment of Gamaliel is full of wisdom in regard to the treatment of error. Jesus himself said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15: 13). For (1) the very way to exalt error into notice, and to confirm men in it, is to oppose it in a harsh, authoritative, and unkind manner. (2) Error, if left alone, will often die away itself. The interest of men in it will often cease as soon as it ceases to be opposed; and having nothing to fan the flame, it will expire. It is not so with truth. (3) This does not mean that error is to do all the talking, and truth never attempt to set the people right. But (4) the power of truth is positive. In the presence of error preach the truth, and live the gospel, taking as little notice of the error as possible. One revival of religion is worth more to put down infidelity than a million books full of unanswerable arguments. Pull up weeds as need be, but he that would have a good garden must pay his chief attention to sowing good seed, and culturing good plants, in the very culture of which the weeds are destroyed.

¹ Knowing.

² See Knowing, pp. 159, 160.

³ Some think this change of moods indicates that Gamaliel felt that the cause of the apostles was from God. Others think that the indicative was used because the second is the case—the assertion of the apostles—with which the Sanhedrim had to deal.

⁴ Knowing.

⁵ Compare the Norse legends of Thor, in the home of Odin, trying to drain a cup, and finding the ocean behind it, and to lift a cat, and finding it a part of the world-serpent girding the earth. See Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*, "The Hero as Divinity," and *Suggestive Illustrations on the Acts*, p. 208.

40 And to him they agreed: and ^{when they had called the apostles and beaten unto them,} ⁱ they ^{commanded that they should beat them and charged them} not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

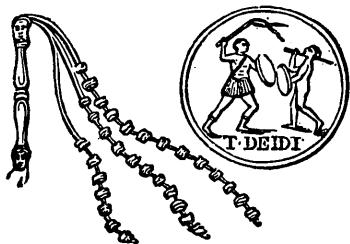
41 ^{And they} They therefore departed from the presence of the council, ^j rejoicing that they were counted worthy ^k to suffer ^{shame dishonour} for ^{his name the Name.}

42 And ^{daily} every day, ^m in the temple and ^{in every house, at home,} they ceased not to teach and to "preach ^o Jesus as the Christ.

^k ch. 4. 18. ⁱ Cp. ch. 22. 19 & Mark 13. 9 & Luke 23. 16. ^j 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14, 16. See Matt. 5. 12. ^k ch. 9. 16 & 21. 13. Cp. Rom. 1. 5. See John 15. 21. ^l Lev. 24. 11, 16. Phil. 2. 9. 3 John 7. ^m ch. 2. 46. ⁿ ch. 8. 35 & 11. 20 & 17. 18. ^o See ch. 18. 5.

VII. THE APOSTLES BEATEN AND RELEASED.

40. And when they had . . . beaten them. "St. Paul, as he tells us in 2 Cor. 11: 24, was five times flogged by the Jews. When the Jews inflicted this punishment the culprit was tied to a pillar in the synagogue; the executioner, armed with a scourge of three distinct lashes, inflicted the pun-



FLAGELLUM OR SCOURGE.

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per. The Jewish scourge consisted of three things, one of ox hide, and two of ass's hide. In the Roman scourge the thongs were loaded with pieces of lead or brass, or sharp-pointed bones.

ishment; while an official standing by read selected portions of the law between each stroke. Thirteen strokes of the threefold scourge was equivalent to the thirty-nine stripes. This was the flogging the apostles suffered on this occasion."¹ The Roman scourging was much more severe. They commanded. As if that would do any good.

VIII. THE APOSTLES IN TRIUMPHANT JOY CONTINUE THEIR WORK. 41. And they departed . . . rejoicing that they were counted

worthy to suffer shame, *κατηξιώθησαν ἀτιμασθῆναι*. "This is an instance of what rhetoricians style an *oxymoron*, from *ἀξίος*, sharp, and *μωρός*, foolish; a *pointedly foolish* saying, which is witty or impressive through sheer contradiction or paradox, as *laborious idleness*, *sublime indifference*. In this case the apostles are described as *dignified by indignity*."²

For his name. R. V., "the Name." In this they obeyed Christ, who in his beatitude bade them rejoice and be exceeding glad when men persecuted them. (1) When bad men hate and oppose us, we have reason to believe that we have some active goodness and are not living in vain. It places us among the saints and prophets and martyrs. (2) "Great shall be the reward in heaven," for it gives an opportunity of gaining the heavenly character and spirit, the heavenly capacity for joy. Only through battlefields can come victory and crowns. (3) It gives an opportunity to express our love to Jesus; to prove it to him, to ourselves, and to the world. Any one can rejoice when all is happy and pleasant. The test of joy is joy in sorrow and tribulation. The storm tests the vessel. Christian joy and peace have been tested by every storm that man or Satan can raise, and yet have ridden triumphant over all.

42. Daily, not merely on the sabbath, in the temple, the largest and most public place, and in every house, R. V., at home, *κατ' οἶκον*, referring to private preaching, as distinct from the public, and also to Christian assemblies in private houses in different parts of the city.

They ceased not. What was good for one time was good for all. They never wearied, and they never failed of an audience.³

¹ Professor Stokes.

² In Correggio's picture of the Suffering Saviour in the Royal Gallery of Munich, the rope which binds the hands of the Divine Victim is represented as depending over the Latin inscription:—

"Ego, pro te, hæc passus sum:
Tu vero quid fecisti pro me?"

("I have borne these things for thee;
What hast thou done for me?")

³ Goethe's *Poems*, "Without Haste, Without Rest."

The "Lotus Eaters," in Tennyson's *Poems*, show the exact contrast to what Christ was on earth, and what his disciples are to be, reposing

"On the hills together, careless of mankind,
For they lie beside their nectar,"

in golden houses, and smile, and find a music in the lamentations which come up from wronged and suffering men. Compare Hawthorne's sketch of the modern Pil-

PERSECUTION. "Its essential feature is this, that it addresses itself to the will, not to the understanding; it seeks to modify opinion by the use of fears instead of reasons, of motives instead of arguments."¹

PERSECUTION: WHAT IT IS NOT. Punishment of a crime is not persecution, nor is the refusal to sustain those who hold opinions which we think wrong. We are not persecutors if we refuse to read an injurious book, or to go to a school whose teachings we believe to be erroneous and harmful, or to support a preacher whose doctrines we believe to be an injury to the community.

PERSECUTION, MEANNESS OF. Persecution always has in it an element of meanness. It is the strong overbearing the weak, not in intellect or virtue, but in numbers and popular power.²

PERSECUTION A FAILURE. Persecution of Christians is like ringing a bell to call all men to see what Christianity does. It is setting a light upon a hill that it may shine far and wide. So Bishop Latimer, bound to the stake, said to

Bishop Ridley, "We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out again."

"All honor to men who are willing to sink
Half their present repute for the freedom to think;
And when they have thought, be their cause strong or weak,
Will sink th' other half for the freedom to speak."³

The one way to overcome evil is by good. Only moral weapons can really destroy moral evil. But persecution in the end usually helps the good. It is a sieve that sifts out the chaff from the wheat, the bad seed from the good, both in the community and the individual. Many a man's piety shines brighter, and his strength is increased, by opposition.

THE CHURCH is like the three men in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, all unharmed because the Son of God was with them. Like Venus, it was born from the foam of an ocean of opposition. Like Hercules, it had to strangle the serpents which assailed it in its cradle.

grim's Progress in "A Celestial Railroad," in *Mosses from an Old Manse*.

¹ Martineau.

² Note a case related in *Tom Brown at Rugby*. Hazing

is often a form of persecution, especially when inflicted on the weak or inexperienced.

³ Lowell, *Fable for Critics*.

CHAPTER 6.

CHURCH AT JERUSALEM (*Continued*).

SECOND DANGER FROM WITHIN.—A NEW PREACHER.

A NEW DEVELOPMENT: ORGANIZATION.

{ The Occasion: Imperfect Administration.
Election of Deacons.
Outcome: Rapid Increase.

TIME.
About A. D. 35, 36.
Authorities vary
from 31 to 37.

{ Character and Work.
Faith.
Power.
Miracles.
Wisdom.
Preaching.

PLACE.
Jerusalem.

STEPHEN.

{ Attempts to destroy his Influence
by discussion.
by false charges.
by arrest.
by trial.
by false witnesses.
Appearance before the Sanhedrim.

1 ^{AND} ^{those} ^{now} in these days, ^{when} the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of ^{the} ^{Gre'cians} ^{Gre'cian} Jews against the He'brews, because their widows were neglected in ^r the daily ministration.

p ch. 2. 41, 47 & 4. 4 & 5. 14. Cp. ver. 7.

q ch. 9. 29 & 11. 20 (mg.).

r Cp. ch. 4. 35.

BEGINNING OF ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH, vers. 1-7.

I. THE OCCASION. 1. In those days. A general expression for the period of the great growth

of the early church, somewhere between A. D. 33 and 37. The cause for the murmuring was doubtless of gradual growth, and extended over considerable time.

The number of the disciples, μαθητῶν. The word occurs here for the first time in the Acts. Disciples are learners, those who go to school to Christ, who accept of him as their teacher, receiving his doctrines, obeying his teachings, following his example, trusting to his guidance. Life is a school for eternal life; Jesus is the teacher, the Bible is the text-book, duties are the lessons to be learned.

Was multiplied, πληθυνόντων, present participle, implying that the multiplication was continuous. The verb is from πληθύνω, *fulness; a multitude*; hence, *made full, become a great number, multiplied* as the means of making the number great. This is more than "added" of Acts 2:41.¹

THE MULTIPLIED CHURCH. There are two ways of multiplying a church. One is to multiply the numbers, on the principle of Ten Times One is Ten;² the other way is to multiply the quality of the members, so that each one counts for much more. Ten times a lump of charcoal is of small value, but ten times that same charcoal transformed into a diamond is of vast value. A Christian multiplied by the Holy Spirit, by truth, by character, is like coal multiplied by man's skill into force, warmth, lights, electric cars; or iron multiplied by man into steam-engines, railroads, steamships, cannon, needles, watch-springs, and a thousand other things.

There arose. Because the increased number of disciples added many to the number who must be aided from the common fund.

A murmuring, γογγυσμός, a murmuring, used of the cooing of doves, the sound expressing in some measure the sense, as does our word *murmur*; hence, *muttering, grumbling, querulous discontent expressed only in a half secret way*, but not openly avowed; an "indignatio clandestina."³

Of the Grecians. R. V., "Grecian Jews," Ἑλληνιστῶν, from ἑλληνίζειν, *to speak Greek*. The term "includes those Jews who had settled in Greek-speaking countries, who spoke the common Greek dialect in place of the vernacular Aramaic current in Palestine, and who would be more or less acquainted with Greek habits of life and education. They were therefore a class distinguished not by descent, but by language. . . . Thus in the Dispersion 'the cultured Jew was not only a Jew, but a Greek as well;' he would be

obliged from force of circumstances to adapt himself to his surroundings more or less, but, even in the more educated, the original Jewish element still predominated in his character; and if this was true of the higher, it was still more true of the lower classes amongst the Hellenists. . . . Nothing could make them forget that they were members of the Commonwealth of Israel, that Palestine was their home, and the Temple their pride."⁴

Against the Hebrews. Here also the word expresses a distinction founded on language. So we say Jewish race, but Hebrew language.⁵

Because their widows. "Under the Mosaic law no definite provision was made for the maintenance of widows, who were dependent upon relatives, especially the eldest son, though they were protected from oppression by special laws (Deut. 28:17; Job 24:3), and they were commended to the care of the community (Exod. 22:22; Deut. 27:19; Isaiah 1:17; Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Zech. 7:10). In compliance with the spirit of these regulations, the early Christian church appeared to have made special provision for the widows (comp. 1 Tim. 5:9)."⁶

"An Oriental widow so circumstanced presents a case of even more absolute destitution than with us, for in the East any resources of remunerative occupation to a woman can be scarcely said to exist; and the comparatively secluded habits of life which custom exacts prevent her from pressing her claims and wants upon the attention of others with that vigor and effect which among ourselves a widow may properly do. And it may also be observed that widows then were more numerous than with us, as the feelings of society, though it did not forbid or even openly blame the remarriage of widows, was decidedly unfavorable to the second marriages of women."⁷

Were neglected. παρεβωρύντο, from παρά, *one side of, beside*, and θεωρέω, *to look at, to contemplate*, hence here, *to look aside from*, so as not to see. They turned their eyes in another direction.

"It is quite possible that the Hellenistic widows had previously been helped from the temple treasury, but that now, on their joining the Christian community, this help had ceased."⁸ They felt that they did not receive their share of

¹ We gain a clear idea of this growth if we look forward 200 or 250 years. Gibbon estimates the population of Rome at 1,000,000, and of the Empire at 120,000,000. The average estimate of Christians at the beginning of the fourth century is one tenth of the population, or 100,000 in Rome and 12,000,000 in the Empire. Keim says one sixth; Schultze implies one fifth. Maximian, Emperor of Rome (308-313), writes to his governors that "almost all men were abandoning the worship of the gods, and attaching themselves to the party of the Christians" (Eusebius, ix. 9). See a full discussion in Prof. Orr's

Neglected Factors in the Study of Early Christianity, chap. 1. (1899).

² See E. E. Hale's book with that name.

³ Dante, in his *Inferno*, pictures those who were ungrateful murmurers as sunk into an inky sea because they refused to trust God in the sunshine.

⁴ Knowing. Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraicæ* gives a full discussion of the distinction between Hebrew and Grecian Jews. See Schürer's *Jewish People*, div. ii., vol. ii. p. 282; and Hort's *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 48.

⁵ See Trenchard's *Synonyms of the New Testament*.

⁶ Lyman Abbott.

⁷ Kitto.

⁸ Knowing.

2 ^{Then} ^{And} the twelve called the multitude of the disciples ^{unto them,} and said, It is not ^{reason} ^{it} that we should ^{leave} ^{forsake} the word of God, and serve tables.

3 ^{Wherefore,} ^{brethren,} ^s ^{look ye out} ^{among you} ^{seven men} ^{of} ^{honest} ^{good} report, "full of the ^{Holy Ghost} ^{Spirit} and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

s Cp. Deut. 1. 13.

t Cp. 1 Tim. 3. 7.

u ver. 5. ch. 7. 55 & 11. 24. Cp. Luke 1. 15 & 4. 1.

the funds or supplies so abundantly contributed for the poor. In that rich soil of open-handed charity several rank weeds suddenly sprang up, to test and exercise the wisdom and faithfulness of the infant church. One of these was real or apparent partiality.

In the daily ministration, *διακονία*, from *διάκονος* (the same word as our *deacon*), commonly derived (though very doubtful) from *διδ*, *thoroughly*, and *κόμης*, *dust*, one who is dusty from running on messages (Liddell), raising the dust from hastening (Thayer); hence, *service*, *ministration*, *bringing relief*.

THE OCCASION OF THE NEGLECT. 1. McGiffert thinks "that the reason for the neglect of the Hellenistic poor lay not in any differences of opinion or of practice, but solely in the traditional attitude of native Hebrews toward their foreign brethren." For "the Hellenists were not always treated by their Palestinian brethren with the same measure of respect that was shown to the Jew who had never made his home among the Gentiles."¹ "In Judea the use of the Hebrew language was regarded as a symbol of patriotism and zeal, that of the Greek as a token of foreign sympathies. The Hellenists were therefore an unpopular minority in Jerusalem, engaged for the most part either in the service of the Roman government or in foreign commerce and the affairs of Jewish colonies abroad."²

2. "It is difficult to believe that the apostles, who shared with St. James of Jerusalem the belief that true religion consisted in visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, could have acted in a spirit of partiality, so that the neglect, if it was due to them, could be attributed to anything else than to their ignorance of the greatness of the need."³ It is quite probable that the Hebrews who had charge of the distribution may have been better acquainted with the needs of their own people, and thus have unintentionally given them more than their share of attention.

3. Perhaps, also, more of the money was given by the Hebrews, and hence the distributors felt that their poor should have the larger share. This mistake, or partiality, of the first Christians has been far too greatly magnified. It was a very small and natural error,—a very slight blot on the character of these noble Christians; a mere

spot on the sun. And there is no greater mistake or injustice than to magnify the spots and forget the shining.

II. THE ELECTION OF DEACONS. 2. Then the twelve, as the leaders to whom all looked for wisdom, and whom all trusted.

Called the multitude, *πλήθος*, allied to the verb for *multiplied* in ver. 1. The whole church, not merely the one hundred and twenty. "It is no more necessary to suppose that the entire number, five or six thousand, attended than that all the citizens attend every town meeting. It was a public gathering of the church, to which all could come who were so inclined. The open courtyard of any of the large houses of Jerusalem would afford a convenient place of meeting."⁴

It is not reason, *ἀρεστόν*, *pleasing*, *agreeable*, to the apostles, to the circumstances, or to the work which God had assigned to them. It was not fitting, that we should leave, *καταλείψαντας*, *leave behind*, *leave in the lurch*, *forsake*, *abandon*, the word of God, which was the work they could do better than any one else, while the work of distribution could be done by many others, perhaps even better fitted for it than the apostles themselves. It is not fitting that the captain or pilot should go into the hold and shovel coal; or for the general of an army to shoulder a gun.

And serve tables. Both the tables at which money was collected and distributed, and the tables at which the poor sat, or from which food was distributed. Both in Greek and Hebrew *bankers* are "tablers;" our word "bankers" means *benchers*.

3. Look ye out . . . seven men. The church at large was to elect the men, but the apostles appointed them. The reasons for this action being taken by the church itself may have been, (1) because the matter being one pertaining to money, it may have been prudent for the apostles to avoid all suspicion; (2) it would enable them to avoid all taking sides in the controversy; (3) it would show more Christian spirit in the disciples to settle peacefully their own disagreements; (4) it would be more likely to be settled to the satisfaction of all if done among themselves; (5) it was a good training of the church;—it is far better to train others to do good deeds than to do any single act ourselves; (6) it was a good example to the future church. **Seven men.**

¹ *Apostolic Age*, pp. 76, 77.² Rendall.³ Knowling.⁴ Abbott.

4 But ^{we will give ourselves continually to continue steadfastly in} prayer, and ^{to} in the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stēphēn, ^w a man full of faith and ^x of the Holy ^{Ghost, Spirit,} and ^y Phil'p, and Prōch'ō-rūs, and Nicā'nōr, and Tīmōn, and Pār'mē-nās, and Nic'ō-lās ^z a proselyte of Ān'ti-ōch;

v See ch. 1. 14. *w* ch. 11. 24. *x* ver. 3. *y* ch. 8. 5 &c. & 21. 8. *z* ch. 2. 10 & 13. 43. Matt. 23. 15.

Chrysostom's deduction is just and reasonable: "If there were need of seven men for this, how great in proportion must have been the sums of money that flowed in."

WHY SEVEN? They must take some number, and seven seemed to be about the right number for the work required, exactly as we now decide on the number on a committee. I never knew a church to appoint a certain number on a committee for symbolic reasons, as some have suggested in this case. Two reasons are probable: (1) "that the number was appointed with regard to the different elements of the church, — three Hellenists, three Hebrews, one Proselyte;" (2) that, as Zöckler thinks, the great body of disciples was divided into seven "churches in the house" (5: 42), "each with its special worship, and its special business connected with almsgiving;" which is closely connected with the suggestion "that the number was regulated by the fact that the Jerusalem of that day may have been divided into seven districts."

THEIR QUALIFICATIONS. (1) **Of honest report,** *μαρτυρουμένους, those who have good witness borne to them, well reported of, accredited.* The same word as is frequently used in describing the apostles as witnesses. They were men who had proved themselves by their past conduct to be honest and trustworthy, so that the people could put the utmost confidence in them.

(2) **Full of the Holy Ghost,** hence, deeply religious, abounding in the fruits of the Spirit, which would make them not only honest, but loving and gentle and peculiarly fitted to deal with the poor.

(3) **And (of) wisdom,** one of the gifts imparted by the Spirit. They were men of good judgment and common sense; business-like men. Piety shines brightest when it is wise as well as good.

NOTE. These are the true qualifications of all men who are to be chosen to any church office, business or devotional; and they exalt the office. The ordinary daily work should be done in the most religious spirit. Phillips Brooks bids us never to fear to do the smallest act with the highest motive. This spirit gives grandeur and glory to the most common-place duties.

4. We will give ourselves continually to prayer, the source of their power. It was public

and private prayer; the conduct of the worship of the church. **And to the ministry of the word.** Preaching and teaching the word of God, which they had learned of Jesus, and which was more and more revealed to them by the Spirit. So Timothy is commanded by Paul to give himself wholly to these things (1 Tim. 4: 15).

THE SEVEN DEACONS. 5. Of these seven we know almost nothing except of Stephen and of Philip. These two did a great deal more than *serve tables*. From the lower duty they rose to a higher. The names were all Greek, but it does not follow that all were Grecians, Hellenistic Jews, for "it was customary among the Jews to have two names, one Hebrew and the other Greek." Three among the apostles had Greek names, Andrew, Didymus, and Philip. But it was more customary among the foreign Jews, and probably some at least of the seven were Grecian Jews, and were doubtless chosen largely from the complaining party, to make them sure that no injustice had been or was intended. Here, too, a most excellent spirit was shown.

And they chose Stephen. His name means "a crown," and he was the first to receive the crown of Christian martyrdom. His story is told in this and the next chapter. According to tradition both he and Philip were among the seventy chosen by Jesus.¹ On the other hand, Plumptre argues that he was a Roman goldsmith, whose name, Stephanus, is found in the *Columbarium*, or burial-place, of the household of the Empress Livia. That Stephen was a freedman, and the Stephen of the Acts was active in the synagogue of the Libertines (Freedmen). In this case Stephen was one of the Roman freedmen visiting Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost; and the appointment of the seven may have had its origin in the customs of the trade-guilds of Rome, such as that to which the goldsmith Stephanus had belonged.

Full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, according to the requirement of ver. 3. A similar description is given of Barnabas (11: 24).

And Philip, whose labors in Samaria and the coast towns are recorded in chapter 8. He afterwards settled in Cesarea, where Paul visited him for seven days on his way to Jerusalem. He had four daughters who prophesied (21: 9).

Prochorus, etc. Of him and the three follow-

¹ Epiphanius, *Treatise on Heresies*, 20: 4.

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and ^awhen they had prayed, ^bthey laid ^{their} hands on them.

7 And ^cthe word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem ^{greatly}; and a great company of the priests ^dwere obedient to ^ethe faith.

^a ch. 1. 24 & 13. 3.

^b 1 Tim. 4. 14 & 5. 22.

² Tim. 1. 6.

Cp. ch. 8. 17 & 9. 17 & 19. 6 & Heb. 6. 2.

^c ch. 12.

24 & 19. 20. Cp. Col. 1. 5, 6.

^d See Rom. 1. 5.

^e ch. 13. 8 & 14. 22 & 16. 5. Luke 18. 8 (mg.).

ing persons nothing is known beyond what is stated in this verse.

Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch, probably the only one, or he would not have been so designated. This shows the wide range of the selection of the seven. Here is the first mention of Antioch, which later became so important as a Christian centre and mother of foreign missions.

6. Whom they set before the apostles, for their approval and sanction.

And when they had prayed, to obtain divine guidance, and the gift they wished imparted through them.

They laid their hands on them, both as a symbol and a means of imparting grace. The results of the election and of the laying on of hands are seen in ver. 8.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. "The Acts of the Apostles is a kind of magic mirror for church history. In the olden times men dreamt of a magic mirror into which one could look and see the course of their future life depicted. We see something of the same in this inspired book."¹ Every age has similar difficulties, which can be removed by the same principles shown here.

1. We should not be discouraged when we find imperfections in the modern church.² Probably the differences between members arise more from misunderstandings than from a desire to do wrong.

2. There are diversities of work in the church of Christ. No one class should absorb all the functions and duties. "How many a schism and rent in the visible church of Christ has been caused because no work, no spiritual function, was found for a newly awakened layman anxious to do something for him who had done so much for his soul."¹

3. The active participation of the whole church in such an election as this is a most valuable training in many directions.

4. We learn how to settle difficulties in the church, and the spirit in which they should be dealt with.

5. We learn how flexible the church organiza-

tion should be, ready to be adapted to all circumstances and emergencies.

6. We have another example of the way God overrules times of trials and difficulty. The better organization of the church, the office of deacon, and an illustration of adapting our methods to our circumstances, all grew out of this early difficulty.

7. Yet we need as churches, as well as individuals, to pray continually, Lead us not into temptation. "To walk through evil into good is one of those hard trials which are never worth the risk. The chance is that we shall stop short in the evil. True, we gain wondrous strength if we succeed, but only an overstrong man now and then struggles through and comes out glowing from the struggle — like John Rogers, who, Fox tells us, 'with no cry of pain, washed his hands in the flames as if they had been cold water.'"³

III. THE OUTCOME, — RAPID INCREASE, laterally in numbers, and vertically through different strata of society. 7. The word of God increased. Its power extended to many more people, and to other classes, as the priests; the truths of salvation gained wider credence, and changed many hearts and lives. The generosity shown, the love of others expressed, the difficulty healed by a forbearing Christian spirit, were made known as widely as the discontent had spread. The beauty and power of religion were shown in a new light, as the silent unseen current of electricity, when obstructed by the carbon film, bursts out into a brilliant light. Multiplied. See on ver. 1. In Jerusalem, where there was the greatest opposition from the rulers, and where Christ was crucified, and all the facts concerning his resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit were best known. A great company of the priests. According to Ezra (2: 36-39), the priests amounted to 4,289 at the time of the return from Babylon. They must have been still more numerous at this period. Such an accession of such converts was a signal event in the early history of the church.⁴ Josephus says there were 20,000 priests. The

rice by the first handful of grains, and who, if he found one or two bad grains, would have nothing to do with the whole field." — *My Autobiography* (1901), pp. 92-95.

³ Prof. Allen's *Life and Letters of Phillips Brooks*, vol. i. p. 180; Bp. Brooks' notes at the age of 20.

⁴ Hackett.

¹ Prof. Stokes.

² See some capital illustrations from Max Müller's experience: "I had to learn by long experience that there may be a spot, nay, several spots, on the soft skin of a peach, and yet the whole fruit may be perfect. I acted very much like the merchant who tested a whole field of

8 And Stēphēn, full of ^{faith} grace and ^{power}, ^{did} wrought great wonders and ^{miracles} signs among the people.

f See ch. 1. 8.

number joining the disciples doubtless included some of the wealthy and prominent (Knowing), as well as the mass of the poor, ill-paid priests whose sympathies were largely with the people (Rendall). They may, like Zacharias and Simeon, have been devout men waiting for the consolation of Israel.

"It must be borne in mind that the obedience of these priests to the Christian faith need not of necessity have interfered with the continuance of their duties in the temple (so Felten), especially when we remember the attitude of Peter and John; but the words certainly seem to mark their complete obedience to the faith (see Grimm-Thayer, *sub v. πίστις*, i. b, a), and in face of the opposition of the Sadducees and the more wealthy priestly families, an open adherence to the disciples of Jesus may well have involved a break with their former profession."¹

Were obedient to the faith, imperfect, denoting continued action. The priests kept joining the new community. Their duties in the temple would bring them constantly into contact with Christians and the preaching of the apostles.

Stephen was a prominent example of the converts; and the wonders and signs wrought by him, as well as by the apostles, were manifestations which proved and illustrated to the people the power that was working so mightily and beneficently among them.

THE SUDDEN INCREASE OF DISCIPLES. All great popular movements begin with a period of incubation, of the hidden working of the heaven, till at a certain stage there is a sudden outburst of activity and development. This is frequently seen in the history of missions.

Sir Charles Trevelyan, speaking of the pervasion of India with Christian instruction, prophesied half a century ago that "at last when society is completely saturated with Christian knowledge, and public opinion has taken a decided turn that way, they will come over by thousands." Carey and Judson waited seven long years for their first convert; then came many. The American Baptist Mission worked thirty years among the Telugus in Burmah, with the result of only a handful of converts, so small as almost to cause the mission to be abandoned. Then there came a great ingathering, so that at the end of ten years more this mission stood forth as one of the most successful missions in the world.²

STEPHEN, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR, vers. 8-15.

I. HIS CHARACTER AND WORK. As usual, new work developed new men. The election to a responsible office, and the fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit, brought out all the power there was in Stephen.

He was first of good report, then a "server of tables" and distributor of supplies to the poor, then a preacher of great power, a worker of miracles, a martyr, the forerunner of the greatest apostle in Christian history. It was an instance of "to him that hath shall be given." "Thackeray sagaciously hints that there is a law of spiritual harvest: we sow a thought and reap an act; sow an act and reap a habit; sow a habit and reap a character; sow a character and reap a destiny."

(1) The source of his power was that he was filled with the Holy Spirit (ver. 5). Professor Bruce said of Phillips Brooks, "The man is just a great water-main attached to the everlasting reservoir of God's truth and grace and love, and streams of life, as by a heavenly gravitation, pour through him to refresh weary souls."³

(2) He was full of faith, see ver. 5, the faculty through which he received the Holy Spirit, the power and the character which was his.

(3) He was "full of grace." The R. V., according to the best manuscripts, has "grace" instead of *faith*. He had the favor of God, and all the gracious influences of the Spirit. His piety and his manner expressed "the beauty of holiness," which gave him favor in the eyes of the people.

(4) He was a man of power. Grace and power do not always go together. Some things are beautiful, but not strong. Some things are strong and not beautiful. "How seldom is a Boanerges (Son of Thunder) at the same time a Barnabas (a Son of Consolation). But the highest characters combine both. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength . . . and the beauty of the Lord God shall be upon them.'"⁴

(5) He was a man of deeds. He did. Imperfect tense, "was doing;" he kept on doing. He was a man of action as well as preaching. He practised what he preached. "Battles are not won by lectures on gunpowder." Great wonders. Proving the power of God that worked in and through him. And miracles. Greek, "signs," miracles that were a sign of God's presence and

¹ Knowing. (See Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 49, and *Ecclesia*, p. 52.)

² See Prof. Clarke's *A Study of Missions*, p. 248.

³ See Prof. Allen's *Life of Phillips Brooks*.

⁴ From Pres. Mark Hopkins' *Strength and Beauty*.

9 ^{Then} But there arose certain of ^{the synagogue, which is} them that were of the synagogue called *the synagogue* of the Lib'ër-tines, and of the Cÿ-rē-ni-āns, and of the Āl-ēx-ān'dri-āns, and of them of Cī-l'cīā and of Asia, disputing with Stē-phēn.

10 And ^{they} were not able to ^{resist} withstand the wisdom and the ^{spirit} spirit by which he spake.

g See Luke 21. 14, 15.

endorsement, and object-lessons of the loving, saving spirit of the gospel.

II. ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY HIS INFLUENCE. FIRST. BY ARGUMENT. 9. Then, R. V. "But," introducing an element of opposition to the new gospel impulse.

There arose, ἀνέστησαν, stood up, as from lying on a couch. The opposition had been sleeping; now it was awakened and stood up against the Christian movement in a hostile attitude. The synagogue of the Libertines. The Libertines "were probably Roman 'freedmen,' ἀπελεύθεροι, who were formerly captive Jews brought to Rome by Pompey (B. C. 63),¹ and afterwards liberated by their Roman masters. These men and their descendants would enjoy the rights of Roman citizenship, and some of them appear to have returned to Jerusalem."² So in our large cities we often have churches of foreign-born people.

And Cyrenians, etc. The views of critics are divided as to whether there were five synagogues or not.

Some think there was but one synagogue consisting of freedmen from the countries named (Rendall, Hort, Holtzmann).

Others, that there were only two: (1) "Libertines, even Cyrenians and Alexandrians;" (2) "Jews from Cilicia and Asia" (Wendt, Knowling).

Page, that there are three: (1) Libertines; (2) Cyrenians and Alexandrians; (3) men of Cilicia and Asia.

Most probably there were five distinct synagogues. There was abundant opportunity for five synagogues of foreign resident Jews. Tacitus speaks of 10,000 Libertine Jews; and the Talmudists say there were 460 or 480 synagogues in Jerusalem. Cyrenians. Cyrene was a great city of the province of Cyrenaica, in North Africa. Josephus relates that one fourth of its inhabitants were Jews. Alexandrians. From Alexandria, on the Mediterranean, twelve miles from the mouth of the Nile, a famous philosophical and literary centre. The famous teacher Philo, who lived here (B. C. 20-A. D. 50), says that two of its five districts formed the Jewish quarter. Cilicia. A province of Asia Minor, of which Tarsus was the capital. Paul is supposed to have

belonged to this synagogue. Asia. Not the grand division, but the Roman province in Asia Minor.

Disputing with Stephen, συζητούντες, from σύν, with, and ζητέω, to seek as the truth; hence, to seek or examine together, to discuss, to dispute. Free and fair discussion is the way to the truth. But free discussion of any kind is better than forced repression, which tends to produce a dangerous explosion. Free discussion is a safety valve. Woe to him who sits upon it. It is like the crater of Vesuvius, ever smoking and blazing with little harm. Confine its fires, and you have an earthquake and destruction.

10. And they were not able. Had not strength to resist, "to withstand," his Scriptural arguments that Jesus was the Messiah, as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to see and to explain. This effort to oppose Christianity was a failure.

THE SCENE. Professor Wilkinson, in his *Epic of Saul*, sets forth this scene most vividly. He represents Saul as wanting to debate with this young genius as "a foeman worthy of his steel." Saul makes the first address, ending with an eloquent peroration against the blasphemy of thinking that a Galilean carpenter, a crucified felon, could represent "the dazzling splendors of Messiahship." His argument seemed without a flaw.

"Be sure that when *He* comes,
His high degree
Will shine illustrious, like the sun in heaven,
Not feebly flicker, for your fishermen
From Galilee to point it out to you,
With their illiterate 'Lo, here! lo, there!'"

To accept Christ seemed to abolish Moses, destroy the great traditions of the fathers, to erase their past history, to blot out all their glorious hopes.

But Stephen answers from their own Scriptures, much as is recorded in the next chapter.

"In guise a seraph rapt, with love aflame
And all aflame with knowledge, like the bush
That burned with God in Horeb unconsumed,
The fervent, pure apostle Stephen stood
In ardors from celestial altars caught,
Kindling to incandescence, — stood and forged
With ringing blow on blow, his argument
A vivid weapon edged and tempered so,
And in those hands so wielded, that its stroke
No mortal might abide, and bide upright." ³

¹ Tacitus, *Annals*, 2: 85.

² Knowling.

³ Wilkinson's *Epic of Saul* finely depicts the character of Stephen and his power as a preacher. Tennyson's

11 Then ^hthey suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon ^{him}him; and ^{caught}seized him, and brought ^{him to}him into the council,

13 And ⁱset up ^jfalse witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against ^kthis holy place, and the law:

14 For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth ⁱshall destroy this place, and shall ^mchange "the customs which Moses delivered ^{unto}us.

15 And all that sat in the council, ^{looking stedfastly}fastening their eyes on him, saw his face ^oas it had been the face of an angel.

^h Cp. 1 Kin. 21. 10, 13 & Matt. 26. 59, 60. ⁱ ver. 11. ^j ch. 7. 58. ^k Cp. ch. 21. 28 & 25. 8 & Matt. 24. 15.
^l Cp. Dan. 9. 26 & Matt. 26. 61. ^m Cp. Matt. 5. 17. ⁿ ch. 15. 1 & 21. 21. ^o Cp. Judg. 13. 6 & Eccles. 8. 1.

SECOND. BY FALSE CHARGES. 11. Then they suborned men, *ἐπέβαλον, ἐπὶ, under, and βάλλω, to cast or throw; hence, to put under, as carpets under one's feet; hence, to put one person in place of another, to substitute, as another's child for one's own, to employ a secret agent in one's place, and instigate, or secretly instruct him.*¹ The English "suborn" is from the Latin *sub, under, secretly, and ornare, to furnish, or provide, as a false accusation. We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses.* The statements charged are given in vers. 13, 14. The blasphemy consisted in contempt of Moses and his institutions. It was a capital offence. See Deut. 13: 6, 10. And against God, who instituted the sacrifices, and to whom the temple was dedicated. So Christ said to the Pharisees, "Whoso shall swear by the temple sweareth by it, and him that dwelleth therein."

THIRD. BY STIRRING UP THE POPULACE AGAINST HIM. 12. And they stirred up the people. Hitherto the opposition was confined chiefly to the rulers whose interests were most affected by the progress of the gospel. Now the leaders had got hold of something which touched the religion and the hopes of the people; and especially when the strictness and the generosity of the Christians troubled the consciences of those who did not wish to act in like manner.

FOURTH. BY ARRESTING HIM. By the division of feeling among the people, the elders and the scribes were able to take action, which they feared to do before, and they caught him, *συνήρασαν, seized, snatched, and carried away with (σύν) them, implying violence.* They handled him roughly. Brought him to the council. The Sanhedrim. They had been discussing in the synagogue, and were not a match for Stephen. Now they brought him before the most learned and powerful body in the nation.

13. False witnesses. False because they per-

verted and distorted his words, exaggerated his opinions, and laid a false emphasis on his statements.

In one room of the Palace of Light at the great Exposition at Paris, there was a long row of peculiar mirrors, in which you saw yourself in every odd, peculiar, distorted fashion, except your own natural image. So these people saw the statements of Stephen changed and distorted by their prejudices and preconceived views.

Against this holy place. The temple adjoining the hall of the Sanhedrim. The same charge was made against Christ (Matt. 26: 61; Mark 14: 58). Probably he said that God could be worshipped acceptably elsewhere, and that if they rejected the Messiah the temple would be destroyed (ver. 14). But what he taught was really the glorifying and fulfilling of the temple and the law. It was the Jews themselves who blasphemed the temple by desecrating it, and it was their own hands that destroyed it at last. If he had so spoken against the holy place and the law, "he would," says McGiffert, "have incurred the disapprobation, not of the unconverted Jews alone, but of his Christian brethren." And in his address emphasis is put upon the sacredness both of the Promised Land and of the Mosaic law.

14. And . . . change the customs which Moses delivered us. Jesus fulfilled these, and clothed their soul in a new body. But he did change the Jews' interpretation of the law and removed the excrescences they had fastened upon it, as seen in Matt. 6 and 23.

III. STEPHEN'S APPEARANCE AT THE TRIAL.

15. His face as . . . the face of an angel. With the divine illumination of the Holy Spirit, as Moses' face when he had been forty days alone with God. This was God's answer to the charge against Stephen. "It is said of the aged Polycarp, as he faced a martyr's death, that he caught

Two Voices contains three stanzas referring to Stephen. Keble's *Christian Year*, "St. Stephen's Day."

¹ M. R. Vincent.

in his closing hours some rays of the glory of the transfiguration."¹ "Brightness, calmness, benignity, fearlessness, a look high and far, — such, Dr. Raleigh supposes, must have been at least some of the elements of this 'angel face on man.' And then he goes on to suggest how even we, now and here, may have at least a little of its radiance."² Dante, describing the angels whom he met in the Paradise, impresses us at once with their external glory and spiritual effulgence. Invariably he makes the former the result of the latter. With closer faithfulness to physical science than he dreamed, he sings: —

"Another of those splendors
Approached me, and its will to pleasure me
It signified by brightening outwardly,
As one delighted to do good;
Became a thing translucent in my sight
As a prize ruby smitten by the sun."³

"Dante says of Beatrice (Divine Wisdom) as he saw her in the Paradise, that —

'She smiled so joyously
That God seemed in her countenance to rejoice.'⁴

—
"When one that holds communion with the skies,
Has filled his urn where those pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'T is e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied."⁵

—
The light that lifted and transfigured him
And glorified, that bright auroral ray
Of genius which forever makes the brow
It strikes on from its fountain far in God,
Shine like the sunrise-smitten mountain peak."⁶

¹ Knowling. See Canon Liddon's *Some Elements of Religion*.

² Wayland Hoyt, D. D.

³ *Paradiso*, IX. 13-19.

⁴ *Paradiso*, XXVII. 105.

⁵ Cowper.

⁶ Prof. W. C. Wilkinson's *Epic of Saul*. See, also,

Joseph Cook's *Boston Monday Lectures*, "Conscience," "Solar Self-Culture;" Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, in which the fisherman's hut is transformed by the lamps placed within it. "Other things being equal, Cæsar's eye goes down whenever it meets and does not possess the solar look. The veriest sick girl, with this solar light behind her eyeballs, is more than a match for Cæsar without it."

CHAPTER 7.

THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM (*Continued*). STEPHEN.

STEPHEN ON TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM.	Circumstances.	{ Christians kept the Jewish law. Sadducees their chief opponents. Pharisees were quiet. People in favor of Christians.
	A Change in the Situation.	{ Pharisees now come into open opposition. Against Stephen chiefly, at first. Stephen gave new interpretations which were unwellcome.
	The Accusation: that he was opposed	{ to Moses. to the temple. to God. to the prevailing customs and views. to the nation's hope.
STEPHEN'S ADDRESS, vers. 1-53.	An Historical Argument from Scripture.	
	A Refutation of the Charges.	
STEPHEN, THE MARTYR, vers. 54-60.	An Argument for Jesus as the Messiah.	
	A Mirror, showing that they were acting as their Fathers did, whom they condemned.	
	The Interruption, and Sudden Application.	
	The Vision.	
	The Mob.	
	The Stoning.	
	"He fell asleep."	
		PLACE.
		Jerusalem.
		Hall of the Sanhedrim; Kidron valley, outside of St. Stephen's gate.
		TIME.
		A. D. 36.

1 THEN said the high priest,
AND the high priest said, Are these things so?

STEPHEN ON TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM, vers. 1-53.

I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES. It is well, first, to grasp the situation of affairs when Stephen appeared on the scene. The disciples of Jesus were zealous keepers of the Jewish law and regular worshippers in the temple; hence, the opposition to them proceeded chiefly from the Sadducees, of whom the high priest and his party were the leaders, whose teaching was assailed both by the facts and the teachings of the Christians.

The Pharisees were passive, and endured much not agreeable to them in the teachings of the apostles, because they threw their influence on the side of the Pharisees on those questions on which they most differed from their rivals the Sadducees. In general, too, the people sympathized with the new movement.

But with the advent of Stephen there was a change. The opposition now came from the Pharisees. Stephen's understanding of the words of Jesus and of the Scriptures attacked their

views, and seemed to be overthrowing all that they held dearest. And they persuaded the people to sympathize with them.

II. THE ACCUSATION against Stephen charged him with practical treason against his country and the religion on which it was founded; that he stood opposed to the Mosaic law, foretold the destruction of the Temple by Jesus whom he proclaimed to be the Messiah.

1. Then said the high priest, to the prisoner, in the presence of the Sanhedrim. **Are these things so?** Probably the usual interrogation at a trial. To this question Stephen's speech is the answer.

STEPHEN'S ADDRESS. This address was an argument from history, almost entirely Scriptural, based on the facts which his auditors accepted. The light of the past was thrown on the present. It was a presentation and interpretation of the course of history, that brought out facts neglected by them, and which shed new light upon the history and its meaning.

2 And he said, ^{p Men, brethren, Brethren} and fathers, hearken! ^a The God ^r of glory appeared unto our father ^{Char'mu, Ha'tan,} Ā-brā-hām, when he was in Mēs-ō-pō-tā-mi-ā, ^s before he dwelt

^p ch. 22. 1. ^q Cp. Gen. 15. 7 & Josh. 24. 3 & Neh. 9. 7. ^r Ps. 29. 3. ^s Cp. 1 Cor. 2. 8 & James 2. 1. ^s Gen. 11. 31. Judith 5. 6, 7.

ITS AIM was threefold.

FIRST. It was an answer to the accusations brought against him, interwoven with the whole history, implicitly rather than directly repudiating the charge of blasphemy against God, and contempt for the law. This was a defence of the Christian cause even more than of himself. His use of the Bible was itself a refutation. He knows the Scriptures; he reverently repeats their history. He shows that he accepts Moses as a prophet, and that even his preaching of Jesus as the Messiah was simply the proclamation that Moses' prophecy had been fulfilled, and Moses himself bade them, "Hear ye him." "One of the marked characteristics of the address," says McGiffert, "is the emphasis which is put upon the sacredness both of the Promised Land and of the Mosaic law." It was like taking the oath of allegiance to his religion and his country.

SECOND. In like manner interwoven with the history was an argument in proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, the prophet whom Moses foretold and in whom the promise to Abraham was fulfilled, as against "those who appealed to the authority of Moses, and saw in Jesus a twofold cause of offence: (1) that he was rejected by his people and crucified; (2) that he had treated with impiety that which they held most sacred, the law and the temple," — points which "must have been discussed in every synagogue, and which the infant church must have been obliged to face from the first, especially as it took its stand upon the proof that Jesus was the Christ."¹

He showed that Jesus was the goal of Hebrew history, the fulfilment and culmination of all the past which the Sanhedrim revered.

THIRD. The history as related by Stephen was a mirror² in which the Sanhedrim could see their own conduct in their treatment of Jesus, paralleled by the conduct of their ancestors in opposing and seeking to destroy those whom God had sent to save them; that not himself, but they, are the criminals; that they are doing to Jesus just what their fathers did to Moses and the prophets, whom they now revere. The people rejected Moses, but he became their deliverer, and brought them to the Promised Land. The rulers were now rejecting Jesus; they had betrayed and murdered him,

but still God would make him their deliverer, and he would bring the Messianic kingdom they hoped for. So God delivered Joseph, as he has now delivered Christ. Even in the earliest times there were suggestions of a wider worship than tabernacle or temple, and that vision was now being realized.

REMARKS. 1. Stephen's speech as here given was doubtless but an epitome of his full address. The report was most probably received from Paul, upon whom it made a deep impression.

2. It was an extempore rehearsal from memory of facts which he learned more from his teachers than from reading of the Scriptures himself, as in those days it was very difficult for a layman to have possession of the Scriptures. Hence, while the great facts are stated correctly, and the course of the history is true, yet there are a few unimportant statements which differ from our Scriptures. Alford says there are seven of them. Farrar finds five; most of which he easily answers.³

3. None of them affect the argument; and "the fact of their presence, where their removal was easy, bears witness to the accuracy of the report."⁴ They will be considered each in its place in the notes.

4. So far as there is any mistake, it arose from the extempore form of address. Luke's business was to record the address, and not to state whether any point was exact or not. Just as in Job the record is not that certain statements are true, but that they were spoken by certain characters.

5. An incidental error in such a case does not impeach the truthfulness of the history or its teachings. W. H. Stead illustrates this by a mistake in spelling a word in an arithmetic, which would not show that the arithmetic was wrong in its number teachings. Nor would a scratch or bruise on an electric accumulator affect its ability to give power and light.⁵

6. Some things can be learned about Stephen from this address: (1) His gentle graciousness; (2) his acquaintance with Scripture; (3) his power of logic; (4) his courage and fearlessness; (5) his unselfishness; (6) his zealous temperament; (7) his faithfulness to duty.

2. Men, brethren, and fathers. A courteous and conciliatory form of address. They were his

¹ So Spitta, in *Knowing*.

² Compare the soul-mirror in which each one saw his own character. See, also, Orlando's remark to Jacques in *As You Like It*, Act III., Scene 2.

³ *Texts Explained*.

⁴ *Knowing*.

⁵ See his interesting argument in *The Bairns' Bible*.

3 And said unto him, "Get thee out of thy ^{country} ^{land,} and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then 'came he out of the land of the Chāl-dæ'ans, and dwelt in ^{Char'ran:} ^{Har'ran:} and from thence, "when his father was dead, ^v ^{he} ^{God} removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell:

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not ^{so much as} ^{so much as} to set his foot on: ^{yet} and he promised ^w that he would give it to him ^{for} ^a ⁱⁿ possession, and to his seed after him, ^x when ^{as} ^{yet} he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, that ^v his seed should ^z sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat ^{them} ^{them} evil, ^a four hundred years.

s Cited from Gen. 12. 1. t Gen. 11. 31. Judith 5. 6, 7. v Gen. 11. 32. v Gen. 12. 4, 5. w Gen. 12. 7 & 13. 15 & 15. 18 & 17. 8 & 48. 4. Heb. 11. 8, 9. x Gen. 15. 3 & 18. 10. y Cited from Gen. 15. 13, 14. z Cp. Ex. 2. 22 & Heb. 11. 9. a ver. 17. See Ex. 12. 40.

brethren in race, nationality, and hopes; and fathers as older men and representatives of the ruling powers.

The God of (the) glory, his own peculiarglory, beyond all beings as the sun is more glorious than earthly things.

Appeared unto our father Abraham, the ancestor of the nation.

In Mesopotamia, "between the two rivers" Tigris and Euphrates, at Ur of the Chaldees.

3. Get thee out of thy country. So that unhampered by the idolatries of the Chaldeans, he could in a new country, among strangers, become the founder of the Jewish nation.

Here is one of the apparent contradictions between Stephen's account and Genesis, on which some have laid stress. Stephen represents the call as coming to Abraham in Chaldea, while in Gen. 12:1 the call came in Haran, 600 miles to the northwest. But the answer is equally apparent. One call does not deny the existence of another. It is implied in Gen. 15:7, that there was a call there as well as at Haran, and Stephen's language in ver. 4 leaves room for two calls. To most persons the call to their life work is repeated.

Into the land which I shall shew thee. Like many government vessels which sail with sealed orders. So we go on our pilgrimage of Life, not knowing just what the Lord has for us to do, or where he would have us go.¹

4. Charan, the Greek form of the Hebrew Haran,² the Roman Carræ, the scene of Crassus' disastrous defeat.

When his father was dead, he removed. Here is another apparent discrepancy when compared with Gen. 11:26, 32; 12:4.

"Stephen places Abraham's departure from

Haran after his father's death; so does Philo. The narrative in Genesis conveys the same impression." But this seems to contradict other statements in Genesis which say that Terah was 70 years old when Abraham was born, and Abraham was 75 when he left Haran, which would make Terah 145 years old at that time; but Genesis also says he was 205 years old when he died, or 60 years after Abraham's departure. It is possible that Gen. 11:26 has been misunderstood. "This apparent disagreement admits of a ready solution if we suppose that Abraham was not the oldest son, but that Haran, who died before the first migration of the family (Gen. 11:28), was 60 years older than he, and that Terah, consequently, was 130 years old at the birth of Abraham (130+75=205). The relation of Abraham to the Hebrew history would account for his being named first in the genealogy."³ But the reconciliation of the discrepancy belongs rather to Genesis than to the Acts.

5. Gave him none inheritance. The small piece of land he bought for a burial place would not come under this title.

Promised . . . for a possession, *κατάσχεσιν*, from *κατέχω*, to hold fast; hence, a permanent possession.

6. Four hundred years. Compare with the 430 years of Ex. 12:40. "Four hundred years" is a round number for 430, just as in Gen. 15:13, and Josephus, who once uses the 430, but usually the 400. This is no mistake, but just such a use of round numbers as the most accurate persons are continually employing. The system of chronology used, whether the four hundred years includes the sojourn in Canaan, or is limited to the bondage in Egypt, must be referred to students of Genesis.

¹ Compare Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

² See Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, "Haran."

³ Hackett.

7 And the nation to ^{whom} which they shall be in bondage ^b will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and ^c serve me in this place.

8 And ^d he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and ^e so *Ābrā-hām* begat *Īśāac*, and ^f circumcised him the eighth day; ^g and *Īśāac* *begat* Jacob; and ^h Jacob *begat* the twelve patriarchs.

9 And the patriarchs, ⁱ moved with ^{envy, sold} jealousy against Joseph, ^j sold him into *Ēgypt*: ^{but and} ^k God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and ^l gave him favour and wisdom ^{in the sight of} ^{before} *Phā'raōh* king of Egypt; and ^m he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 Now ⁿ there came a ^{dearth} ^{famine} over all ^{the land of} Egypt and ^{Cha'naan,} ^{Ca'naan,} and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 But ^o when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent ^{out} ^{forth} our fathers ^{the first} ^{time}.

13 And ^p at the second ^{time} ^{time} ^q Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's ^r kindred was made known ^{unto} ^{unto} *Phā'raōh*.

14 ^{Then sent a Joseph,} and called ^{his father Jacob to him,} ^{And Joseph sent,} to him Jacob his father, and all his kindred, ^s threescore and fifteen souls.

15 ^{So} ^{And} ^u Jacob went down into Egypt; and ^{he} ^v died, ^{he,} himself, and ^w our fathers;

16 And ^{they} ^x were carried over ^{into Sy'chem,} ^{unto Shech'en,} and laid in the ^{sepulchre} ^{tomb} that ^y Abraham bought for a ^{sum of money} ^{price in silver} of the sons of ^{Em'mor} ^{the father of Sy'chem.} ^{Ha'mor in Shech'en.}

^b Cp. Jer. 25. 12 & 30. 20. ^c Cp. Ex. 3. 12. ^d Gen. 17. 9-12. ^e Gen. 21. 2-4. ^f See Luke 1. 59. ^g Gen. 25. 26. ^h Gen. 29. 31-35 & 30. 5-24 & 35. 18, 23-26. ⁱ Gen. 37. 11. ^j Gen. 37. 28 & 45. 4. Ps. 105. 17. ^k Gen. 39. 2, 21, 23. ^l Gen. 41. 37-40. ^m Gen. 41. 41, 43, 46 & 42. 6. Ps. 105. 21. ⁿ Gen. 41. 54, 55 & 42. 5. Ps. 105. 16. ^o Gen. 42. 1-3. ^p Gen. 43. 2-15. ^q Gen. 45. 1-4. ^r Gen. 45. 16. ^s Gen. 45. 9, 10, 27. ^t Cp. Gen. 46. 26, 27 & Ex. 1. 5 & Deut. 10. 22. ^u Gen. 46. 5, 28. Ps. 105. 23. ^v Gen. 49. 33. ^w Ex. 1. 6. ^x Gen. 50. 25. ^y Ex. 13. 19. Josh. 24. 32. ^z Cp. Gen. 23. 16 with Gen. 33. 19 & Josh. 24. 32.

7. Will I judge, bring to judgment, and seeing they have done wrong, will condemn and punish. In this place. Palestine.

8. Gave him the covenant of circumcision, the covenant of which circumcision was the sign and seal. Recorded in Gen. 17: 4-8.

Covenant, *διαθήκη*, from *did* (distributive) and *τίθημι*, to place; hence, an arrangement, a disposition, a covenant. This form of the Greek word is especially suitable for a divine covenant with man, rather than the usual word *συνθήκη*, a covenant *with*, *σύν*, as between equals.

9. Moved with envy, *ζηλόσαντες*, heated, boiling with envy or passion or jealousy.

Sold Joseph into Egypt, just as the Jews for like reasons had caused Jesus to be crucified.

But God was with him. And he was a true and righteous servant of God.

10. And delivered him, just as God had delivered Jesus by raising him from the dead.

Gave him favour and wisdom . . . and he made him governor, etc. A very vivid picture of what God was doing for Jesus, exalting him as a Ruler far above all his brethren the rulers of the Jews.

11-13. These verses too were a mirror in which the Sanhedrim could see themselves, and what God was doing for Jesus.

14. Jacob . . . and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. In Genesis (46: 27) the number including Joseph's two sons is given as 70. But the Septuagint version in Greek, which was familiar to Stephen, and from which he is quoting, gives the number as 75, simply adding five descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, giving their names. It is simply another way of counting. As one would say there are 225 in our Sunday-school, and another that there are 240; both being right, only one includes the 15 in the afternoon class, and the other does not.

16. And were. Who were? he, and our fathers, ver. 15, or probably only our fathers. It is a general statement about their ancestors, and does not necessarily include Jacob, who was buried at Machpelah (Gen. 50: 13). Jerome, who lived near Shechem, says that the tombs of the twelve patriarchs were to be seen there in his time, and the record in Joshua (24: 32) states that Joseph was buried there. As their bodies were all embalmed (since they died in Egypt where embalm-

17 But ^{as} ^{when} the time of the promise drew nigh, which God ^{had sworn to} ^{vouchsafed unto} Ābrāhām, "the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till ^{there arose another king over Egypt,} ^{another king arose} ^b which knew not Joseph.

19 The ^c same dealt subtilly with our ^{kindred,} ^{race} and evil entreated our fathers, ^d that they ^{should} cast out their ^{young children,} ^{babes,} to the end they might not-live.

20 ⁱⁿ ^{at} ^{which} ^{season} Moses was born, and was ^f exceeding fair; and ^{he was} nourished ^{up in his father's house three months:} ^{three months in his father's house:}

21 And ^g when he was cast out, Phā'rāoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

22 And Moses ^h was ^{learned} ⁱⁿ all the wisdom of the Ē-ġyp'tiāns; and ^{he was} mighty in ^{his} words and ^{in deeds,} ^{works.}

^z vers. 5-7. ^a ch. 13. 17. ^{Ex.} 1. 7, 12. ^{Ps.} 105. 24. ^b Cited from Ex. 1. 8. ^c Ex. 1. 9, 10. ^{Ps.} 105. 25. ^d Ex. 1. 16-18, 22. ^e Ex. 2. 2. ^{Heb.} 11. 23. ^f Jonah 3. 3 (& mg. for mg.). ^g Cp. 2 Cor. 10. 4 (for ag.). ^g Ex. 2. 3-10. ^h Cp. Dan. 1. 4, 17. ⁱ 1 Kin. 4. 30. ^{Cp.} Isai. 19. 11. ^j Cp. Luke 24. 19.

ing was the custom) their bodies were easily carried into Canaan.

That Abraham bought . . . of the sons of Emmor (Hamor), the father (in italics, and therefore not in the text) of Sychem, R. V. in Shechem, according to the better reading. Sychem is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Shechem*. The record in Genesis (33: 19; Josh. 24: 32) states that Jacob bought a piece of land of Hamor in the land of Shechem, and also that Abraham bought a piece of land at Mamre near Hebron (Gen. 23: 16). But it is a peculiarly strange vision that sees a contradiction in the statements, as if the fact that Abraham bought a piece of land in Hebron would prevent him from buying one also in Shechem where he once lived, or the fact that Jacob bought a piece of land there, during his sojourn, would prove that his grandfather, Abraham, did not also buy one during his sojourn. Knowling argues that Abraham bought land at Shechem because he built an altar there when he first arrived in Palestine (Gen. 12: 6, 7); for no devout Hebrew would be content to see a consecrated altar possessed by others. Hence, the purchase follows as natural corollary from the building of the altar. Nor is it unnatural that each should buy of a ruler named Hamor, when we remember how many Pharaohs and Cæsars in early times, and how many Henrys and Edwards and Georges in English history, have followed one another. At the same time, there is no difficulty in believing that Stephen may have made a slip in his extempore address; and I agree fully with Alford that one should "fearlessly and honestly recognize the phenomena presented by the text of Scripture, instead of wresting them to suit a preconceived theory," whether that preconceived theory be for or against the accuracy of the records. The only question is, what is the

most natural and probable treatment of the phenomena presented.

18. Till another, ἕτερος, not ἄλλος, king, a different kind of king, who reversed the policy of the previous king or dynasty.

Which knew not Joseph, either was not acquainted with his history and services, or had no regard for them.

19. Dealt subtilly, κατασοφισάμενος, from *κατά*, down, from a higher place to a lower, or against, in hostility, and *σοφός*, wise, skilled in matters of common life, cunning; hence, he brought low by subtlety and cunning, or employed cunning against.

So that they, the Egyptians, cast out their, the Hebrews', young children.

20. Exceeding fair, ἀστεῖος τῷ θεῷ, fair in the judgment or sight of God; that is, either exceedingly fair, since his fairness was noticed by God, or his beauty and gracious charm were not only attractive to men, but also to God, who recognized the spiritual beauty of his character and nature.¹

'Αστεῖος is from ἀστύ, a city, hence city-bred, of polished manners, refined, elegant, comely. Joseph says that those who met Moses, as he was carried along the streets, forgot their business and stood still to gaze at him.

Moses was in many ways a type of Christ, and those points are especially brought out by Stephen which emphasize the comparison, as his childhood, his labors to deliver his people, the opposition, communion with God, the long wilderness journey to the Promised Land.

22. Was learned, ἐπαίδευσθαι, from *παῖς*, a child; hence, trained, instructed, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. This "wisdom," though not perhaps very deep, was multiform and manifold. It included orthography, grammar, history, theology, medicine, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy,

¹ "Page and Wendt, compare Æschylus' *Agamemnon*, 352."

23 ^{And} But when he was ^{full} well-nigh forty years old, it came into his heart ^k to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of *them* suffer wrong he defended ^{him} him, and avenged him that was oppressed, ^{and smote} the Egyptian:

25 ^{For} And he supposed that his brethren ^{would have} understood how that God by his hand ^{would deliver them:} was giving them deliverance; but they understood not.

26 And ^{the} ^{next day} day following he ^{showed himself} appeared unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?

27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, ^m Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

28 ^{Wilt} Wouldst thou kill me, as thou ^{diddest} killedst the Egyptian yesterday?

29 ^{Then fled Moses} And Moses fled at this saying, and ^{was a stranger} became a sojourner in the land of ^{Ma'di-an,} Mid'i-an, ^o where he begat two sons.

30 And when forty years were ^{expired, there} fulfilled, ^{an angel} appeared to him ^{in the wilder-} ness of mount ^{Si'na an angel of the Lord} Si'nai, in a flame of fire in a bush.

31 ^{When} And when Moses saw ^{it,} he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold, ^{the voice of the Lord came unto him,} there came a voice of the Lord,

32 ^{Saying, r} I ^{am} the God of thy fathers, the God of Ā'brā-hām, and ^{the God of} Iṣṣāac, and ^{the God} of Jacob. ^{Then} And Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

^k Ex. 2. 11, 12. ^l Ex. 2. 13, 14. ^m ver. 35. Cp. Luke 12. 14. ⁿ Ex. 2. 15. ^o Ex. 2. 22 & 18. 3, 4. ^p Ex. 3. 2. ^q Cp. Ex. 3. 1. ^r Cited from Ex. 3. 6, which see.

and engineering. By the more advanced, poetry was read, and poetic composition occasionally practised.¹

Mighty in words and in deeds. "He invented boats, and engines for building, instruments of war and of hydraulics, hieroglyphics, division of lands." He taught Orpheus, and was hence called by the Greeks Musæus, and by the Egyptians Hermes. He was sent on an expedition against the Ethiopians. He got rid of the serpents of the country to be traversed by letting loose baskets full of ibises upon them.² But Moses was not only a scholar; as years went on he had an opportunity of earning distinction as a warrior. "His military achievements outshone in popular estimation his intellectual attainments." "He returned from this campaign the most popular man in the kingdom."

23. It came into his heart.³

24, 25. He defended him, he began his work for the redemption of his people, but they understood not, just as the Jews did not understand Jesus in his labors for their deliverance. The same comparison is made in ver. 27, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

30. An angel. "In Exod. 3: 2 'the angel of

the Lord,' but in ver. 7 'the Lord said,' so here in ver. 31 'the voice of the Lord said,' compare ver. 33. For the same mode of expression compare Acts 27: 23 with 23: 11. In this Angel, the Angel of the Lord (compare Exod. 3: 2 with vers. 6, 14, and Gen. 22: 11 with ver. 12; the Angel of the Presence, Exod. 33: 11, compare Isa. 63: 9), although Jewish interpreters varied, the Fathers saw the Logos, the Eternal Word of the Father."⁴

A flame of fire in a bush.

"One towering thorn was wrapt in flame:
Bright without blaze it went and came:
Who would not turn and see?"⁵

It was the symbol of God's presence. There is no better visible symbol of God than fire. Fire, shining in light, is mysterious in nature, ineffably bright and glorious, everywhere present, swift-winged, undefiled, and undefilable. Light is the source of life, of beauty, of manifested reality, of warmth, comfort, and joy, of health, and of power. It destroys all darkness. Without it the world would be but a mass of coldness and death. Fire purifies, fire subdues with resistless energy. The fact that the bush was not consumed illustrates the benign nature of the divine light, especially as

¹ Rawlinson.

² Stanley, *Jewish Church*.

³ Compare Hercules' choice in Xenophon's *Memora-*

bilis, and Pizarro's choice in Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, vol. i. 263-265.

⁴ Knowling.

⁵ Keble, *Christian Year*.

33 Then said the Lord to And the Lord said unto him, ^s Put off thy Loose the shoes from thy feet: for the place ^{where} ^{whereon} thou standest is holy ground.

34 I have ^{seen, I have surely} seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and ¹ have "heard their groaning, and ¹ am come down to deliver them; ^{And} ^{and} ^w now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

35 This Moses whom they refused, ^x saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? ^{the same did him hath} God ^{send} ^{sent} to ^{be} both a ruler and a deliverer ^v ^{by} with the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

36 ^z He brought ^{This man led them} ^{out, after that he had shewed forth, having wrought} ^a wonders and signs ^b in the land of Egypt, and ^c in the Red sea, and ^d in the wilderness ^e forty years.

37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, ^f A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you ^{of} from among your brethren, like unto me; ^{him shall} ye hear.

38 This is he ^o that was in the ^h church in the wilderness with ⁱ the angel which spake to him in the mount ^{Si^{na}, Si^{na}}, and ^{with} our fathers: ^j who received the ^k living ^l oracles to give unto us:

^s Ex. 3. 5. Josh. 5. 15. ^t Ex. 3. 7. ^u Ex. 2. 24. ^v Ex. 3. 8. ^w Ex. 3. 10. ^x ver. 27. ^y Cp. Ex. 3. 2 & 14. 19 & 23. 20 & Num. 20. 10. ^z Ex. 12. 41 & 33. 1. Heb. 8. 9. ^a Ex. 7. 3. ^b Ex. 7. 12. Ps. 78. 43-51 & 105. 27-36. ^c Ex. 14. 21, 27-31. Ps. 78. 53 & 106. 9. ^d Ex. 16. 1, 35 & 17. 1-6. Ps. 78. 15. ^e ver. 42. ch. 13. 18. Ex. 16. 35. Num. 14. 33, 34. Ps. 95. 10. Heb. 3. 9, 17. ^f ch. 3. 22. Cited from Deut. 18. 15. ^g Ex. 19. 3, 17, 18. ^h Heb. 2. 12 (mg.) & 12. 23. ⁱ Cp. ver. 53 & Isai. 63. 9. ^j Deut. 5. 27, 31 & 33. 4. See John 1. 17. ^k Cp. Deut. 32. 47. ^l Rom. 3. 2. Heb. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

manifested in Jesus. Its work is to bless, not to destroy. It destroys only evil to make the good more perfect.

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who *sees* takes off his shoes."¹

33. Is holy ground. The manifested presence of God made it holy. It is by some places specially holy that all nature becomes to us holy ground, as a holy Sabbath sanctifies all the other days. And he who feels no reverence for special places and times will not treat any place or time as holy. The natural inference for the Sanhedrim to draw was that the temple was not the only holy place, but wherever God manifested himself, although in a private house, and by flaming tongues instead of a flaming bush, that place was holy.

35. Moses whom they refused, as the Jews had refused Christ.

The same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer, *λυτρωτήν*, *ransomer, redeemer*; as God had sent Jesus.

By the hand of the angel, not "by," but "with," *ἐν*, denoting "the active coöperation of Moses with the angel, as joint instruments of Jehovah."²

36. He brought them out of bondage, as Jesus had come to deliver the world from the bondage of sin; and shewed wonders and signs, as had been shown in Jesus, by his miracles, his resurrection, Pentecost, and the change in the character of his disciples, for the same purpose of convincing the people that he was the true Saviour, and of overcoming all opposition.

37. This is that Moses, which said . . . A prophet . . . like unto me. The Moses, whose every word you believe, foretold the coming of Jesus, who is in so many respects like unto him in mission, in work, in results, and in spite of similar opposition. You are not on Moses' side, but have joined the ranks of those who opposed him.

38. In the church, *ἐκκλησία*, "in classical Greek, an assembly of the citizens summoned by the crier, or a legislative assembly. It is used in the Septuagint to denote the people of Israel when called together in an assembly (Deut. 31 : 30; Josh. 8 : 35; Judg. 21 : 8; Heb. 2 : 12)."³

The great congregation of Israel was then the sole representative of the church of God.

In the wilderness, this refers to that part of the great wilderness between Egypt and Palestine, which lies around Sinai. The church from the

¹ Mrs. Browning. See, also, Whittier's *Chapel of the Hermits*. —

"This maple ridge shall Horeb be,
Yon green-banked lake our Galilee."

"Our common daily life divine,
And every land a Palestine."

² Rendall.

³ Prof. Alvah Hovey.

39 To whom our fathers would not ^{obey} be obedient, but thrust ^{him} from them, and in their hearts turned back again into ^{turned back in their hearts into} Egypt,

40 Saying unto Aâr'on, "Make us gods ^{to} which shall go before us: for ^{as for} this Moses, which ^{brought led} us forth out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

41 And "they made a calf in those days, and ^{offered brought a} sacrifice unto the idol, and ^p rejoiced in ^q the works of their ^{own} hands.

42 ^{Then But} "God turned, and ^s gave them up to ^{worship serve} "the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets,

O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to ^{Did ye offer unto} me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty ^{Forty} years in the wilderness? O house of Israel?

m Ex. 16. 3. Num. 11. 4, 5 & 14. 3, 4. Ezek. 20. 8, 24. n Cited from Ex. 32. 1, 23. o Ex. 32. 4-6, 35. Deut. 9. 16. Ps. 106. 19. p Amos 6. 13. q Isai. 2. 8. Jer. 1. 16 & 25. 6, 7. r Cp. Josh. 24. 20 & Isai. 63. 10. s Ps. 81. 12. Ezek. 20. 39. Rom. 1. 23. t Deut. 4. 19. 2 Kin. 17. 16 & 21. 3 & 23. 5. Jer. 19. 13. Zeph. 1. 5. u Cited from Amos 5. 25-27. v See ver. 36.

apostles' time till now may well be called "The church in the wilderness."

With the angel, the manifestation of Jehovah, by which the presence of God was made known to Moses and the people. And with our fathers. Moses had relations both with God and with the congregation, and therefore was a mediator between them; as Christ was the mediator of the new covenant. "The argument is the same as that of Paul in Gal. 3: 19, 20; Stephen's preaching of Jesus Christ as a mediator between God and man is not, as charged, blasphemy against God or Moses; it accords with the divine dispensation from the beginning; and it does not weaken but strengthens allegiance to God."¹

Who received, from God, the lively oracles, λόγια ζῶντα. λόγια, diminutive of λόγος, a word, here little words, brief utterances; in classical Greek, oracles or responses of heathen deities; but in the Bible, any utterance of God whether of precept or promise. Philo calls the ten commandments ten λόγια, ten little words or sayings. These oracles were ζῶντα, living, as a seed, having an active life; enduring, abiding; refreshing, healthful, as living water; "having vital power in itself and exerting the same upon the soul."²

39. Our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, just as the rulers had treated Jesus. In their hearts. Not an actual turning back, but in feeling, and longing, and spirit, they turned back to the idol worship of Egypt with its visible gods and lax morality. At Sinai they had not been away from Egypt long enough to wish to return there. That desire came later, when the terrors and hardships of the Egypt life were forgotten in the hardships and terrors of the wilderness.

41. Made a calf in imitation of Egyptian bull

worship. The calf Apis was worshipped at Memphis; another sacred bull at Heliopolis where Joseph lived.

Rejoiced in the work of their own hands, as the rulers were then rejoicing in the traditions they had made, in their false interpretations of Scripture, and in seeking their own wealth and honor instead of the good of the nation.

42. Then, after this first experience had failed to fit them for the kingdom of God. Stephen now passes to the idolatry that, while existing early in their history, prevailed more under the kings of Israel and Judah.

God turned away from them, and left them to work out their own pleasure, without immediate check or hindrance. This was not in hate, but in love, as it is now under certain conditions wise to allow people to work out their own destiny, and experience the results of their course, till looking into the awful depths of sin, they may turn from their iniquities, or cause others to turn.

Gave them up to worship, to serve the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, in the degrading rites of Baal (the sun) and Astarte (the moon). "The created host was worshipped in place of the Lord of hosts." "God had previously warned them against this kind of idolatry (Deut. 4: 19), but we learn from the records of their historians (2 Kings 17: 16) and their prophets (Jer. 19: 13; Zeph. 1: 5) that the warning was given in vain."³

As it is written in the book of the prophets. The quotation (vers. 41-43) that follows is from Amos 5: 25-27.

Have ye offered to me slain beasts, etc. In form no doubt, and some of them sincerely (Ex. 24: 4; Num. 7: 9), but with many these offer-

¹ Lyman Abbott.

² Thayer, *Greek Lex. of N. Test.*

³ *Cambridge Bible.*

43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of ^w Mōlōch,

And the star of ^{your} the god ^{Remphan,} Re'phan,

The figures which ye made to worship them:

And I will carry you away beyond Bāb'ý-lon.

44 Our fathers had the ^x tabernacle of ^{witness} the testimony in the wilderness, ^{even} as he ^{had} appointed, ^{speaking} ^{who spake} unto Moses, ^{that} he should make it according to the ^{fashion} ^{figure} that he had seen.

^w See 1 Kin. 11. 7.

^x Rev. 15. 5.

See Ex. 38. 21.

^y See Ex. 25. 40.

ings were not from the heart, and therefore not true worship.

43. Yea, ye took up the tabernacle, "the portable tent-temple of the god to be carried in procession."¹ Of Moloch, "an Ammonite idol to whom children were sacrificed. According to rabbinical tradition, his image was hollow, heated from below, with the head of an ox and outstretched arms, into which children were laid, their cries being stifled by the beating of drums."¹ Sacrifice of children seems to have had its origin in the test of devotion and obedience by the sacrifice of whatever was most precious. The Israelites were familiar with idolaters who sacrificed to their idols their choicest treasures, their most beloved, their first-born sons. Æschylus tells how King Agamemnon sacrificed his beautiful daughter, Iphigenia. Tennyson's *The Victim* shows a similar picture in the land of Odin and Thor.

"What would you have of us?

Human life?

Were it our nearest,

Were it our dearest,

We give you his life.

"The king is happy

In child and wife;

Take you his dearest,

Give us a life."²

The Septuagint, from which Stephen quotes, differs somewhat from the Hebrew. "Not only does the fact that the worship of Moloch was forbidden in the wilderness seem to indicate that its practice was a possibility, but there is also evidence that long before the Exodus Babylonian influence had made itself felt in the West, and the statement of Amos may therefore mean that the Babylonian god was actually worshipped by the Israelites in the wilderness."³

The star of your god Remphan, the Coptic (Egyptian) name for Saturn.⁴ "In the words 'ye took up the star,' etc., the meaning is that they

took up the star or image which represented the god."³

Carry you away beyond Babylon. Both the Septuagint and the Hebrew say Damascus, the most formidable enemy of Israel in the days of Amos. It is probable that Stephen's substitution of Babylon for Damascus was not due to a slip, but was done designedly, because the greater fulfilment of the threatened punishment for idolatry was by the Babylonian captivity.

Thus Stephen, by this picture from their past history, shows his audience their danger of growing worse and worse, as they actually did, and of the destruction of their city and temple which he had foretold according to the words of Christ, all of which actually came to pass.

44. Here begins, as a natural sequence, Stephen's dealing with the charge of blasphemy against the temple.

The tabernacle of witness, R. V., "of the testimony," μαρτυριον. It was so named for several reasons. It contained the ark of the testimony in which were the two tables of stone engraved with the Ten Commandments. Ex. 25: 22. It was a witness to God's presence, through his visible glory which at certain times rested on the golden mercy seat. It was a testimony to God's covenant with his people, and the central place of worship.

As he, God, had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that is, he told Moses after what pattern he had appointed the tabernacle to be made, namely, the one shown to him on Mount Sinai, Ex. 25: 9, 40.

Stephen shows that he was far from denying the divine sanction for a place of worship. God furnished the pattern even for the tabernacle which gave place to the nobler structure of the temple. The argument is, that the destruction of the tabernacle, in order to make way for the more fitting and glorious temple, implied no blasphemy against God; and therefore the announcement that the temple should be destroyed,

¹ M. R. Vincent.

² See, also, the *Iphigenia* of Euripides. The feelings of a heathen parent before and after such a sacrifice are described with fine imaginative power in the *Epic of Hades*, "Tantalus."

³ Knowling. See Sayce, *Patriarchal Palestine*, pp. 258, 259.

⁴ Schaff.

45 Which also our fathers, ^{that came after ^{in their turn,} ^{Jesus into} brought in with ^{Josh'u-a when they entered on} the ^{Gen'tiles, ^{in whom} ^{drive} ^{nations, which} God thrust out before the face of our fathers, ^{unto the days of David;}}}

46 Who ^{before} found favour ^{in the sight of} God, and ^{desired} to find a ^{tabernacle} for ^{the} God of Jacob.

47 But ^h Solomon built him a house.

48 ⁱ Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not ^j in ^{temples} made with hands; as saith the prophet,

49 ^k ^{Heaven is} ^{The heaven is} my throne,
And ^{the} earth ^{is} ^{my footstool:}
^{the footstool of my feet:}

What manner of house will ye build me? saith the Lord:

Or what ^{is} the place of my rest?

50 ^{Hath} Did ^{not} my hand ^{made} ^{make} all these things?

51 'Ye stiffnecked and ^m uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: ^{as} ^{ye} fathers ^{did,} ^{so} ^{do} ye.

^z Josh. 3. 14-17. ^a Heb. 4. 8 (mg. for mg.). ^b Num. 32. 5. Deut. 32. 49. ^c ch. 13. 19. Josh. 3. 10 & 23. 9 & 24. 18. 2 Chr. 20. 7. Ps. 44. 2, *al.* ^d 2 Sam. 7. 2. ^e ch. 13. 22. 1 Sam. 16. 1. Ps. 89. 19. ^f 1 Kin. 8. 17. 1 Chr. 22. 7. Ps. 132. 5. ^g Cp. Gen. 49. 24 & Isai. 49. 26. ^h 2 Sam. 7. 13. 1 Kin. 6. 1, 2 & 8. 20. 2 Chr. 3. 1. ⁱ Cp. 1 Kin. 8. 27 & 2 Chr. 2. 6. ^j ch. 17. 24. ^k Matt. 5. 34, 35. Cited from Isai. 66. 1, 2. Cp. Ps. 11. 4. ^l Deut. 10. 16. See Ex. 32. 9. ^m Lev. 26. 41. Jer. 6. 10 & 9. 26. Ezek. 44. 7, 9. ⁿ Mal. 3. 7.

and that its place should be taken by a still more glorious spiritual temple, was not blasphemy against God, nor a denial that the temple and its worship were ordained of God.

45. Fathers that came after, *διαδεξάμενοι*, having received it in turn.

Brought in with Jesus, *i. e.*, Joshua. "Jesus" is the Greek mode of rendering the Hebrew Joshua. Both words have the same meaning.

Into the possession, in the act of possessing, or taking possession of the Gentiles, the heathen nations who held Palestine.

46. Desired to find a tabernacle, *σκήνωμα*, not a tent, but a house. David greatly desired to build the temple, but was forbidden.

47. But Solomon built him a house. This was the divine plan, and the temple had its usefulness even as did the tabernacle that passed away.

48. Howbeit. But the Most High is not confined to the narrow limits of Solomon's temple, even as Solomon himself said in his dedication prayer (1 Kings 8 : 27). There is something larger and better, of which Solomon's temple was a type.¹ So that the destruction of the temple was not the destruction of religion nor the denial of God.

As saith the prophet, Isa. 66 : 1, 2. Although Solomon had uttered the same truth, the argu-

ment was stronger by the appeal to the great Messianic prophet when speaking of the very times the Messiah was to bring, the dawning rays of which were then shining on Jerusalem.

50. Hath not my hand made, etc. This verse is a continuation of the prophecy. It belongs to the chapter in which the prophet "winds up all his prophecies with an express prediction of the change of dispensations, of the time when Jehovah would no longer dwell in temples (ver. 1), but in human hearts (ver. 2); when the ritual, though divinely instituted, would be no less hateful than idolatry itself (ver. 5). This remarkable prophecy is doubly appropriate to Stephen's purpose : first, as a declaration of the general truth affirmed by Solomon; and then, as a direct and pointed prediction of the very changes that were taking place when Stephen spoke."²

51. At this verse there is an abrupt change. The argument is complete, though more examples could have been brought from the history of the Jews. But two things conspired to bring the address to a close.

FIRST. Stephen's whole speech led up to this personal application. It was a fitting climax; a speaking to the heart and conscience, in a last "forlorn hope" that the rulers might repent.

SECOND. There is every reason to believe that the Sanhedrim were becoming impatient and

¹ Of Solomon it might be said in the words of Emerson,

"The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned."

"Himself from God he could not free.
He builded better than he knew;
The conscious stone to beauty grew."

² Prof. J. A. Alexander.

52 ° Which of the prophets ^{have} ^{did} not your fathers ^{persecuted?} ^{persecute?} and they ^{have slain} ^{killed} them which shewed before of the coming of the " ^{Just} ^{Righteous} One; " of whom ye have ^{been} ^{now} ^{the} ^{become} betrayers and murderers;

53 ^{Who have} ^{Ye who} received the law ^{r by the disposition of} ^{as it was ordained by} angels, and ^{have not kept it.} ^{* kept it not.}

54 ^{When} ^{Now when} they heard these things, "they were cut to the heart, and they "gnashed on him with ^{their} ^{their} teeth.

o 1 Kin. 19. 10. 2 Chr. 36. 16. Jer. 2. 30. Matt. 23. 31, 37. See Matt. 5. 12 & 21. 35. ch. 5. 28. r Gal. 3. 19. Heb. 2. 2. Cp. ver. 38 & Deut. 33. 2.

p See ch. 3. 14. q See t ch. 5. 33. Cp. ch. 2. 37.

u Job 16. 9. Ps. 35. 16 & 37. 12.

angry, and expressed their hostility by their countenances, gestures, murmurs, and cries. They would soon be uncontrollable; so that Stephen hastened to his application. This outburst of fiery indignation, this wielding of the lightning of heaven, was not contradictory to his dying cry, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," but was a different expression of the same love, the same desire to save his nation from their sins, and consequent destruction. The most terrible of all "woes" is the "woe unto you" of love.

Stiffnecked, *σκληροτράχηλοι*, *hard of neck*, set in their own way.

Uncircumcised in heart. However much in outward rite and in profession they claimed to stand in covenant relations with God as his peculiar people, in reality, in heart, in character, they were heathen, outside of the covenant, and not the people of God. "This word contains a whole volume of rebuke." Stephen's audience were familiar with these terms. See Ex. 32: 9; 33: 3, 5; Deut. 9: 6, 13, for applications of "stiff-necked;" and Lev. 26: 41; Deut. 30: 6; Jer. 6: 10; 9: 26, for "uncircumcised in heart."

And ears, they would not listen to the truth, and thus it was prevented from entering through their ears into their hearts.

Resist the Holy Ghost. They were not so much resisting Stephen as God and the strongest influence that could be brought to bear upon them.

52. Which of the prophets, etc. "St. Stephen echoes, as it were, our Lord's own words (Matt. 5: 12; Luke 13: 34)."¹

The Just One, in intensest contrast with their own conduct as betrayers and murderers; and showing the depth of the depravity which could murder not only the most innocent, but the most righteous man that ever lived, their rightful King and Redeemer.

53. Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, *eis διαταγὰς ἀγγέλων*, *διαταγή* signified an arrangement or disposition as of troops in an army, or of duties and services, hence, ordinance, something ordained or arranged by angels. "As the ordinances" of angels (Ren-

dall); "influenced by the authority of the ordaining angels, or because ye thought it your duty to receive what was enjoined by angels" (Thayer). "As ordained by God through angels."

"The presence of angels at the giving of the law is not expressly stated in the Old Testament, but is alluded to in Gal. 3: 19 and Heb. 2: 2. Philo and Josephus testify to the same tradition; the Seventy translate Deut. 33: 2 in such a manner as to assert the same fact; it is implied perhaps in Ps. 68: 18. The Jews regarded this angelic mediation as both ennobling the law and as conferring special honor on themselves, to whom the law was given. For a striking proof of this Jewish feeling, see Josephus, *Ant.*, 15: 5, 3."²

"All we know is that angels were ministers on that occasion, and that some of the solemn and impressive circumstances were carried on by their agency. The trumpets and thunderings and other attendant demonstrations may have been due to their agency. They are spoken of as being present 'at Sinai in the holy place,' and the Lord as being among them (Ps. 68: 17. See Deut. 33: 2, 3). Their agency may be referred to where the mount is spoken of as that 'which burned with fire, with blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words,' etc. (Heb. 12: 18, 19). This allusion to so stupendous a demonstration, angelic and preternatural, in their history, at the giving of the law, when they were specially constituted as a nation chosen of God, forms the most stirring climax in the discourse of Stephen; and his bold and earnest enforcement of all these facts, to show the enormity of their disobedience, could no longer be endured by the Sanhedrin."³

And have not kept it. You yourselves are guilty of the crime with which you charge me. You glory in the law, and yet you dishonor God by your violations of it. And the climax of your treason against God and his law and the nation is your rejection of God's Son, the Messiah promised in the law, and the Redeemer in whom the glory and the hope of the nation rests.

¹ Plumptre,

² Hackett,

³ Jacobs,

55 But he, ^v being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw ^w the glory of God, and Jesus standing ^x on the right hand of God,

56 And one said, Behold, I see the ^y heavens opened, and the ^z Son of man standing on ^x the right hand of God.

57 ^{Then} ^{But} they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ^{ran} rushed upon him with one accord;

^v ch. 6. 5. ^w Ex. 24. 16. ^{Luke} 2. 9. ^{John} 12. 41.
^z See Dan. 7. 13.

^x Ps. 110. 1. See Mark 16. 19. ^y See John 1. 51.

STEPHEN THE MARTYR, vers. 54-60.

54. They were cut to the heart, *διεπρόσσωτο*, were *sawn* (*did*), *through*, or *asunder*, *all cut up*. Passion raged against passion, and passion against reason. Their hearts were *distracted*, *torn* with rage, greatly *exasperated*.

Stephen's words stung like scorpions. Before him the whole fabric of their hopes fell "and left not a wreck behind," unless they repented. They *gnashed on him with their teeth*, as if they would like to bite him, an expression of impotent rage, as of the lost in hell (Matt. 8: 12; 13: 42). It was the same demoniac feeling. They snarled like beasts of prey.

55. Being full of the Holy Ghost. The Greek *being full* implies not a sudden inspiration, but a permanent state.¹ Looked up steadfastly into heaven, *ἀνέβλεψας*, from *α*, intensive, and *τελῶ*, to stretch; hence, *applying the mind intently to*, on the stretch. Our word "attention" has the same meaning, from *ad*, "to," and *tendo*, "to stretch." With mind outstretched and intent he looked into heaven, as Jesus did at the close of the Lord's supper just before his crucifixion, John 17: 1. "For where the eye is, there is the heart and the love."

"Bidding my heart look up, not down,
While the cross fades before the crown."²

The tumultuous scene around him, the council hall, and the circle of his infuriated judges all faded from his vision, and he saw the celestial city in its beauty, the glory of God, the angels gazing in sympathy, and waiting to welcome him with crowns and harps, and Jesus standing (as if ready to help and sustain him, not seated as in Heb. 10: 12) on the right hand of God, as if saying, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. He now knew that Jesus was alive, and able to sustain him in his trial.³

¹ Plumptre. Jeremy Taylor, in his *Holy Living*, speaks of "the practice of the presence of God."

² Motto under a picture of a jewelled crown with a cross fading in the distance.

³ Compare Bunyan's Pilgrims when they looked through the Shepherds' glass: "As they held the glass and brought it to bear on the gates of the Celestial City, their hands

56. And said. He reported to the assembly what he had seen. It was too good to withhold, and was an additional motive for them to accept of Jesus as the Messiah.

57. Then, enraged by such blasphemy (so they called it) as seeing the one they had crucified, at the right hand of God. Where were they if these things were true? Cried out with a loud voice. In order to drown with their clamor such, to them, impious words. So "the drums were beaten to drown the last words of the Scottish covenanters." Their action was a practical condemnation of Stephen. It was a rising vote, in addition to any formal vote of the tribunal.

Ran upon him with one accord. "Whilst the scene was a tumultuous one, it was quite possible that it was not wholly bereft of judicial appearances." "Wendt points out with much force that an excited and tumultuous crowd might observe some legal forms."⁴ "The execution of Stephen was in strict accordance with the ancient law against blasphemy. . . . That he was condemned by acclamation with the concurrence of the populace was in entire harmony with the spirit of the law (Lev. 24: 14-16)."⁵ But it was the worst injustice under the forms of law. The witnesses were false, the charge unfounded and unproved. The trial was the counterpart of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees which Jesus so severely condemned, outwardly correct, but inwardly full of all uncleanness.

Moreover, they were acting contrary to the Roman law, which forbade the Jews from putting any one to death without the sanction of the governor. "The supreme power of life and death, which in allied and tributary states belonged to native rulers, was, in the provinces, strictly reserved to Roman officers, as an essential principle of policy."⁶

There arises, therefore, the question how it was possible for the Sanhedrim to put Stephen to

did shake; yet they thought they saw something like a gate opening into the city, and also some of the glory of the place; and they went forward singing on their way."

⁴ Knowing.

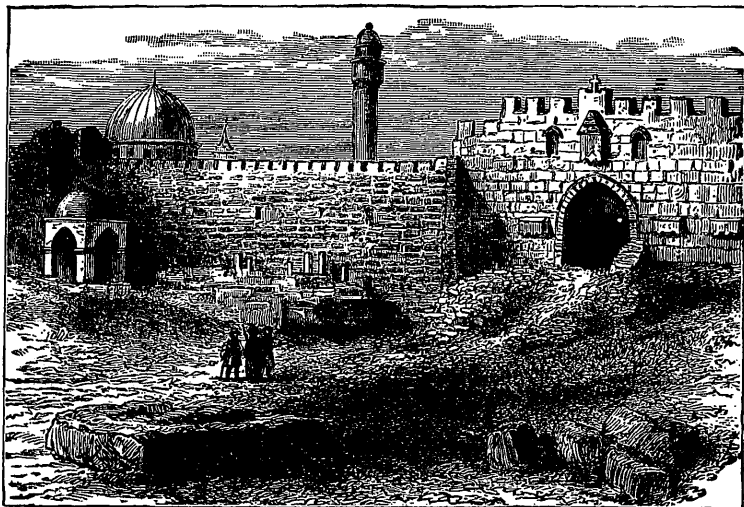
⁵ Rendall. See Schürer's *Jewish People*, div. ii., vol. i. p. 187.

58 And they ^a cast ^{him} out of the city, ^b and stoned ^{him}; and ^c the witnesses laid down their ^{clothes} at ^{a young man's feet, whose name was} ^{the feet of a young man named} ^d Saul.

^a Lev. 24. 14-16. Num. 15. 35. 1 Kin. 21. 13. Cp. Luke 4. 29 & Heb. 13. 12. ^b Matt. 21. 35 & 23. 37. Heb. 11. 37. ^c ch. 6. 13. Cp. Deut. 13. 9, 10 & 17. 7. ^d ch. 8. 1 & 22. 20. Cp. ch. 22. 4.

death? The condition of the Roman rule in Palestine furnishes the answer. At this time the Roman government in Judea was in a very unsettled state. Pilate was either deposed (A. D. 36), or was on the point of being so, to be tried for his misgovernment. Vitellius, governor of Syria,

who had caused Pilate to be sent to Rome in disgrace, was anxious to conciliate the Jews, because he needed their favor since he desired to lead his army through Palestine to attack Petra; so that it is easy to see how Rome may have connived at the murder of Stephen by the



ST. STEPHEN'S GATE.

In the east wall north of the temple area; leading down through the Kidron valley, Gethsemane, and the Mount of Olives. Jesus probably passed through it, after instituting his Supper, on his way to Gethsemane and his trial.

leading Jews, and at the persecution which followed.

The stoning of Stephen was an act of riotous fanaticism, under the guise of law, and with the connivance of the Roman authorities.¹ "Later history furnishes, indeed, one exact parallel to the stoning of Stephen: Josephus relates how James the Just was tried before the high priest, convicted, and stoned to death at Jerusalem (*Ant.*, 20: 9, 1). But this act is expressly attributed to the arbitrary violence of the high priest, who took advantage of an interregnum caused by the death of Festus; and so far from its being sanctioned by the succeeding governor he warmly resented it as an abuse of power, and the high priest was at once deposed."²

58. Cast him out of the city. "According to the Mosaic law, malefactors among the Jews were executed without the gates of their cities (Lev. 24: 14). Thus our Lord suffered without the gate."³ The place was somewhere about the rocky edges of the ravine of Jehoshaphat, where the Mount of Olives looks down upon Gethsemane and Siloam (Howson), which agrees with Lewin, "They stoned Stephen under the very walls of the temple." There is still a gate in Jerusalem called St. Stephen's Gate, in memory of this deed. "The place of execution was always outside the town—as was, until about the middle of the 18th century, the case in London, the condemned being conveyed from Newgate to Tyburn, a distance of nearly three miles, for execution."³

¹ See Rendall, *Acts*, Intro., pp. 18-23; McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, p. 91.

² Gloag.

³ Kitto.

59 And they stoned Stēphēn, ^ecalling upon ^{God,} ^{the Lord,} and saying, Lord Jesus, ^freceive my spirit.

60 And he ^gkneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, ^hLord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, ⁱhe fell asleep.

^e ch. 9. 14. ^f Ps. 31. 5. Luke 23. 46. ^g ch. 9. 40 & 20. 36 & 21. 5. Luke 22. 41. Eph. 3. 14. ^h See Matt. 5. 44. ⁱ See Matt. 27. 52.

And stoned him. The witnesses placed their hands on the head of the criminal in token that the guilt rested on him (Lev. 24: 14). "The rabbins state that the culprit was stripped of all clothing except a cloth about the loins, and was thrown to the ground from a scaffold about ten feet high by the first witness; the first stone was cast by the second witness on the chest over the heart of the criminal, and if it failed to cause death, the bystanders completed the execution."¹

"Stoning was mercy itself when contrasted with the flaying, impaling, and burning alive still practised in Oriental tribunals."² **And the witnesses.** "According to the law of Moses the witnesses were to cast the first stone (Deut. 17: 6, 7), as a guard against making careless or unjust charges. The witnesses here mentioned are those false witnesses who accused Stephen of blasphemy."³ **Laid down their clothes.** Their outer garments, the cloaks or mantles, leaving on only the under garment or tunic, in order that they might have the free use of their arms in hurling the stones. **At a young man's feet, *pearlov*,** used to denote any man of an age between twenty-four and forty. Josephus applies the term to Agrippa I., when he was at least forty.⁴ **Whose name was Saul.** The same who became afterwards the great apostle to the Gentiles. According to Lewin, he was probably thirty-four or thirty-five years old at this time. He was probably a member of the Sanhedrim, and active in condemning Stephen. See Acts 26: 10.

59. And they stoned Stephen, "were stoning," "went on stoning," while the martyr was calling upon God. When Savonarola stood at his funeral pile on the great square of Florence, before his burning, on May 23, 1498, the bishop spoke the words of ecclesiastical excommunication, "I separate thee from the church," the martyr's face lighted up joyously as he responded, "From the church militant, but not from the church triumphant."

Receive my spirit. Into the mansions Jesus had gone to prepare; to his own heart and home.

60. And he kneeled down. While they were stoning him, he rose up on his knees. **And cried with a loud voice,** so that his persecutors could hear him, and understand his spirit, **Lord, lay**

not this sin to their charge. "And the prayer for his murderers is identical in spirit with Christ's upon the cross." Rendall says this "presents a striking contrast to the spirit of his previous defence." "The vision of his Lord had filled his mind and heart." The contrast is only in form, not in spirit, like Jesus' "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees," and his "Father, forgive them" from the cross. Both grew out of the same loving spirit.

And . . . he fell asleep (*ἐκοιμήθη*). "Marking his calm and peaceful death. Though the pagan authors sometimes used *sleep* to signify *death*, it was only as a poetic figure. When Christ, on the other hand, said, 'Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*' (*κεκοιμήται*), he used the word not as a figure, but as the expression of a *fact*. In that mystery of death, in which the pagan saw only nothingness, Jesus saw continued life, rest, waking—the elements which enter into sleep. And thus, in Christian speech and thought, as the doctrine of the resurrection struck its roots deeper, the word 'dead,' with its hopeless finality, gave place to the more gracious and hopeful word 'sleep.' The pagan burying-place carried in its name no suggestion of hope or comfort. It was a burying-place, a hiding-place, monumentum, a mere memorial of something gone; a columbarium, or dovecot, with its little pigeon-holes for cinerary urns; but the Christian thought of death as sleep brought with it into Christian speech the kindred thought of a chamber of rest, and embodied it in the word 'cemetery' (*κοιμητήριον*), *the place to lie down to sleep.*"⁵

The one who sleeps is alive, and awakes the same person who lay down to sleep.

A soldier of the Grand Army said lately, "When I die do not sound taps (the evening call to rest) over my grave, but reveillé (the morning call, 'the summons to rise).'"

"Say not good-night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me good-morning."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Stephen's name signifies in Greek a *crown*. "He received three crowns: (1) The beautiful crown of grace with which the Lord adorned him. (2) The bloody crown of thorns, which, like his Saviour, he wore

¹ Davis, *Bib. Dic.* (1898).

² Canon Tristram.

³ Gloag.

⁴ *Antiquities*, 18: 6, 7.

⁵ Prof. M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

in suffering and in death. (3) The heavenly crown of honor."¹

2. Stephen's Christian life was short, but he accomplished more than most men had they lived as long as Methuselah.

"He liveth long who liveth well;
All other life is short and vain;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain."

3. Stephen's success lay in the fact that he preserved his manhood and his character untarnished amid great temptations. He was a hero. He was gold tried in the fire. No man's life is a failure who is himself a moral success, and is a victor on the battlefield of the heart. "Shakespeare," says Dowden, "beats triumphal marches, not for successful persons alone, but also for the conquered and the slain."

4. Stephen has part in the triumphs of Christianity through the ages. His example is a star which never ceases to shine. He holds up before all men an ideal of heroism, courage, faithfulness to duty. He is a perpetual inspiration. Good men

"Are indeed our pillar fires
Seen as we go;
They are the city's shining spires
We travel to."

"Oh, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, . . .
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars."²

5. In heaven he wears the victor's crown, and dwells forever in the joy of his Lord, eating of "the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God," "a pillar in the temple of my God," having "the morning star" and "the new name."

"If thou wilt be a hero, and wilt strive
To help thy fellow and exalt thyself,
Thy feet, at last, shall stand on jasper floors;
Thy heart, at last, shall seem a thousand hearts —
Each single heart with myriad raptures filled —
While thou shalt sit with princes and with kings,
Rich in the jewel of a ransomed soul."

¹ Strauss.

² George Eliot.

CHAPTER 8.

THE CHURCH EXTENDED

TO SAMARIA, SYRIA, AFRICA, AND THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST.

Devoted chiefly to the Work of Philip the Evangelist.

TIME. A. D. 36-37.

THE GREAT PERSECUTION.
vers. 1-4.

The Disciples scattered.
 The Apostles remain at their Post.
 Saul makes Havoc of the Church.
 The Result: the Rapid Spread of the Gospel.

CHURCH EXTENSION
 THROUGH
 PHILIP THE EVANGELIST.
 vers. 5-40.

Philip in Samaria.
 Trials and Triumphs of
 a Home Missionary.

Philip and the
 Ethiopian.

Philip: His Later
 Life.

Preaching.
 Working miracles.
 Many converts.
 Simon the magician.
 Delegation from Jerusalem.
 The Samaritan bridge between Jews and
 Gentiles.
 Simony.
 Peter's reproof.
 Return of the delegation.
 Candace's treasurer.
 His meeting with Philip.
 Studying the Scriptures.
 New light from an old prophecy.
 The baptism.
 The parting of the ways.
 Preaches in the coast towns.
 Settles in Caesarea.

1 AND^j Saul was ^kconsenting unto his death. And ^{at that time there was} there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was ^{at} in Jē-rū'sā-lēm; and ^lthey were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Jû-dæ'ā and Sā-mā'ri-ā, except the apostles.

^j ch. 7. 58 & 22. 20.^k See Rom. 1. 32.^l ch. 11. 19. See Matt. 10. 23.

THE GREAT PERSECUTION, vers. 1-4.

1. The first sentence belongs to the last chapter, as in R. V. Saul. See on chapter 9.

Was consenting, *συνευδοκῶν*, from *σύν*, together with, *εἰδ*, well, *δοκέω*, to think, to seem good; hence, to be well pleased, to have satisfaction in, together with others. Saul did more than consent, he joined with the others in hearty approval and satisfaction in his death, *ἀναπέσει*, his taking away.¹ The emphasis being not so much on his death, as on the fact that he was taken out of their way.

We now come to a NEW EPOCH in the history of the church, which had grown so strong and was rooted so firmly that the time had come when a new departure could be successfully

made, as a young tree comes to a time when it is strong enough to put forth blossoms and begin to bear fruit. As usual the new epoch came through an outward disturbance, a providential leading.

It was an era of HOME MISSIONS, the extension of the gospel to other fields, and a broadening of view as to the nature and work of the gospel. It was the first of several steps toward the universal spread of the gospel, which was like a river that broadens and deepens as it flows on toward the sea, overflowing obstacles within and without, and gaining in blessing and power.

At that time. The original literally implies "on that very day," as in the R. V.; immediately after the stoning. That was the first blow, the signal for the excited and tumultuous crowd to

¹ Compare "The deep damnation of his taking off." *Macbeth*, Act I., Scene 7.

2 And devout men ^{carried} ^{buried} Stephen, ^{to his burial,} and ^m made great lamentation over him.

3 As for ⁿ Saul, ^{he made havoc of} ^{the church,} entering into every house, and ^o haling men and women committed ^{them} to prison.

^m Cp. Gen. 50. 10 & Jer. 6. 26, *al.*
¹ Tim. 1. 13. ^o Cp. James 2. 6.

ⁿ ch. 9. 1, 13, 21 & 22. 4, 19 & 26. 10, 11. ¹ Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6.

attack the Christians throughout the city. There was a great persecution, *διωγμὸς*, from *διώκω*, to cause to run, and also to run swiftly in order to catch some person. Both ideas are included in persecution. The severity and the variety of suffering may be imagined from James' description (Jas. 2 : 6, 7), and Paul's in 2 Cor. 11 : 23-25, and from the accounts of later persecutions in Rome.¹

They were all. "It is absurd to take this with mathematical exactness."²

Scattered abroad, *διεσπάρησαν*, from *διδ*, thoroughly, throughout, in all directions, and *σπείρω*, to sow, to scatter like seed. They were like good living seed scattered in all directions.

"For the extent of the dispersion, overruled to the enlargement of the church, see Acts 11 : 19, 20. It was not merely the result of panic, but in obedience to Christ's command (Matt. 10 : 23)."³ Throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, where they would be less exposed to persecution than at Jerusalem.

Except the apostles. Why did these remain ? (1) They were followers of the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, and not hirelings, who flee because they are hirelings (John 10 : 11-13). So Nehemiah said, "Shall such a man as I flee ?" (2) They were the leaders, the organizers of the church ; their place, the headquarters of all the disciples. It was not fitting that they should flee. Their steadfastness would strengthen the believers everywhere. Their fleeing would almost break up the church. They must remain at every cost. (3) "It is probable that they were permitted by the authorities to remain because they had not yet proclaimed the truth that Stephen emphasized, as to the passing away of the 'customs of Moses.' They were conspicuous as worshippers in the temple, kept themselves from all that was common and unclean (chap. 10 : 14), held aloof from fellowship with the Gentiles (chap. 10 : 28)."⁴ (4) It might not have been safe to attack the apostles, who

were so prominent and so loved and admired by the people (Acts 5 : 13). To have assailed them might have caused a reaction against the rulers and their persecutions.

2. And devout men, *εὐλαβεῖς*, "from *εἶδ*, well, and *λαμβάνω*, to take hold of ; hence, cautious persons who take hold of things carefully. As applied to morals and religion it emphasizes the element of *circumspection*, a cautious, careful observance of the divine law."⁵ Reverencing God, pious, religious.

As the Christians were immediately driven away by the persecution, it is probable that these devout men were "pious Jews who, though not professedly followers of Jesus, still as inquirers, had listened with admiration to the brave and eloquent deacon." Being Jews, but not Christians, they need not perform the funeral rites in secret. "In the legend or tradition as to the death of Stephen, reported and accepted by Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, 17 : 8 ; *Serm.*, 318, 319 ; *Tract. in Johann.*, 120), Gamaliel and Nicodemus are named as actually taking part in the entombment, and as afterwards laid in the same sepulchre."⁶

Carried Stephen to his burial, *συνεκόμισαν*, from *σύν*, together, and *κομίζω*, to carry away in order to care for and preserve. Used of those who bring in the harvest together, and of those who join together in carrying the dead to their burial. The word includes the whole funeral ceremony.

And made great lamentation, *κοπεῖν*, from *κόπτομαι*, to beat the breast.⁷ "If the mourners included Jews as well as Jewish Christians, it may well have been that the lamentation was not only a token of sorrow and respect, but also in the nature of a protest on the part of the more moderate section of the Pharisees."⁷

3. As for Saul, he made havoc of, *ἐλυμάλετο*, from *λύω*, injury, ruin ; hence, devastated the church, as an army devastates the country it overruns, or as wild beasts ravage a garden, or field of grain, or a pasture where they destroy the sheep. "In the Septuagint of Ps. 80 : 13, it is used of

¹ See Pliny's letter to the Emperor Trajan, and Trajan's reply, written A. D. 112, discovered in Paris A. D. 1500. The letters are given with comments in Prof. Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, and partly in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*. The persecutions under Nero are described by Tacitus, also quoted by Professor Thatcher, *Apostolic Church*, pp. 280-287. See, also, the descriptions in *Quo Vadis*.

² Blass.

³ Canon Cook.

⁴ Plumptre.

⁵ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

⁶ On funerals and mourning, see Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*, "Funerals and Mourning in the East ;" Edersheim, *Jesus the Messiah*, i. p. 616 ; and *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, p. 172 ff.

⁷ Knowing.

4 Therefore ^{they} ~~They~~ ^{therefore} that were scattered abroad went ^{every where} ~~about~~ ^{about} preaching the word.

p. ver. 1.

the laying waste of a vineyard by the wild boar." "As the word is used only by St. Luke, it is possible that it may have been suggested by its frequent employment in medical language,¹ where it is employed not only of injury by wrong treatment, but also of the ravages of disease."² Compare 1 Tim. 1: 13, which may well refer to the infliction of personal insults and injuries, as expressed by this word.³

Entering into every house, especially "the houses known as places of Christian assembly." No place was safe from the persecutor; no man's "house was his castle." Haling. Old English for hauling, dragging out by violence. This form of the word is still used in *halyards*. "Paul's own statements confirm this description. He thought 'he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth . . . in Jerusalem . . . he shut up many of the saints in prisons' (Acts 26: 9, 10). Women also suffered, — a fact three times repeated as a great aggravation of his cruelty (Acts 9: 2; 22: 4). Stephen was not the only one who suffered death (Acts 22: 4; 26: 10). Paul 'persecuted the church beyond measure' (Gal. 1: 13), and used every effort to make the Christians blaspheme that Holy Name whereby they were called (Acts 26: 11). His fame as an inquisitor was notorious far and wide; Ananias of Damascus had heard how much evil he had done to the saints at Jerusalem (Acts 9: 13, 21; see Phil. 3: 6; 1 Tim. 1: 13; 1 Cor. 15: 9)."⁴

4. Therefore, *μὲν οὖν*, marking a general statement, as "then," *δὲ*, of ver. 5, introduces a particular instance.⁵

They that were scattered abroad, *διασπαρύντες*, from *διδ*, thoroughly, in all directions, and *σπέρω*, to sow, to scatter like seed. They were as seed scattered in all directions by the farmer sowing his field broadcast. They went through Samaria, Galilee, and as far as Phœnicia, Antioch, and Cyprus.

Preaching the word. The persecution not only sent them over the country, but opened the way, in each town or village where they found shelter, for speaking about Jesus and his gospel; for they must explain why they left

Jerusalem, and were now wanderers. Their persecution would excite the sympathy of many. Compare, for an example of the same principle, Desdemona's attraction to Othello, Act I., Scene 3. Many were waiting for the larger hope, and were in earnest to know the truth.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Persecution, opposition, difficulties, ridicule, are a sifting process. They keep away most hypocrites, and prevent the careless and the ungodly from joining the movement from unworthy motives, or from the current of popular feeling. The wind that makes the real fire burn brighter blows away the imitation, and cools whatever is heated only from without.

2. Such things reveal us to ourselves. Oftentimes the young convert has felt with the hymn:—

" 'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought, —
Do I love the Lord, or no,
Am I his or am I not."

But serving God when it costs to serve him, and working for Jesus in spite of opposition and temptation, prove to ourselves that we love him, and aid us to the assurance of faith and hope. Many may have lost their property, but we hear of no one who had lost his faith.

3. Persecution is often one of the means God uses for the spread of the gospel. This is not saying that persecution is ever right. It is always wrong. But if men will do wrong things, they shall be compelled also to let them work out good.⁶

4. It enlarged the church in its quality, character, and power. It broadened the vision and widened the view. "The safety and happiness of the church depend thus, under God, on its efficiency as an aggressive force upon the world. Stagnation is death. The physical philosopher tells us that *heat is only a form of motion*; and the warmth of Christian love is only one of the forms of Christian activity. The *pool* is very soon corrupt, but the *river* filters itself into purity as it flows, and sings the while a sweet song in the ear of God."⁷ "Uninterrupted prosperity and

¹ See Hobart, *Medical Language of St. Luke*, pp. 211, 212. ² Knowing.

³ See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, 11: 5.

⁴ Schaaff, *Rev. Com.*

⁵ See Rendall's *Acts*, Appendix on *μὲν οὖν*.

⁶ When Tyndale published at Worms his first complete edition of the New Testament, he sent several hundred copies to England. These, by command of Henry VIII., were bought up and burned at St. Paul's. But the money

paid for them enabled Tyndale to get out a new and more accurate edition, of which three times as many copies were sold in England as had been burned.

⁷ William M. Taylor, D. D. See Max Müller on *Missions*. "The very soul of our religion is missionary, progressive, world-embracing; it would cease to exist if it ceased to be missionary." See, also, the story of Francis Xavier's vision in Rome in Kip's *Conflicts of Christianity*, p. 185.

5 ^{Then} ^{And} Philip went down to the city of Să-mā'ri-ă, and ^{preached Christ} ^{proclaimed} unto them.

the Christ.

6 And ^{the} ^{people with one accord} gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and ^{seeing the} ^{multitudes} gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, ^{miracles} ^{and saw the signs} which he did.

7 For ^{unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them:} ^{from many of those who had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice:} and many ^{taken with palsies,} ^{that were palsied,} and that were lame, were healed.

q ch. 6. 5.

r Cp. John 4. 38.

s John 2. 23.

t See Mark 16. 17, 18.

growth might have been fatal to the development of the finer Christian graces, humility, trust, patience, and purity." New work and new circumstances would develop new graces and new powers, and complete their Christian character. Instead of a short-lived, narrow sect, the church became a world-wide power for salvation.

5. Many were set to work who would otherwise have remained comparatively useless. Going into a new church, having several small churches instead of one great one, moving from an old, thickly settled country into new regions, — these things develop many a person, and reveal in him powers and characteristics that before had lain dormant.¹

PHILIP THE EVANGELIST IN SAMARIA, vers. 5-8.

5. Then Philip, the evangelist, one of the seven deacons (6: 5), not the apostle of the same name.

Of his previous history we know nothing. Besides this work recorded in this chapter, we find him later a resident of Cæsarea, with four daughters gifted in speaking to the people (Acts 21: 9). Paul and Luke visited them at their home here, and Luke may have learned about his work from the evangelist himself. The city of Samaria. The capital of the district of Samaria, built by Omri, the father of King Ahab. The old city had been destroyed by Hyrcanus,² and remained desolate till Herod built another city on the historic site, which he named Sebaste (Greek for the Latin Augustus) in honor of Augustus Cæsar. It was still called also by the old name of Samaria.³ It was a city of great strength and beauty. As in some manuscripts the article is omitted before "city" in the Greek, there are those who think, with Alford, that the city was Sychar where Christ had preached.

And preached, ἐκήρυσεν, proclaimed, Jesus as

the Christ, the Messiah, unto them. Simon was the leader of the opposition, a man of great influence, but apparently Philip took no direct notice of him. He simply preached the gospel.

"Philip did not argue down Simon: he superseded him. The daylight does not argue with the artificial light: it outshines it; it makes it useless."⁴

6. The people with one accord, ὁμοθυμαδόν, from ὁμός, together, and θυμός (from θύω, to rush along), feeling, passion, ardor, glow; hence, with one mind, one feeling, one accord. Gave heed.

1. It is quite possible that Philip may have reaped a harvest from the seed sown by Jesus himself, nearly ten years before (John 4) in a city of the same region. The seeds of truth often spring up after lying dormant for years. 2. Another reason for the welcome of the gospel may lie in the fact of the cordial love and equal treatment by the Christians. So different from that of the Jews, who had no dealings with the Samaritans. 3. The gospel itself. Hearing the gracious words of eternal life, and of the effects of the gospel upon those who had embraced it at Jerusalem. 4. Seeing the miracles, σημεῖα, signs, of their divine authority and power, and of the loving, helpful nature of the gospel they preached.

7. Unclean spirits. So called because they defiled and degraded both the body and soul of those they possessed.

Demoniacs were types and symbols of the power of evil spirits over the souls of men that yielded to them, including such as the evil spirits of war, intemperance, sensuality, ambition, selfishness.⁵

One of the most striking phenomena in the demonized was that they lost at least temporarily their own self-consciousness, and became identified with the demon or demons. As a physician St. Luke must have often come into contact with those who had unclean spirits, and he would naturally have studied closely the nature of their dis-

¹ See Whittier's *Poems*, "The Two Rabbits."

"Heaven's gate is shut to him that comes alone.
Save thou a soul, and it shall save thine own."

² Josephus, *Antiquities*, 13: 10, 3; 15: 8, 5.

³ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 6, 2.

⁴ Joseph Parker.

⁵ "There is an ineradicable disposition in the human

soul to think that this one little world is not apart from all the rest. Paul cries to his Ephesians, 'You are fighting with principalities and powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenly regions, in the sky or air.' He is thinking of evil spirits. He believes distinctly in a universe all full of unseen forces. The sky was full of them." — *Phillips Brooks*.

8 And "there was ^{great} ^{much} joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, ^{called Sⁱmon,} ^{Sⁱmon by name,} which beforetime in the ^{same} city ^v used sorcery, and ^{bewitched} ^{amazed} the people of Sā-mā'ī-rā, ^w giving out that himself was some great one:

u ver. 30. See John 16. 22.

v ver. 11. ch. 13. 6.

w See ch. 5. 36.

ease. Moreover, St. Luke not only shows himself acquainted with the characteristics of demoniacal possession, cf. his description in Luke 8: 27; 9: 38, 39, but he constantly, as in the passage before us, distinguishes it from disease itself, and that more frequently than the other evangelists. Hobart draws special attention to Luke 6: 17; 8: 4; 13: 32, which have no parallels in the other Gospels, and Acts 19: 12; to which we may add Luke 4: 40; Acts 5: 16.

Taken with palsies, *παρὰλευμένοι*, from *παρά*, by or at the side, and *λύνω*, to loose; hence, suffering from the relaxing of the nerves on one side, having paralysis.

Were healed. Note how closely these healings were connected with the gospel. It is probable that a "tree of healing" that would cure all bodily diseases, without any regard to character, would be a curse to mankind. Thus Bulwer, in his *Lost Tales of Miletus*, "Death and Sisyphus," represents Death as clasped in the Debtor's Chair, and unable to destroy men, with the result that not a single prayer rose to God; and to the red lightnings of divine wrath, "Blaze on," the felon said, "ye cannot kill." The Tree of Healing must be close by the Tree of Life, and lead men nearer to God and to heaven.

"Medical work takes the place of miracles in the apostolic age. It does more. Miracles proved the power of God and the apostolate of man. But medical work in connection with missions proves that the apostle has the spirit of his Master, and shows what the power of God can do to make man godlike."¹

8. And there was great joy. R. V., "much joy," both in depth and extent; great in quality, much in extent. Everything in this religion conduced to joy, — the joy of health, the joy of being saved from sin, joy like the angels in the conversion of sinners, joy of reconciliation to God, joy of fresh new life, joy of Christian activity, — joy like Christ's, unselfish and heavenly.²

THE ATTRACTIVE POWER of these miracles was threefold: (1) They delivered from very real and great evils; (2) they were signs and object-

lessons of the work of the gospel which Philip preached; (3) they were proofs of his authority, and of the power of God to save from sin and evil here and hereafter.

SIMON THE MAGICIAN UNITES WITH THE CHURCH, vers. 9-13.

Luke now turns back to the state of things before Philip began his work in Samaria.

9. A certain man, called Simon. Little is known of him. Neander identifies this Simon with one mentioned as living from ten to twenty years after this by Josephus,³ and as having been employed by the procurator Felix to tempt Drusilla to leave her husband (King Azizus) and live with him, which she did (Acts 24: 24). Simon is there called "a Jew, born in Cyprus."⁴ On the other hand, Rendall thinks there is no ground for this identification except the name, which was very common. The number of legends which a century or two later clustered around this Simon shows that he made a deep impression at the time. It is said that he was able to convert human beings into brutes, like the Greek Circe, and he could make lifeless statues speak.

"Bitterly annoyed at the result of his collision with the followers of Jesus, it is probable that this unhappy man at once turned his great powers (for these undoubtedly he possessed in no mean degree) to oppose the growing influence of the little church. His evil work was crowned with no small measure of success, for in the records of the early history of Christianity, among the many false teachers who sprang up, Simon Magus is invested with a mysterious importance, 'as the great Heresiarch, the open enemy of the apostles, inspired, it would seem, by the spirit of evil, to countermine the work of the Saviour, and to found a school of error in opposition to the church of God.'"⁵

Justin Martyr, in his *Apology* (about A. D. 150), speaks of Simon Magus as having gone to Rome, where his teaching was so successful in leading the Roman people astray that they worshipped him as a god, and erected a statue in his honor

¹ Prof. Geo. E. Post, M. D. See Phillips Brooks' *Sermons*, series 6, "The Battle of Life;" R. F. Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*, "The Cartoon of Disease and Death;" Dr. Nevius' *Demon Possession*; Dr. Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*, "Calls for Healing in the East."

² Professor Drummond's *Paz Yobiscum*, pp. 50-58,

"How Fruits Grow," especially the fruit of the Spirit, Joy; Spurgeon's *Salt-Cellars*, p. 61, "On Joy in Religion;" Earle, in his *Bringing in the Sheaves*, relates two incidents of the power of a joyful Christian life.

³ *Antiquities*, 20: 7, 2.

⁴ Alford.

⁵ Schaff.

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is ^{the great} power of God^{which is called y Great.}

11 And ^{to him they had regard,} because that of long time he had ^{z bewitched} amazed^{they gave heed to him,} them with his sorceries.

12 But when "they believed Philip preaching ^{the things} good tidings^b concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, "they were baptized, both men and women.

z ch. 14. 11 & 28. 6.
b ch. 1. 3.

y Cp. ch. 19. 27, 28.

z ver. 9.

Cp. ver. 13 & Gal. 3. 1.

a ch. 16. 33, 34 & 18. 8. Mark

upon the Island of the Tiber between the two bridges of the city, with the inscription SIMONI DEO SANCTO, "To Simon the Holy God."¹ In the year 1574 there was dug up on this island a statue bearing the inscription SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO SACRUM, which at first was regarded as the statue to Simon Magus, described by Justin Martyr, but now is generally agreed among scholars to have been a statue *Sacred to Semo Sancus, the God of Oaths*, the old Sabine Heracles.

Which beforetime, before Philip came. Used sorcery, *μαγείαν*, from *μάγος* (*magos*, whence our word "magic"), denoting the acts of *wise men* who interpreted dreams. Hence, the word came to denote any enchanter or wizard, and in a bad sense, a juggler, a quack. Simon doubtless exercised the same arts as the modern fortune-teller, with, perhaps, a knowledge of chemistry and the powers of hypnotism, mesmerism, together with sleight-of-hand and ventriloquism. Many of these effects are very wonderful, and inexplicable to all but the initiated, so that it is not strange that Simon bewitched the people, *ἐξήρωσεν*, literally, to put out of place, to put out of one's senses, as in Mark 3: 21 the word is translated, *he is beside himself*; hence, it means *amazed far beyond their ordinary conditions; astonished out of their wits, perplexed. That himself was some great one.*

"According to Irenæus, I. 23, 1, Simon claimed to combine in himself the Three Persons in the Trinity, alleging that he appeared to the Jews as the Son, to the Samaritans as the Father, and among the Gentiles as the Holy Ghost."² According to his later followers he said: "*Ego sum sermo Dei, ego sum speciosus, ego paracletus, ego omnipotens, ego omnia dei*"³ (I am the word of God, I am the glorious one, I, the Holy Spirit, I, the Almighty, I, the fulness of God).

10. To whom they all gave heed. The Samaritans, like the rest of the Jews, seem to have been expecting a Messiah, not only a political, but a religious Deliverer "and one in whom the

promise of Deut. 18: 15 would be fulfilled."⁴ So that the soil was prepared for any one who could give presumptive evidence that he was the Expected One.

"At that time an indefinite longing after a new voice from heaven, — a strange, restless feeling in men's minds, such as usually goes before mighty changes in the history of men, was spread abroad; this vague, anxious feeling bewildered and deceived many."⁵ The noble Romans who had lost all firm hold on the national religion, felt themselves driven by a kind of instinctive necessity to get such a connection with the unseen world as could be furnished them by the mysticism of Oriental quacks. A Marius had resorted to the prognostications of the Jewess Martha. At this particular epoch, augurs, haruspices, Babylonians, mathematici, astrologers, magians, soothsayers, casters of horoscopes, fortune-tellers, ventriloquists, dream-interpreters, flocked to Rome in such multitudes, and acquired such vogue, as to attract the indignant notice of both satirists and historians. A few of them — like Apollonius of Tyana, and at a later period, Alexander of Abonoteichos and the cynic Peregrinus — attracted universal attention. There was scarcely a Roman family that did not keep or consult its own foreteller of the future; and Juvenal describes the Emperor Tiberius as seated "with a herd of Chaldeans" on his rock at Capri.⁶

This man is the great power of God. Among the Samaritans the angels were regarded as powers of God, and Simon was regarded as one of the greatest.

11. To him they had regard. The same original words, as "gave heed" in ver. 10.

When they saw this candle in the darkness, they were ready to believe that it was a star shining from heaven.

12. But when they believed Philip. When they saw the true light, they turned from the feeble worldly light that had attracted them before. (1) Philip's teaching met their needs,

¹ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2: 13.

² Canon Cook.

³ Jerome.

⁴ See Edersheim, *Jesus the Messiah*, i. 402, 403; West-

cott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, pp. 102, 163.

⁵ Neander, *Planting of the Christian Church*, vol. i.

⁶ Farrar.

13 ^{Then} And Simon ^{also} himself believed; ^{also:} and ^{when he was being} baptized, he continued with Philip; and ^{wondered,} ^c beholding ^{the miracles and signs which were done.} signs and ^d great miracles wrought, ^e he was amazed.

14 Now when ^f the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that ^g Sā-mā'rī-ā had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John :

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, ^h that they might receive the Holy Ghost :

16 * (For ⁱ as yet he was ^j fallen upon none of them: only ^k they ^{were} had been baptized ⁱⁿ into the name of the Lord Jesus.)

c vers. 6, 7. d ch. 19. 11. e Cp. ver. 9. f ver. 1. g ch. 1. 8. h ch. 2. 38. * This verse is not a parenthesis in the R. V. i Cp. ch. 19. 2. j ch. 10. 44 & 11. 15. k ch. 19. 5. Cp. ch. 2. 38 & 10. 47, 48 & Matt. 28. 19 & 1 Cor. 1. 13, 15 & Gal. 3. 27.

brought forgiveness and salvation, hope and joy. (2) Philip's works were not only more wonderful, but more gracious, more loving, more divine; and they were such that all possibility of deception was removed. (3) Simon's produced wonder, but did not bring religion. He touched the mind, but left the heart as it was. (4) Simon was selfish, seeking money and honor; Philip sought nothing for himself, but only the good of others. **They (the believers) were baptized.** According to the command of Christ, as the outward condition of admission to the kingdom of Christ. It is the rite of profession. No better way of public profession of Christ can be found than this of Christ's own ordaining. "The tense points not to one great act, but to the continual succession of converts who were thus admitted."¹

13. Then Simon himself believed also. He believed that Jesus was the Messiah. He knew all about the tricks of magic, and the character of magicians, and he knew that miracles wrought in the name of Jesus were real and divine. "Yet this faith of his was only historical and intellectual, without having as its result a change of the inner life; hence, he was soon afterwards capable of what is related in vers. 18, 19."² "It was a belief about the facts and not a belief in him whom the facts made known, a belief in the power of the new faith, but not an acceptance of its holiness."³ It was without heart, without giving up all to Jesus, without accepting him as his Saviour, guide, teacher, and Lord. He was baptized. Thus making a public profession of his faith. Perhaps he was self-deceived, and thought that he possessed the same faith as the others, and knew all about religion. And wondered, *ἐξίστατο*, the same verb as "bewitched," R. V. "amazed," in vers. 9, 11. *The miracles and signs, σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις*, signs and powers. "Powers" conveys the idea of power resident in a person.

"Here, apparently, outward cures are classed as *σημεῖα* (signs), while *δυνάμεις* (power), which has

been before personified in ver. 10, denotes the restorative power of the Spirit upon the demoniac and the paralytic."⁴

SIMON AND THE DELEGATION FROM JERUSALEM, vers. 14-25.

14. The apostles . . . sent unto them Peter and John. Not as rulers, but as a friendly delegation of leading apostles who could be trusted. The early Christians were sufficiently conservative, but yet had open minds to the guidance of God's providence, though they were not so progressive as to neglect to study carefully the facts. The object of the delegation seems to have been to obtain a true report of the strange doings in Samaria, which, if true, must change the views of the Christian church. Were these true conversions? Should the Samaritan converts be received and welcomed in spite of the barriers between Jews and Samaritans, "who have no dealings" with one another (John 4: 9)? Besides this, Peter and John could give wise counsel to the new converts, and further instruction in the teachings of Jesus, and confer some spiritual gifts. "John *once*," says Barnes, "would have called down destroying fire upon the Samaritans (Luke 9: 54). Now he gladly seeks to bring upon them the blessed baptism of fire from the Holy Ghost."

15. Prayed for them. The two apostles found that the conversions were real, but that the converts had received only a portion of the blessings of the gospel. "There was more to follow." Therefore they prayed for them, since the best spiritual gifts come through prayer.

That they might receive the Holy Ghost. Not the ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit who had already convicted them "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," and changed their hearts so that they were "born anew of the spirit;" but the larger special gifts of the Spirit for greater devotion, for power in service as Jesus had promised (Acts 1: 8), and, in fuller degree,

¹ Plumptre.

² Meyer.

³ Knowling.

⁴ Rendall.

17 Then ^l laid they ^{their} hands on them, and ^m they received the Holy Ghost.

18 ^{And Now} when Simon saw that through ^{the} laying on of the apostles' hands ^{the} Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay ^{my} hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

^l ch. 9. 17 & 19. 6. Cp. ch. 6. 6 & Heb. 6. 2. ^m See ch. 2. 4.

the "divine indwelling of the Spirit which makes the Christian the temple of God (Gal. 3: 2; Rom. 8: 15)." ¹

17. Then laid they their hands on them, to express that the gift came from God through his apostles. It was a connecting link between the giver and the receiver. And they received the Holy Ghost, probably with the outward manifestations of Pentecost, and the inward grace which they represented. For it is plain from Simon's request that there must have been some "visible and audible phenomena, as was common in the apostolic age." . . . "Simon would never have offered money for a power that produced effects which might as easily be produced in other ways, and which gave no clear indication of supernatural influence." ²

The special reasons for this gift were much the same as on its first bestowal at Pentecost. (1) It expressed clearly the inward grace and power, so that both those who received it, and all others, might realize the fact of the unseen gift, as the spark or the lightning reveals the presence of electricity. (2) The new church, under new circumstances, needed the power, and gifts, and fresh life bestowed. (3) It proved to the Jewish disciples, and especially to the church at Jerusalem, that the Samaritan movement was from God, and approved by the Saviour and Master.

THE SAMARITAN PIER OF THE BRIDGE FROM JEWS TO GENTILES. The greatest epoch in the early church, and one essential to the gospel, was to be the reception of the Gentile Christians without their first becoming Jews. A great gulf lay between them which it seemed impossible to bridge. All were willing enough that Gentiles should become Jewish Christians, but they did not see how to welcome them as Gentile Christians. How could they join in eating and in social life with those whose food was forbidden, with whom an intermarriage was against their law. The great change could not be made suddenly, but only after due preparation.

¹ "In Mr. Moody's illustration of the tumbler filled with air, the air cannot be taken out of it, but as soon as the water is poured in the air goes out, and the tumbler is filled with water. Just so with the cleansing of the heart and life from sin. The incoming of the Spirit means the outgoing of all sin. Be filled with the Spirit and you will be emptied of self and of sin. The coming of the Spirit of God means our sanctification, our deliver-

"God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal their calyxes of gold."

Thus the reception of the Samaritans, who were half Jews (2 Kings 17: 24-29) and accepted the Mosaic books, but not the interpretations of the Elders, prepared the way for the wider opening of the door to the Gentiles.

18. And when Simon saw, by means of the visible symbols of the Spirit's presence. This expression gives us insight into the real character of Simon, and into the nature of his faith, which rested in the outward signs of a higher power than his own magic, but caught feeble glimpses of the renovating, transforming power of the Spirit over the hearts and lives of men. He offered them money. "Like conjurers and wizards of every age and country, he had spent much to add fresh tricks or spells to his store, and he had come to think that this wonder-working, like everything of the kind, had its price." ³

19. On whomsoever I lay my hands, "i. e., quite apart from any profession of faith or test of character; no words could more plainly show how completely Simon mistook the essential source and meaning of the power which he coveted." ⁴

"Love for man and the promotion of God's glory, — these two marks were stamped upon every supernatural act which the apostles performed." ⁵

NOTE 1. From this action of Simon his name has won an immortality of infamy, since the crime of *Simony* is named after him. "Simony is the act or practice of trafficking in sacred things; particularly the buying or selling of ecclesiastical preferment;" ⁶ the crime of obtaining spiritual things, as "orders, benefices, or any position which entitles to the administration of spiritual gifts, by money."

NOTE 2. How little of the best things can be bought for money! Wisdom, spiritual power, poetic feeling, sound judgment, character, love,

ance from sin." — J. F. Carson, D. D., in *Northfield Echoes*.

² McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*.

³ Luckock, *Footprints of the Apostles*, i. 207.

⁴ Knowling.

⁵ *Century Dictionary*.

20 But Peter said unto him, "Thy ^{money} ^{silver} perish with thee, because thou hast thought ^{that} ^{to obtain} the gift of God ^{may be purchased} with ^o money.

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter : for ^{in the sight of} ^{before} thy heart is not right ^{of} God.

22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray ^{the} ^{God,} ^{Lord,} if perhaps the thought of ^{thine} ^{thy} heart ^{may} ^{shall} be forgiven thee.

23 For I ^{perceive} ^{see} that thou [']art in [']the gall of bitterness, and ⁱⁿ the [']bond of iniquity.

n Cp. 2 Kin. 5. 16 & Dan. 5. 17. o Isai. 55. 1. p 2 Kin. 10. 15. Ps. 78. 37. q Dan. 4. 27. 2 Tim. 2. 25.
r Cp. 2 Kin. 8. 11, 12 (for mg.). s Deut. 29. 18 & 32. 32. Heb. 12. 15. t Isai. 58. 6. Cp. Eph. 4. 3 & Col. 3. 14.

peace, forgiveness, communion with God, heaven, are as possible to the poorest man as to the richest. They can be received as far as we open our minds and hearts, but never bought. The best things of God are free to all men, as the most beautiful forms and lines are the most common.¹

"At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay;
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking,
'T is heaven alone that is given away,
'T is only God may be had for the asking."²

20. But Peter said. The request of Simon, like Ithuriel's spear in Paradise, revealed the true nature of his piety.

Thy money perish with thee. This is not a curse on Simon, but a declaration that in his present state of heart he is a lost man. "The real force of the prayer is not that Simon may perish, but that, as he is already on the road to destruction, so the silver may perish which is dragging him down, to the intent, as ver. 22 makes manifest, that Simon himself may repent and be forgiven."³

Because thou hast thought, because you have so little conception of God and his grace and of spiritual gifts, that you could think that the gift of God may be purchased with money. There was a sinful intention coming from a heart not right before God. (1) Salvation is God's free gift, and as such draws the heart to God, which is essential to salvation. Salvation bought is not salvation at all. (2) Salvation is so precious that there is nothing of sufficient value wherewith to purchase it. (3) Salvation is of such a nature that it cannot be purchased; it is love, but purchased love is not love; it is a choice of good and God, but a choice cannot be purchased. (4) Money is but a small portion of what God asks of us in return for his salvation. He wants the heart, the soul, the whole of us; and all is infinitely too little to give him.

21. Thou hast neither part nor lot. "If there is any difference in these words, the first indicates a portion already assigned; the second, one yet to be assigned. The first would then indicate that Simon had no present portion in Christian gifts; the second, no share in the future inheritance of the saints."⁴ "The first term is literal, the second figurative; they are conjoined, in order to affirm the exclusion spoken of with more emphasis."⁵

In this matter, *λόγῳ*, the word, which the apostles preached, "the ministry of the Word, which Simon hoped to share with the apostles as a means of sharing their power."⁶ But *λόγος*, word, is often used in classical Greek for the thing spoken of, the subject matter. The meaning seems to be that Simon's request showed that he had no part or lot in the religion of Jesus, — in its divine life here and hereafter, its spirit, its blessings, its gifts, its labors. He was outside of the gospel sphere.

For thy heart is not right, *εὐθεῖα*, straight, morally upright and true. His heart being wrong, he was all wrong.

22. Repent therefore, *μετανόησον*, change your mind and heart; "amend your life, with abhorrence of your past life."

If perhaps, showing the great difficulty in forgiving such an aggravated and deep-seated sin, for it is difficult for such a person to really repent of an evil which is not a single act, but an all-pervasive quality of the character.

23. For "gives the reason, not why it would be difficult for forgiveness to take place, but why he had such extreme need of repentance and prayer."⁶

Thou art in the gall of bitterness, "a gall which is the very seat and essence of bitterness." In, *εἰς*, is literally *into*. Thou hast fallen *into*, and continuest *in* the gall, *χολήν*, either the juice of the gall plant, "a poisonous plant of intense bitterness and of quick growth," or bile, gall, as "the

¹ Compare Ruskin's account of the refusal of the artist Turner to tell the secret of his coloring, *Modern Painters*, vol. v.

² Lowell, *Poems*, "Vision of Sir Launfal."

³ Rendall.

⁵ Hackett.

⁴ Lyman Abbott.

⁶ Alford.

24 Then answered Simon, and said, "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. for me to the Lord,

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Să-măr'i-tāns.

26 And an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gă'zā: which is desert.

^u Cp. Ex. 8. 8 & 9. 28 & 10. 17. Cp. Judg. 6. 12 & 13. 3.

^v Cp. vers. 6-8 & John 4. 38.

^w ch. 5. 19 & 10. 3 & 11. 13 & 12. 7, 23 & 27. 23.

gall of vipers, *i. e.*, the poison of vipers, which the ancients supposed to lie in the gall."¹ So in Job 20: 14, "The gall of asps within him." This denotes the intense malignity and bitterness of the moral disease into which Simon had fallen.

And in the bond of iniquity, *συνδεσμων*, a very close, firm bond, a bond together, fastened on all sides. Thou hast fallen into iniquity which is binding you in fetters of steel.

Rendall presents a different view of the application of this verse, from a different interpretation of the preposition *eis*, translated *in* in our version; "*eis* before indefinite substantives has much the same force as *eis*, and answers to the English *as* or *for*." "Thou art as gall of bitterness and a bond of iniquity," denoting "the evil function which Simon would fulfil in the church of God if he continued as he was." Compare Heb. 12: 15; Deut. 29: 18. His presence among the disciples would be like bitter poison in good food, like a person with a malignant, contagious disease in the new community, and "a rallying point for the gathering of iniquity" binding it together.

24. Pray ye to the Lord for me. The desire of Simon that the apostles should pray for him does not imply that he did not pray for himself, but rather that he desired their prayers to be united with his.

That none of these things. The usual inference from this prayer seems unwarranted by the facts. It is said, "There is no true penitence in this prayer; no sense of sin; no seeking for forgiveness. It is the language of fear, not of repentance, and resembles that of Saul to Samuel (1 Sam. 15: 30), who desired not divine forgiveness, but escape from public censure and reprobation before the people." "So Pharaoh entreated Moses to intercede for him (Ex. 8: 28; 9: 28; 10: 17), and yet hardened his heart afterwards. Bengel observes here: 'He confesses his fear of punishment, not horror of guilt.'"

But what were these things which he desired not to come upon him? a heart not right in the

sight of God, that he might not be a "gall of bitterness" to the church nor fall into it himself, that he might not remain in the "bond of iniquity." The history in the Acts gives no further information concerning Simon: whether he repented, or whether he became one of the great opposers of Christianity as represented in later traditions.

25. And they, when they had testified. "The statement involves a stay of some duration, long enough to found and organize a community of disciples. And this was followed, not by an immediate return to Jerusalem, but, as the Greek tense shows, by one with many halts, at each of which the glad tidings of 'the word of the Lord' were proclaimed, and a church founded."²

Returned to Jerusalem. Most commentators think that only Peter and John returned, leaving Philip to pursue his ministry at Samaria. The reasons which sent Philip away from Jerusalem during the persecution would keep him away, unless there had been time for a mitigation of its severity. Knowing seems to agree with Rendall that Philip returned with them. "The particles *μὲν οὖν* (ver. 25) and *δέ* (ver. 26, both translated 'and' in the common version) mark a connection between the return of the party to Jerusalem and the angelic instruction to Philip that he should proceed along the desert road to Gaza. In this way they establish the fact, which may be gathered from other details of the narrative, that Philip returned with Peter and John to Jerusalem, and there received the heavenly mandate."³

PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN, vers. 26-38.

26. And the (better, "an") angel of the Lord. Whether he appeared in some visible form, or by some inward communication, or by vision, is not revealed, and is a matter of small consequence. But in any case it was a real messenger bringing a real message from God.

And go toward the south. "With his face to the south," from Samaria. This would lead him

¹ Knowing.

² Plumptre.

³ Rendall, Appendix, p. 164.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, ^a a man of ^b *Ē-thī-ō'pī-ā*, a eunuch of great authority under Cān'dā-qē, queen of the *Ē-thī-ō'pī-āns*, ^c who ^d had the charge of all her treasure, ^e and who had come to Jerusalem for to worship;

^a Cp. Jer. 38. 7.

^b Ps. 68. 31 & 87. 4. Zeph. 3. 10.

^c Ezra 7. 21.

^d Cp. 1 Kin. 8. 41, 42 & John 12. 20.

directly across the different roads from Jerusalem to Gaza on the main western road to Egypt. The command to go toward the south is an argument in favor of Philip's remaining at Samaria, and not going back to Jerusalem. He may have gone with Peter and John through the Samaritan villages, which fact would satisfy the reasons which Rendall gives for his returning as far as Jerusalem. Rendall, Nestle, Wendt, with the margin of Revision, read "at noon," the word for "south" and "noon" naturally being the same, the difference being in the preposition used. But noon is not a good time in the East for starting on a journey.

That goeth down from Jerusalem. Both because Jerusalem was on high land, and any road toward the coast must be a descending one, and also toward Jerusalem was always spoken of as up, and away from it as down, as in England it is always up to London and down from London, without any regard to relative position. Unto Gaza. A Philistine city. The scene of one of Samson's feats, and one of the oldest cities in the world. At present it contains about sixteen thousand inhabitants. Which is desert. That is, wild pasture lands, uncultivated and thinly inhabited. Opinion is still divided as to whether the adjective "desert" belongs to the way or the city. If it refers to the way, it designates the southern route through Hebron. For, "the other two routes—one by the seacoast, the other across the central and richest part of Philistia—passed through a thickly peopled country. The southern road, which is the only one adapted for chariots, passed by the great arterial highway of Solomon, and afterwards of the Romans, through Hebron; and then turned to the southwest, entering, in a few hours after leaving Hebron, upon a wide pastoral plain, which extends, without interruption, to Gaza."¹ This lonely region would be a natural one for the Ethiopian's reading aloud. "The angel said, 'Go to Gaza by the desert road.'"² On the other hand, Prof. George Adam Smith thinks it was Gaza which was desert, that is, the old city of Gaza three miles from the sea, which had been devastated with fire and sword B. C. 96. A new city of Gaza had been built by the seashore. The road from Jerusalem to Africa passed

through the old city which Josephus calls desert,³ and so does Strabo.⁴

27. And he arose and went. Apparently under sealed orders, as so often in life, not knowing the object of his journey.

"I know not where I am going, but well do I know my Guide."

Where the two roads from Samaria and Jerusalem unite, or while he was walking along the road common to the two journeys, he met, by the ordering of Providence, a man of Ethiopia. Ethiopia was a vague term for the lands south of Egypt, "but in this case we are able to identify it with the ancient Ethiopic kingdom of Meroë by the name of its queen, Candace." "The kingdom of Meroë lay on the right bank of the Nile from its junction with the Atbara, as far as Khartoum, and thence to the east of the blue Nile to the Abyssinian Mountains."⁵ A eunuch. A chamberlain or a servant of the bedchamber. The word "denoted the condition of a man who was chosen to watch over the women's apartment in great houses."⁶ Such persons, deprived of family ambition, were supposed "to be capable of peculiar devotion to the interests of their masters." "They were often very influential and superintended the education of young princes. The word is often used in a wide sense for such officials."⁷ "St. Luke's mention that he was a eunuch is quite in accordance with the 'universalism' of the Acts; gradually the barriers of a narrow Judaism were broken down, first in the case of the Samaritans, and now in the case of the eunuch."⁸ Of great authority, *δυνάστης*, from *δύναμις*, to be able, to have power; hence, a potentate, a man of power, a prince. Under Candace. Not the name of an individual, but of a dynasty, as Pharaoh in Egypt and Cæsar in Rome. Queen of the Ethiopians. The kingdom of Meroë was governed by queens in the time of Augustus, and, according to Eusebius, even to his time, three hundred years after Christ. Charge of all her treasure. (The Greek word for treasure is *gaza*.) He was at the head of the financial department of the kingdom, chancellor of the exchequer, secretary of the treasury. It is regarded as improbable that he was a Jew or a full Jewish proselyte, for eunuchs were not permitted to join

¹ Canon Tristram.

² Canon Cook.

³ *Antiquities*, 14: 5, 3.

⁴ *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 182-189.

⁵ Tristram. See Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*.

⁶ Pres. Woolsey.

⁷ Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

⁸ Knowing.

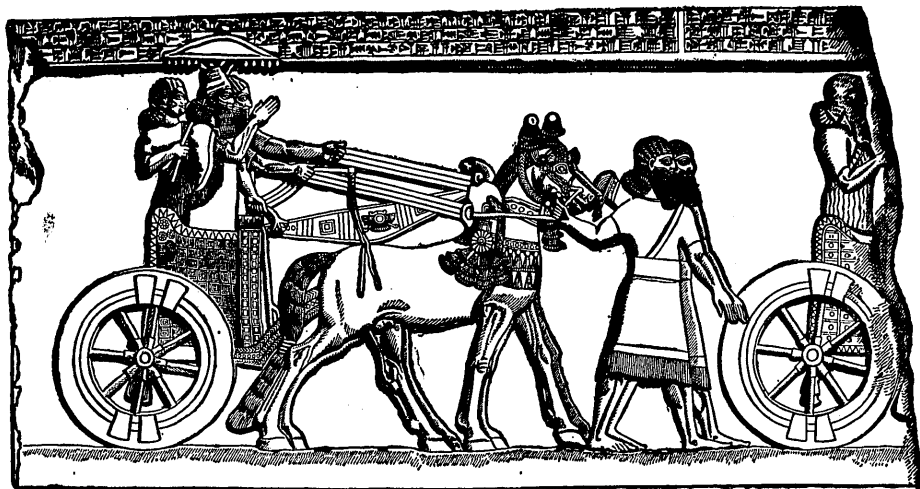
28 ^{Was} And he was returning^a and sitting in his chariot ^{read E-sai'as the prophet.} and was reading the prophet I-sai'ah.
 29 ^{Then} And the ^bSpirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

^b ch. 10. 19 & 11. 12 & 13. 2 & 20. 23 & 21. 11, *al.*

the congregation (Deut. 23 : 1), but he may have been a "proselyte of the gate," or one who in general adopted the worship of the Jews without becoming a Jew.

Had come to Jerusalem for to worship. Hav-

ing tasted of the stream, he sought the fountain. Having seen some rays, he sought the source of light. He had accepted the truth that was given him, which fact in itself, since he was a leading man, amid great temptations, showed a deeply



AN ANCIENT CHARIOT. From a bas-relief on the walls of the palace of Tiglath-Pileser III., at Nineveh, now in the British Museum.

From the *Oxford Bible*, by per.

sincere and earnest soul. But he wanted more light, and he travelled a long distance, at great expense, that he might obtain it.

28. Was returning. The time and the route were so arranged by Divine Providence that Philip and the Ethiopian should arrive at the junction of the roads at the same hour. Every life is full of such providences.¹ "They approached in different directions or converging lines until they met in a point like the apex of the letter V; but having met they soon separated again, like the crossing lines of the letter X, and probably never saw each other more in the body."²

And sitting in his chariot read, was reading. "It was a maxim of the Rabbis that one who was on a journey, and without a companion, should busy himself in the study of the law."³

He was reading aloud as was the custom. When riding alone on a long journey, this would be a very pleasant occupation.

"The great Jewish teachers insisted, in many instances, upon their scholars reading aloud. They would say, in effect, 'If you wish this word to abide in you, you must speak it aloud.' It is more easy for some minds to learn by the ear than by the eye; their minds require both the eye and the ear to coöperate in the act of memory. I speak to the experience, probably, of many, when I say that utterance aloud is often a very powerful aid to mental retentiveness."⁴

29. Then the Spirit said, by some inward impulse, influencing not merely his feelings, but his judgment; producing not merely an impression, but wisdom.

¹ Dr. Bushnell's *Sermons for the New Life*, "Every man's Life a Plan of God;" F. W. Robertson's *Life and Letters*, p. 13, giving an account of providential guidance

in his early life; the story "Hands Off," in Dr. E. E. Hale's *Christmas in a Palace*.

² Arnot.

³ Schaff.

⁴ Joseph Parker.

30 And Philip ran ^{thither} to ^{him} him; and heard him ^{read the prophet E-sal'as,} and said, ^{reading I-sal'ah the prophet,} Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, 'How can I, except some ^{man should} ^{one shall} guide me? And 'he ^{desired} ^{bought} Philip ^{that he would} ^{to} come up and sit with him.

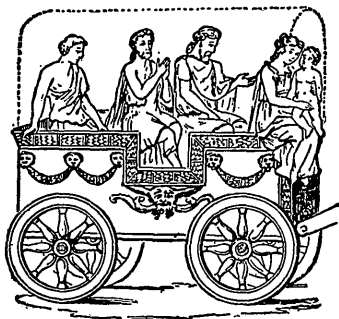
c See Rom. 10. 14.

d John 16. 13.

e Cp. 1 Kin. 20. 33 & 2 Kin. 10. 15.

30. And Philip ran thither, not only showing the eagerness of his obedience, but from necessity, if he would join the company of travellers. And while running beside the chariot he overheard him read the prophet Esaias. Greek for "Isaiah."

The citation which follows shows that he was reading from the Greek translation made in Egypt, and not from the Hebrew. Such a roll would be made by hand on parchment and was



A REDA, OR ROMAN TRAVELLING CARRIAGE with four wheels, adapted to the transport of a large party, with their baggage. From a drawing by Glinzert, after several models of carriages on the columns of Trajan and M. Aurelius.

From Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities (1897), by per.

very expensive, "a pearl of great price." He had probably bought it in Jerusalem in order to study the questions discussed there concerning the Messiah.¹

Understandest thou what thou readest? In the Greek there is a play upon the word for *understand* (*ginôskeis*, "to know") and *read* (*anaginôskeis*, "to know again," that is, to read, because the letter characters being permanent enable one to know again and again what they say). St. Paul uses the same play upon these words in 2 Cor. 3: 2: *ginôskomenê, known, and anaginôskomenê, read, of all men*. There is a well-known parallel saying of the Emperor Julian with reference to the Christian writings. *Anegnôn; eggnôn; kategnôn*, "I read; I understood; I condemned;" and the famous retort of the bishop, —

<i>Anegnôn,</i>	all' ouk <i>eggnôn</i> ;
<i>You read,</i>	but you did not <i>understand</i> ;
<i>ei gar eggnôn,</i>	ouk an <i>kategnôn</i> .
for if you <i>understood</i> ,	you would not <i>condemn</i> .

31. How can I, except some man should guide me? The passage in Isaiah was a very difficult one for a Jew to understand. It seemed almost impossible to put together the idea of Christ as a sufferer, as despised and slain, and the promise that he should be a glorious king, triumphing over the world. Only the facts could solve the problem; and these facts were familiar to Philip.

THE NEED OF HELPS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE FULL MEANING OF THE SCRIPTURES. There is enough of Scripture that is perfectly plain for every one to be guided safely through life to heaven; like the light and air and water in their familiar uses. We can see plainly enough with our eyes for our ordinary daily life.

But there are many things one can see with a microscope and telescope which he could never learn without those aids. There are depths and beauties and powers and blessings, which only an interpreter can reveal. Scientific men are the interpreters of nature. So are artists. So are thinkers. We cannot have too many of them. We can often see a thing very clearly after it is pointed out to us, which yet entirely escaped our notice before. A picture explained by an artist has been a new picture ever since, though we had seen it many times. A fact of nature pointed out by a scientist has illumined some portion of God's works which were unknown before. The same is true of the Scriptures. Researches in every department of knowledge are throwing light on the Bible. Different persons see the truth from different standpoints and from varied experiences. Each one can help to interpret the Bible to others. He is not wise who walks among treasures of knowledge, and over untold riches in the earth beneath his feet, and will learn only what he can find out for himself without an interpreter.

Mr. Ruskin says that one of the most difficult of arts is to see. One of his volumes has taught me to see things in nature that my eyes never understood before. A guide in foreign travel has shown me things, in a brief time, that it would

¹ Compare Bunyan's Pilgrim who found Evangelist when he was seeking to find the gate to the heavenly city.

32 ^{The} ^{Now} the place of the scripture which he ^{read} ^{was reading} was this,

✓ He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And ^{like} ^{as} a lamb ^{dumb} before his shearer¹ is dumb,
So ^{opened he} ^{he openeth} not his mouth:

33 In his ^{and who shall declare his generation?} ^{His generation who shall declare?} humiliation his judgment was taken away:

For his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other, ^{man?}

f Cited from Isai. 53. 7, 8, which see. *g* Cp. Phil. 2. 8.

have taken days or weeks to have learned by myself. More than one book has been to me a new revelation. Read Ruskin's interpretation of Milton's *Comus*, in his *Sesame and Lilies*, for a fine example. The reason for teachers, preachers, and books, is to interpret to others. They are like those who open the secret doors in an old castle, unnoticed till pointed out, but opening into treasures of gold and jewels and art.

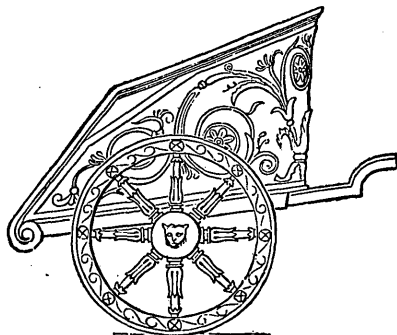
"We lack but open eye and ear
To find the Orient marvels here;
The still, small voice in autumn's hush,
Yon maple wood the burning bush."¹

And he desired, *παρεκάλεισε*, called to his side, hence, entreated, besought.

32. The place, *περιχώ*, from *περί*, around, and *χω*, to have, to hold; hence, an encompassing, thence, that which is contained in the compass, the contents, especially of a writing. The section which he was reading contained the following passage, which was its central theme. The passage is quoted from the Septuagint, or Greek version, of Isaiah 53: 7, 8. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter. He unresistingly went to his sacrificial death on the cross, as the lamb for the evening sacrifice to the altar. The chapter from which these verses are taken contains no less than eleven distinct references to the vicarious character of Christ's sufferings.²

33. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away, the judgment (justice) due to him. A fair trial was not accorded to him, as is plainly seen in the account of the trial of Jesus. Who shall declare his generation? "The Hebrew seems to mean, as in R. V. text, 'and as for his generation who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living? for the transgression of my people,' etc."³ In Wendt's revision of

Meyer, the words are taken to mean, "who can fitly declare the number of those who share his life," his spiritual prosperity, which came not only in spite of, but through his humiliation. Gloag, Hackett, De Wette, Rendall, Meyer (early editions), Alford, understand this as equivalent to, Who can describe his contemporaries? Their wickedness is so great, it is beyond words to express. Schaff renders it as follows: "But though so lowly, so mean, so poor, was his semblance on



A BIGA, OR ROMAN CHARIOT, drawn by two horses. From an ancient chariot in the Vatican, executed in marble.

From Harper's *Dictionary of Classical Literature* (1897), by per.

earth, who shall declare his generation? It is ineffable! for he is the eternal Son of God, forgotten from everlasting of the Father."

His life is taken, *αἰραται*, to take with violence, as the capture of a city.

34. Of whom speaketh the prophet this? The earlier Jewish authorities all understood chapter 53 of Isaiah to refer to the coming Mes-

¹ Whittier.

COMPARE the opening of the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan (2 Kings 6: 8-17). Hagar's eyes opened to see the well (Gen. 21: 19).

In Washington Irving's *Alhambra* is a story of "The Moor's Legacy." A vast treasure was hidden within the mountain, but it required three things to obtain it,—

Diligent Search, certain Written Words, and the Living Voice. These three best reveal to us the treasures of the Scriptures.

² Lyman Abbott.

³ Knowling. See Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 358, and Delitzsch and George Adam Smith on Isaiah,

35 ^{Then} And Philip opened his mouth, [^] and ^{began at the same} ^{beginning from this} scripture, ^{and} [^] preached unto him Jesus.

36 And as they went on ^{their} the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch ^{said, See,} ^{saith, Behold,} *here is water*; [^] what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37 * And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they ^{both} went down ^{both} into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

[^] Luke 24. 27. Cp. ch. 17. 2 & 18. 28. [^] See ch. 5. 42. [^] ch. 10. 47. * This verse not in the R. V.

siah. Later, some applied it to the nation, and some to the prophet himself. Of himself. The Ethiopian may have been acquainted with the tradition that Isaiah was placed between the halves of a split log and sawn asunder.

35. Then Philip . . . began at the same scripture. Which was fulfilled in Jesus, and has been fulfilled in no other. And preached, *εὐγγέλισατο*, announced to him the glad tidings of Jesus. Philip showed the strange and marvellous correspondence between the many descriptions of the Messiah in the prophets and the then well-known life of Jesus of Nazareth. He placed Jesus in his life, death, and character beside the picture of the Messiah which the prophets had painted, and all could see that the picture was a portrait of Jesus. He could also explain how this humiliation and sacrifice were the means by which the glories of the Messiah and his kingdom were to be attained, and he could illustrate it by the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the character of the church, its deeds, and its influence as already shown in Jerusalem.

36. They came unto a certain water. According to Jerome and Eusebius the place of baptism was Bethsura, two miles west of Hebron. Canon Tristram locates it about a day's journey from Hebron towards Gaza, at a stream which flowed into the Wady El-Hesy, probably the same which Dr. Thomson calls "a fine stream of water southwest of Latron, called Marubah, deep enough in some places even in June to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends." "This Marubah," says Dr. Hovey, "is merely a local name for the great Wady Surar, given to it on account of copious fountains which supply it with water during summer." Professor George Adam Smith locates it near the deserted old Gaza. See, *here is water*. Or simply, "Behold water!" This was saying, "I believe in Jesus, I accept him as my Saviour, and now I wish to confess him by baptism," as all other Christians had been doing. Without doubt Philip had told him about baptism as the Christian way of acknowledging Christ.

37. If thou believest, etc. This verse is wanting in the best manuscripts, and was probably inserted from some marginal note made to keep readers from error. But the words are exactly true, and are found in other Scriptures, and are implied in the fact of baptism. It is precisely that believing with all the heart which is the condition of a profession of faith. As Professor Knowling says, "These words may well have expressed what actually happened, as the question in ver. 36 evidently required an answer." I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He believed with his mind and his heart. He believed in him as his Master and his Saviour. Such faith, leading to love and obedience, is salvation.

38. He commanded the chariot. He ordered the chariot-driver to stop, and of course the whole retinue would see what took place, and they may certainly be regarded as the nucleus of a congregation to be established in Ethiopia.¹ He baptized him. This was the rite through which he made a public profession of his faith in Jesus.

NOTE the steps in the progress of a soul from darkness to light, and compare with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* as far as the Palace Beautiful, whence he was sent forth clothed in the Christian's armor.

1. He was deeply in earnest, and went on a long, dangerous, and costly journey to find the true religion.

2. He did this against many influences that held him back.

3. He went to the religious people and meetings where he thought he could learn about the true God and his service.

4. He read the Bible carefully to learn the way.

5. He was not discouraged because he did not find the light.

6. He accepted the help of one who knew the truth from experience.

7. As soon as he saw that Jesus was the true Saviour, he accepted him with all his heart.

39 And when they ^{were come} up out of the water, ^{the} Spirit of the Lord ^{came} caught away Philip; ^{that} and the eunuch saw him no more; ^{and} for he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at *Ā-zō'tūs*: and passing through he preached ⁱⁿ the gospel to all the cities, till he came to *Cæs-ā-rē'ā*.

† 1 Kin. 18. 12. 2 Kin. 2. 16. Ezek. 3. 12, 14 & 8. 3 & 11. 1, 24 & 43. 5.

† See 2 Cor. 12. 2.

8. As soon as he felt that he was a true disciple he desired to confess Christ by baptism, in the presence of his whole retinue. Confession strengthens the character and confirms the choice. Like Cortez, on landing on the Mexican shores, it burns the ships behind him. No better, no simpler, no more beautiful or expressive way of confessing Christ has ever been found, or even imagined, than that of baptism.

9. Then he went on to his home, to use all his influence and wealth for making known the gospel to his countrymen. "There is a tradition," says Professor Schaff, "that this minister of Candace, whose name was Judich, preached the gospel, on his return to Ethiopia, with great success, and that his royal mistress was among his converts."

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS, vers. 39, 40.

39. The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, *ἄρπασε*, *carried off swiftly, suddenly, and by force*. "The disappearance, as the context shows, was regarded as supernatural."¹ Instances of a similar miraculous rapture occur in

the history of Elijah (1 Kings 18 : 12; 2 Kings 2 : 16). "The expression asserts that he left the eunuch suddenly, under the impulse of an urgent monition from above, but not that the mode of his departure was miraculous in any other respect."² **And he (the eunuch) went on his way rejoicing.** In his new-found treasure, in his conscious possession of Christ and his salvation. Nothing else in the world could bring so much joy. "It was," says Bonar, "joy from God, joy in God, the joy of God."

40. But Philip was found at Azotus. The preposition is *eis* (*to, into*), implying that he was carried into the city, and was staying there.¹ Azotus was the ancient Ashdod (1 Sam. 5 : 1-7), about ten miles northeast of Gaza. Philip preached here and then in all the cities along the Mediterranean coast till he came to *Cæs-area*, where he made his home. Here Paul and Luke called upon him several years later. He had four daughters who prophesied. It is probable that he made this chief city of Palestine, under the Roman rule, the centre of Christian work.

¹ Knowling.

² Hackett.

CHAPTER 9.

ACTS OF SAUL AND PETER.

SAUL. vers. 1-30.	{	Saul, who is called Paul.	
		Saul, the persecutor.	
		Meets Jesus on the way to Damascus.	
		The great conflict.	
		Transformed into a disciple of Jesus.	
		Preaches at Damascus.	
		Three years in retirement.	
		Returns to Damascus; is persecuted; escapes over the city wall.	
		Preaches at Jerusalem.	
		Driven away by persecution.	
PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH. ver. 31.	{	Goes to Tarsus.	TIME. Saul's conversion, A. D. 36 (Hastings' <i>Bib. Dic.</i>). Authorities vary several years: McGiffert, 31 (scarcely possible); Ramsay, 33; Thatcher, 34, 35; Rendall, Lewin, and most earlier authorities, A. D. 37.
		Rest from persecution.	
		Daily religious life.	
		Edified.	
		Multiplied.	
PETER. vers. 32-43.	{	A home missionary.	PLACE. Jerusalem and Damascus.
		At Lydda. Æneas restored.	
		At Joppa. { Dorcas restored to life. Simon, the tanner.	

SAUL, WHO IS CALLED PAUL. 1. **HIS NAME.** He was probably named Saul after the first king of his nation Σαῦλος (Saulos), Greek, in the Acts when spoken of; but Σαούλ (Saoul), Hebrew in Greek letters, when spoken to. Saul had also the Roman name Paul, "Little," inherited from his Roman citizenship, and he probably was called by both names from childhood. In the history the Roman name was first applied to him at Cyprus, at the beginning of his missionary journeys into the Roman provinces of Asia Minor. This change was perfectly natural, and may have been hastened by the fact that Saulos in Greek means "Waddling," which would not be noticed in Hebrew lands where king Saul was familiar, while Paulus was not an uncommon name among the patrician families of Rome.

2. **BIRTH.** He was born in Tarsus, Cilicia, while from a notice of Jerome it is thought that the family originally came from Gischala in Galilee.

3. **FAMILY AND SOCIAL POSITION.** His parents were Jews of pure descent (Phil. 3: 5; Acts 23: 6), strict Pharisees in belief and life, possessed of Roman citizenship, which, says Professor Ramsay, "may be taken as proof that his family was one of distinction, and at least moderate wealth."¹ "It is certain," says McGiffert, "that his manners were those of a citizen of the world familiar with the habits of good society, . . . and that he felt at home in association with all classes of people, . . . even in the presence of the super-

cilious scholars of Athens, or of magistrates, pro-consuls, and princes. . . . He came, therefore, from an honorable and very likely wealthy family, whose dignity and influence must have been considerable."²

It is apparent from notices in the Epistles, as well as the Acts, that Paul was poor during his early missionary career, while later, in Cæsarea and Rome and the voyage between, he appears as a man of distinction and means. Professor Ramsay interprets this as meaning that Paul was disowned and cast off by his family as an apostate and foe to his race and his religion, on account of his becoming a Christian. So he himself says in Phil. 3: 8, that for Christ's sake he had suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but refuse; while later he inherited from his father's estate, so that on his voyage Paul had servants and enjoyed much respect, "such as a penniless traveller without a servant to attend on him would never receive either in the first century or the nineteenth."³

4. **HIS EDUCATION.** Till he was about twelve years old Paul lived in the atmosphere of a cultured, refined, scholarly university town. "It is impossible," says Professor Thatcher, "not to see a great difference between him and the twelve in this respect." "He breathed a Grecian atmosphere in his boyhood, but he did not receive a Greek education." The Hebrews "regarded Greek literature, and with some show of reason, as grossly immoral," and would no more have

¹ *Paul the Traveller*, pp. 36, 310-312.² *Apostolic Age*, pp. 114-116.³ *Paul the Traveller*, pp. 34, 312-316.

allowed their boys "to study the Greek poets and dramatists than a Puritan in the reign of Charles II. would have set his boy to study the dramatic literature of that age."¹ "Strict Jewish families held aloof from the Greek schools. . . . At the same time St. Paul could not but receive intellectual stimulus, if only by way of aversion, from such a theatre of mental activity. His master Gamaliel is said to have encouraged Greek studies. Especially when Saul returned home after his conversion (Acts 9: 30; 11: 25; Gal. 1: 21) with his mission to the heathen definitely in view, we cannot suppose that he failed to use the facilities afforded by his native city for studying the Gentile thought of the day."² At an early age he was sent to Jerusalem, where he studied the law under Gamaliel (Acts 22: 3; 5: 34). The whole atmosphere of Jerusalem must have greatly influenced him, for he was of a deeply religious nature.

5. HIS PERSONAL TRAITS.

As to his personal appearance we are uncertain. The statement he quotes concerning himself (2 Cor. 10: 10) is a sneer of his enemies that "his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible." It may have some basis of truth. From all we can gather he was a man of not more than medium stature, and with possibly some personal defect, but a man of physical strength and gracious attractiveness, giving such an impression of power that he could quell mobs to listen, and impress audiences of princes and potentates. At Lystra he was compared to a heathen god, his friend regarded as Jupiter from his size, and Paul as Mercury, who is always represented as vigorous and graceful and eloquent. "In the *Acts of Paul and Thekla*, the first Christian romance, written about 150 A. D., there is a description of Paul which is probably based on a true tradition. In this he is described as 'a man small in size, bald-headed, bandy-legged, well

built, with eyebrows meeting, rather long-nosed, and with motions full of grace, for sometimes he seemed like a man and sometimes like an angel. His manner was singularly winning.'³

6. HIS CHARACTER. We can easily see that Paul must have had a winsome character, greatly



PORTRAITS OF PAUL AND PETER. From a gilded glass cup found in the catacombs of Rome.

increased after his conversion. He had the nature which could write the glory of love in 1 Cor. 13. He had a strong will, an intense, passionate nature that conquered all obstacles; a deep religious nature, desiring to do right, and to serve God, full of aspirations and longings after the good. The best description of his mental characteristics is by Lyman Abbott.⁴ He was a seer and a prophet, a great orator, a poet, not scholastic or philosophical. He was not a Calvin, but rather an Isaiah, Plato, Browning, "but a Browning on fire with a moral intensity such as Browning never knew." "Philosopher among poets is Browning; poet among philosophers is

¹ See Lyman Abbott's *Life and Letters of Paul*, pp. 19-22.

² Prof. G. G. Findlay in Hastings' *Bib. Dic.* See Ramsay, *St. Paul*, p. 354.

³ *Professor Thatcher.* For the story of Paul and Thekla, see Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, or *Conybeare*

and Howson, chap. vi., or Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art.* John of Antioch (6th century) and the pseudo-Lucian (4th century) confirm this general impression, — "with a genial expression of countenance he was sensible, earnest, easily accessible, sweet, and inspired with the Holy Spirit." ⁴ *Life and Letters of Paul.*

1 ^{AND} ^{BUT} Saul, "yet" breathing ^{out threatening} ^{threatening} and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto ^o the high priest,
 2 And ^{desired} ^{asked} of him letters to Dă-măs'cūs ^{to} ^{unto} the "synagogues, that if he found any ^{that were} of ^q ^{this way,} ^{the Way,} whether ^{they were} men or women, he might bring them bound ^{unto} ^{to} Jerusalem.

m vers. 13, 21. See ch. 8. 3. n Cp. Ps. 27. 12 & 2 Macc. 9. 7. o ch. 22. 5 & 26. 10. p ch. 22. 19. Cp. Luke 12. 11 & 21. 12. q ch. 19. 9, 23 & 24. 14, 22. Cp. ch. 16. 17 & 18. 25, 26 & 22. 4 & Isai. 30. 21 & 35. 8 & Amos 8. 14.

Paul; prophet, seer, preacher, orator, interpreter of Christ's spirit to the thought of the world."

SAUL THE PERSECUTOR, vers. 1, 2.

1. And, better "but," in contrast with Philip and his work for Christ, taking up the narrative from Acts 8:3. Saul, yet, still. Although some time had elapsed, Saul's burning zeal had not declined in fervor. **Breathing out**, *ἐμπνέων*, *breathing in*, or *upon*, as against the disciples.¹ **Threatenings and slaughter.** In the Greek construction the case (genitive, in which these words are) marks the *cause* or *source* of the "breathing;" breathing hard *out* of threatening and murderous desire.¹ These "were, as it were, the atmosphere which he breathed, and in and by which he lived."² Not prayer but persecution was his "vital breath." It must have greatly intensified his rage to see that the more he persecuted the church, the faster it grew; and his every effort to put out the gospel fire but spread the flames. It is quite probable that the fierceness of his zeal against Christians at this time may have been caused partly by the inner conflict of his soul. **Slaughter.** Acts 26:10 implies that others were martyred besides Stephen. **Went**, of his own accord, a proof of his intense eagerness.³ **High priest**, probably Joseph Caiaphas, who as chief of the Jews exercised authority in such matters. "It is always the actual high priest who presides."²

2. **Letters to Damascus.** Whither doubtless not a few of those persecuted in Jerusalem had gone in order to be safe in another province. Damascus is probably the most ancient city in the world, built, according to Jewish tradition, by Uz, the grandson of Noah. It is situated in one of the most beautiful and fertile plains in the world, about 2200 feet above the sea-level, on the banks of the Barada (Abana of 2 Kings), "the cool," "the golden stream" of the ancient Greeks. It is about 140 miles north of Jerusalem.

In St. Paul's time it must have had a large

population. The Jewish population alone was said to be 50,000. In a tumult under Nero 10,000 Jews were put to death.⁴ It has a present population of between 150,000 and 250,000, composed of Jews, Moslems, and Christians. It is now under Turkish rule. Travellers describe with enthusiasm the marvellous beauty and salubrity of its site. In the autumn of 1895 a railroad was completed between Beyrout and Damascus. "Its architecture does not bear close inspection, but when seen from a distance it is singularly imposing. Tapering minarets and swelling domes tipped with golden crescents rise up in every direction from the confused mass of white terraced roofs, while in some places their tops gleam like diamonds amid the deep green foliage."⁵ It is said that when Mahomet first saw the city, it seemed so much like Paradise that he refused to enter, because God had decreed but one paradise to man, and "who taketh this on earth foregoes the one to be."⁶

To the synagogues. The seat of Jewish authority there. **Any of this way.** Of "the Way," with a capital W. Christ is the Way. The gospel is the Way. It is the Way of salvation, the Way of true worship, the Way to the kingdom of heaven on earth, the Way to heaven. It is the Way out of sin, out of the evils of society, out of troubles, out of temptation. It is an ideal, but more: it is the way to reach the ideal. It is a system of morality, but it is more: it bestows the power by which men become moral. **Men or women.** Perhaps there were an unusual number of women converts, for Josephus remarks that the women of Damascus were addicted to the Jewish religion.⁷ The fact is also stated to indicate the excessive violence of Saul "who had no respect for the sex, which even armed enemies in the heat of battle were accustomed to spare."⁸

Bring them bound unto Jerusalem, where was the highest authority who alone could put any to death, or inflict the severest penalties, and where the influences against Christianity were strongest.

¹ M. R. Vincent.

² Knowing.

³ The study of the motives of Paul in this persecution, as revealed in the narrative and in the Epistles, is both interesting and helpful. They are most clearly set forth in Matheson's *Spiritual Development of St. Paul* and Abbott's *Life and Letters of Paul*.

⁴ Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 7:8, 7; 2:20, 2.

⁵ McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia*.

⁶ See article in Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, and Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography*, p. 641, etc.

⁷ *Jewish Wars*, 2:20, 2.

⁸ Calvin.

3 And ^{he} as he journeyed, ^{it} came to pass that he drew ^{near} nigh unto Dă-măs'eūs: and suddenly there ^{shined} ^{shone} round about him a light ^{from} ^{out of} heaven:

^r For vers. 3-8, see ch. 22. 6-11 & 26. 12-18. Cp. 1 Cor. 15. 8.

WHAT AUTHORITY HAD THE HIGH PRIESTS OVER PEOPLE IN DAMASCUS? (1) All Jews, however remote their dwelling, acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of their nation. (2) The Romans, at least up to this period, never disturbed the Jews in the exercise of their religion, but often protected them from the interference of others. (3) The great benefactor of the Jews was the illustrious Julius Cæsar. His decrees were the foundation of their privileges. His *first decree*, B. C. 47, included these words: "*I command that Hyrcanus and his children do retain all the rights of the high priest, whether established by law or accorded by courtesy.*" Augustus Cæsar confirmed the privileges of the Jews; thus the high priest and elders of the Holy City exercised the same sort of spiritual supremacy over the synagogues of the adjacent countries, as the Pope and cardinals have since assumed over the churches in communion with Rome.¹

WHY PAUL WAS SO EARNEST IN PERSECUTING CHRISTIANS. 1. He was intensely religious, and felt that the Christians were overthrowing the very foundations of religion.

2. His opposition was less against the real character of Jesus than against a caricature received through prejudiced and deformed views prevalent among his enemies, as if seen in distorting mirrors. He himself says that he persecuted ignorantly in unbelief.

Paul would doubtless have loved Jesus had he known him personally as he was. He probably had never seen him. No Gospels were yet written, telling the story of his life and teachings. Jesus was misrepresented as a bastard, a leader of ignorant fishermen, followed by a ragged regiment of the ignorant and vicious, publicans, and harlots. He preached the highest morality, but his keenest satire and severest invective were less against open sinners than the respectable leaders whom he called robbers and hypocrites. He was represented as opposed to the divine Mosaic law, and to the temple whose overthrow he foretold. He was crucified as a blasphemer of religion, a traitor, and disturber of the peace. And yet his followers declared that he was now alive, and these followers were rapidly increasing.

3. But still more: this man crucified as a malefactor, accursed of God, claimed to be the Jewish Messiah. This man of suffering, with the following described above, claimed to fulfil all the glorious prophecies and hopes of the nation, while his character, career, and methods were

absolutely opposed to all Paul's ideals and hopes. Suffering was incompatible with Messiahship. Suffering was the mark of God's displeasure. Where were the dominion and power, and glory and victories, of the promised kingdom of God? It is no wonder that Paul felt that he must stop this growing heresy, this hope-destroying power, by killing or imprisoning its advocates.

4. It is quite probable that the fires of his zeal were intensified by the beginning of an internal conflict. He was kicking against the pricks (ver. 5).

THE CONVERSION OF PAUL, vers. 3-21.

The clearest view of this event is received by placing all three accounts side by side. Compare 22: 6-16; 26: 12-18.

3. **As he journeyed.** Perhaps on horseback, as usually represented by painters, or on a camel, according to Canon Cook; on an ass or mule, according to Felten. And his "followers were some mounted, some on foot, like a caravan of the present day."¹ **Near Damascus.** Probably within sight of the beautiful city. Professor Wilkinson represents a terrific thunderstorm on earth; and in the sky, unseen, are the spirits of Stephen and the martyrs whom Paul's zeal had slain for Jesus' sake, like "a great cloud of witnesses," watching and waiting to see the transformation of the fierce persecutor into a loving disciple.²

Suddenly (about noon, Acts 22: 6) **there shined round about him a light from heaven.** "The light was 'above the brightness of the sun' (Acts 26: 13). The midday glare of an Eastern sun is of itself exceedingly bright, and the hour was chosen, we cannot doubt, in order that 'the glory' of this heaven-sent light should not be confounded with any natural phenomena. It was in the midst of this glory that *Christ was seen* by Saul (1 Cor. 15: 8), so that he can enumerate himself among those who had beheld the Lord after his resurrection."³ See, also, Acts 9: 17, 27. The image of Christ was stamped forever on his memory. "The light was the Shekinah, which shone round Moses on the Mount, rested on the golden mercy-seat of the Ark, filled the temple on the dedication morning, shone on the Mount of Transfiguration, and years after was seen by John in his lonely watch at Patmos encompassing the Son of man.

"In this blinding light, Saul perceived the glorified body of Jesus. This we gather from the

¹ Lewin, *St. Paul*.

² *The Epit of Saul*.

³ *Cambridge Bible*.

4 And he fell ^{upon} the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ^s me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And ^{the Lord said, he said,} I am Jesus ^s whom thou persecutest: ^{it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.}

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord ^{said} unto him, ^{Arise, but rise,} and ^{go} enter into the city, and it shall be told thee "what thou must do."

^s Cp. Isai. 63. 9 & Zech. 2. 8.

^t Cp. Ezek. 3. 22 & Gal. 1. 1.

^u ver. 16. Cp. 1 Cor. 9. 16.

words of Ananias: 'Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way' (ver. 17); and of Barnabas: 'he (Saul) had seen the Lord in the way' (ver. 27). Paul also frequently affirms and emphasizes that he had seen Jesus (22: 14; 1 Cor. 9: 1; 15: 8)."¹

He appears never to have recovered his sight as before, and to have ever afterwards suffered from a painful disease of the eyes. It was probably due to this partial blindness that he failed to recognize the high priest when he addressed him in the council (Acts 23: 5). It seems to be alluded to also in Gal. 4: 13-15, where Paul says the Galatians "would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him," and in Gal. 6: 11, where he speaks of the "large letters" in which he had written the epistle. At other times he employed an amanuensis. It is probable that this dimness of sight was the "thorn in the flesh," against which the apostle prayed so fervently (2 Cor. 12: 7).²

4. Fell to the earth. Blinded and amazed. The whole company fell with him. Heard a voice. Clear and distinct to him, but a mysterious sound to others (see on ver. 7). St. John, when he saw the same glorified Jesus who now spoke to Saul, "fell at his feet as dead" (Rev. 1: 14-17).

Saul, Saul. In the Hebrew tongue (Acts 26: 14). This is curiously confirmed by the fact that in all three accounts the name of Saul here is a transliteration of the Hebrew way of spelling Saul, *Saoul*, while in every other case the Greek form *Saulos* is used. Why persecutest thou me? He thought he was persecuting the disciples of a poor rabbi, an impostor, a crucified malefactor; and instead, he now saw that he was persecuting this glorious being, this living and glorified Jesus, worthy indeed to be the Messiah.

5. Who art thou, Lord? *Τὴς εἰ, Κύριε*. "The title is here used in reverent and awestruck response to the question of a speaker, in whose voice, accompanied as it was by the supernatural light, Saul recognized a divine utterance—it is therefore more than a mere word of respect, as in 16: 30; 25: 26; it indicates, as St. Chrysostom

noted, a purpose to follow the voice, whether it was that of an angel or of God himself (Felten), 'Jam parat se ad obediendum, qui prius insaniebat ad persequendum' (Augustine)."³

Whom thou persecutest, in the person of his disciples. So in Matt. 10: 40: "He that receiveth you, receiveth me;" and in Matt. 25: 40: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

So in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, the knight found that the desolate leper he fed was the Christ who suddenly

"stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate."

"Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,—
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."⁴

The whole mission and work of Jesus depended on the success of his disciples and the gospel they represented. He who opposes the King's soldiers opposes the King.

It is hard for thee. These words and verse 6 to "Arise" are not in the best manuscripts here, but were probably inserted in the later manuscripts from Paul's own account of his conversion (26: 14, 15) where they belong, perhaps from a marginal note of explanation.

To kick against the pricks, *i. e., goads*, as unruly oxen sometimes did. The more they kicked against them the more they injured themselves, without escaping from their work. "This was a common Greek proverb, expressive of the impotent rage which hurts itself instead of its object, and is found in Æschylus, Euripides, and Pindar."⁵

Paul was fighting against his own awakened conscience; against the true interpretation of the prophecies concerning the Messiah; against the truth about Jesus; against the influences of the Holy Spirit; against the providence of God; against eternal principles, invincible forces, the omnipotence of God himself.⁶

6. Trembling and astonished. For he saw

¹ Schaff. ² So Plumptre, Farrar, and others.

³ Knowling. ⁴ Lowell. ⁵ Eugene Stock.

⁶ Compare the Scandinavian legend of Thor at the home of Odin, trying to lift the Midgard serpent encircling the world like gravitation, and to drain Odin's drink-

ing cup which was really the Ocean. Well told in Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

See, also, *Geometry and Faith*, by Pres. Hill of Harvard, where it is shown that "Things give out and fail, but Forces never."

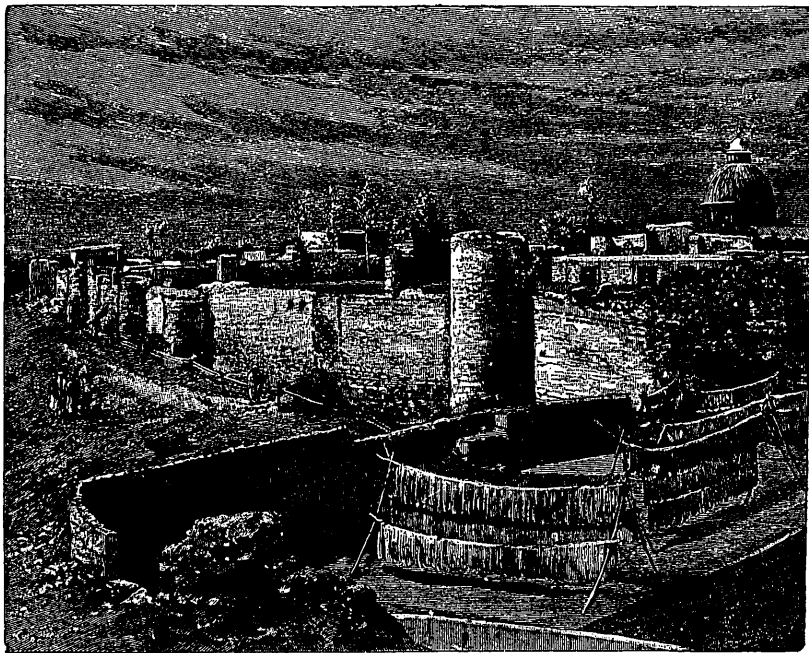
7 And ^v the men ^{which that} journeyed with him stood speechless, ^w hearing the voice, but ^{seeing} beholding no man.

v Cp. Dan. 10. 7. *w* Cp. ch. 22. 9, with John 12. 29.

his own conduct and moral character in that light.

What wilt thou have me to do? This is the next step in the inquirer's progress. He would see clearly what is required of him. He would make his decision, with all the facts before him. **Arise,**

and go into the city (Damascus), and it shall be told thee, etc. He was not yet prepared for the full revelation of his duty. It takes time for the new thoughts and purposes to become calm and clear, for his decisions to mature. The experience of mature Christians can be a great help to



SOUTH WALL OF DAMASCUS, through which Paul would naturally enter the city.

From Harper's *Dictionary of Classical Literature*, by per.

one inquiring the way. Such was Evangelist to Bunyan's Christian.

NOTE the three steps of Paul's progress toward the light: (1) conviction; (2) desire to learn the way; (3) help from Christian experience.

7. Stood speechless. "It is frivolous to find a contradiction here with Acts 26: 14" (where it is said they all fell to the ground). *Stood* is used not in contrast with falling, but with moving on; nor does the standing preclude a previous falling. "We have only to suppose that the sight and sound had affected Saul's companions in a less

degree than Saul, and that they rose from the ground before him, to make the narratives quite consistent." ¹

Hearing a (the) voice. The sound of a voice, without understanding what the voice said, as stated in 22: 9. So we often speak of not hearing a man when we hear the sound of his voice, but do not hear what he says. Rendall says that the change in the construction from the accusative φωνήν in ver. 4 to the genitive in ver. 7 is "clearly intentional and should not be ignored," as expressing the distinction between the voice that Saul

¹ Knowling.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, ^{no man: but} he saw ^{nothing; and} they led him by the hand, and brought ^{him} into Dă-mās'cūs.

9 And he was three days without sight, and ^{neither did} eat nor drink.

x Cp. ch. 22. 11.

heard and the mere sound which his companions heard. Here and elsewhere in this account, the accusative *φωνήν* denotes "the contents of the voice," while the genitive *φωνῆς*, of a voice, is used when the thought is of the sound.¹

But seeing no man. The bystanders saw the light (Acts 22:9), but no person, implying that Paul did see Jesus as he states in 1 Cor. 15:8.²

8. When his eyes were opened (the lids unclosing) **he saw no man.** Imperfect tense denoting a continued blindness. *No man*, *μηδένα*. R. V. has a different reading, *οὐδένα*, *nothing*. "This blindness was the clearest proof that the appearances vouchsafed had been a reality."

9. And he was three days without sight. The blindness of Saul was, no doubt, mercifully intended by Providence to compel him to attend without distraction to the great matters which had been placed before him. The state of his mind may be gathered from the fact that he took no food or drink during that interval.

Charles Mackay has a poem in which Milton, blind to the blue sky, "sees the bowers of paradise;" and Beethoven, "Music's Great High Priest," deaf to all sound, yet in his soul hears "jubilant hymns and lays of love."

"To blind old Milton's rayless orbs
A light divine is given,
And deaf Beethoven hears the hymns
And harmonies of heaven."

"On my bended knee
I recognize thy purpose clearly shown;
My vision thou hast dimmed, that I may see
Thyself, thyself alone."³

"And when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains — alas, too few."⁴

THE GREAT CONFLICT. Without doubt, these three days were a season of intense inward conflict, alone and in darkness. It may be compared to the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness. The seventh chapter of Romans gives us some idea of one part of this conflict.

. On the one side was his duty, his allegiance to

truth, his call from heaven, his conscience, the true, the beautiful, but less worldly and brilliant career for his nation and the world.

On the other side was the necessity of giving up his ambitions and hopes; his family, who would doubtless cast him off; his friends among the rulers; his wealth exchanged for poverty; his honors for sneers, reproaches, and hate; his comfortable life for danger, toil, and death. Even more than these personal matters was the question concerning the glorious hopes for his nation, the ideals and visions of the prophets, of Jerusalem, the capital of the world, of all nations bowing down to the Jews and their religion, the Gentiles coming to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising (Isa. 60:2), and all that magnificent picture more radiant with glory than the greatest poet ever dreamed. How could this come to pass with an obscure teacher for the Messiah, and even him crucified? Then how could he give up the Word of God as he understood it, and the religion God had given them?

On the other hand he had some helps to a decision.

1. "Versed as he was in the Bible, he could, even in his blindness, search the Scriptures, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was enabled clearly to discern the whole scheme of Christian doctrine in its fulness and truth."⁵

2. He had seen something of the moral beauties of the disciples of Christ, in contrast with the character of most of the Jews. A nation of Stephens and Johns would be wonderful in its spiritual and political life.

3. His vision of Jesus proved that he was alive. He could not believe in a dead Messiah. The vision rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and Paul saw an ascended, divine, glorious Messiah.

4. During this time probably was brought before him the vision of what God would have him do, the work for which he was chosen by God, a glorious and blessed work (Acts 26:16-18), and perhaps also some of his sufferings for Christ's sake (ver. 16). This was a strong motive for deciding aright. For any true soul there is no louder call to be a Christian than the call to heroism, to

¹ See Knowing, *in loco*.

² Lyman Abbott refers to Constantine, who thought he saw a cross in the sky; to Loyola, who saw hosts of good and evil set in battle array against each other. "Were these real visions? I know no reason why we should think they were not." — *Life and Letters of Paul*.

³ Miss E. Lloyd on *Milton's Blindness*.

⁴ Wordsworth. See Dr. Bushnell's *Moral Uses of Dark Things*.

⁵ Kitto.

10 ^{And} Now there was a certain disciple at Dă-măs'cūs, named An-ă-nī'ās; and ^{to him said the Lord} in a vision, "An-ă-nī'ās. And he said, "Behold, I *am here*, Lord.

11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go ^{into} to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for ^{one called} *one* named Saul, a man ^a of Tăr'sūs: for behold, he prayeth;

12 And he hath seen ^{in a vision} a man named An-ă-nī'ās coming in, ^b and ^{putting his} *laying his* hands on him, that he might receive his sight.

y ch. 22. 12.

z Gen. 22. 1. Isai. 6. 8.

a ch. 21. 39 & 22. 3.

b ver. 17. See Mark 5. 23.

work, and to suffer for the most glorious cause ever presented to the soul of man.

10. A certain disciple . . . named Ananias.

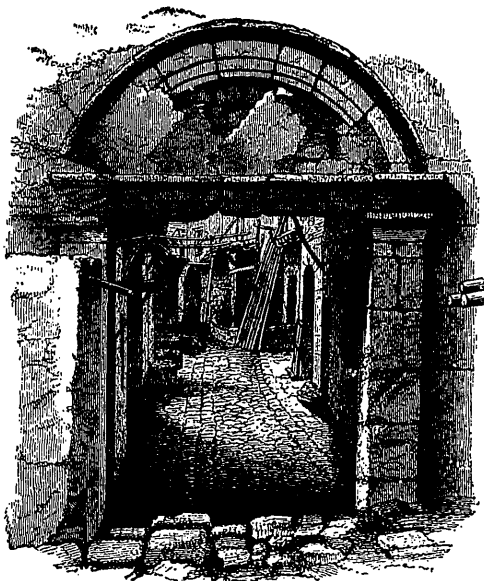
It is good to have some one to redeem the name. We know nothing further about him except that "he was a good man, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt" at Damascus (Acts 22: 12).

To him said the Lord in a vision. "The twofold revelation to Ananias and Saul corresponds to the twofold revelation afterwards made to Peter and Cornelius. The hesitation of Ananias was overcome, like that of Peter, by the divine command."¹

11. Go into the street, *δύμην*, from *έρπω*, to draw, or *πέω*, to flow; hence originally, the swing, rush, or trail, of a body in motion; then a street or lane in a town, shut in by buildings on both sides, like the banks of a stream through which flow or rush the crowds. Called Straight, now called Sultana, or Queen Street. It ran in a direct line from east to west, and was a mile long, but its appearance is strangely changed from that of the magnificent roadway which evoked the admiration of ancient writers. We can picture to ourselves its former splendor by the remains of colonnades and arches, which can still be traced. It was a hundred feet wide, with side pavements for foot passengers, separated by marble colonnades from the central roadway, and, half-way along the street, the triumphal arch. The three archways of the gates may still be traced (one is pictured in the accompanying cut). We cannot leave Damascus without mentioning a relic of the Christianity which Paul first preached there. Over an arch in what was once the cathedral where Chrysostom preached, but which for centuries has been a mosque, the usurpers have neglected to chisel out a prophecy, which every visitor has read inscribed in Greek: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is

an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."²

In the house of Judas. Nothing is known of



STRAIGHT STREET, DAMASCUS, in a house on which Paul had his abode. The spectator is here standing just without the more northern of the two side arches of the triple gate, and is looking down Straight Street, as it is now seen.

From J. L. Porter's *Damascus*.

him. He was probably not then a Christian, but one to whom Paul had letters. Behold, he prayeth. He is asking God for light and help.³

12. And hath seen in a vision, in answer to his prayer. This vision and its correspondence

¹ Rendall.

² Canon Tristram, in *Sunday-School Times*, 1897.

³ Compare Goethe's dying cry, "More light." Some author says our prayer should be "More love." Paul's

prayer was for both. Prayer has the power of the fabled Aladdin's lamp, in the *Arabian Nights*. It has the Midas touch that transformed all things to gold.

13 ^{Then} ^{But} An-ā-nī'ās answered, Lord, I have heard ^{by} ^{from} many of this man, °how much evil he ^d ^{hath} ^{done} ^{did} to thy °saints at Jerusalem :

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call ^{on} thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way : for ^hhe is a ⁱchosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before ^jthe Gentiles' and ^kkings, and the children of Israel :

16 For 'I will shew him how ^{great} many things he ^m must suffer " for my name's sake.

17 And ^o An-ā-nī'ās ^{went his way,} departed, and entered into the house; and ^{putting} laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, ^{that} who appeared unto thee in the way ^{as} which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou ^{mightest} receive thy sight, and ^{be} filled with the Holy Ghost.

c vers. 1, 2. d 1 Thess. 3. 13. 2 Thess. 1. 10. e Rom. 15. 25, 26, 31. f ver. 21. g ch. 22. 16. Rom. 10. 13. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Cp. ch. 7. 59 & 2 Tim. 2. 22. h Cp. ch. 13. 2 & Rom. 1. 1 & Gal. 1. 15 & Eph. 3. 7. i Cp. Rom. 9. 22, 23 & 2 Tim. 2. 20, 21 (for mg.). j Rom. 1. 5 (Gk.) & 11. 13 & 15. 16. Gal. 1. 16 & 2. 2, 7-9. Eph. 3. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 4. 17. k ch. 25. 22, 23 & 26. 1, 32. 2 Tim. 4. 16. l ch. 20. 23 & 21. 4, 11. 1 Thess. 3. 3. m ver. 6. Cp. ch. 14. 22 & 2 Cor. 6. 4, 5 & 11. 23-28. n See ch. 5. 41. o ch. 22. 12-14. p ver. 12. q See ch. 2. 4.

with that of Ananias prove that these visions were sent by the Lord himself.

13. Then Ananias answered. Ananias naturally hesitated to go to the house of the well-known opponent of the gospel, and to put himself in the power of his guest who had done so much harm, and had come to Damascus to do more. It was the lamb "bearding the lion in his den." This hesitation does not prove Ananias to be either disobedient or faithless. He only wanted to be sure that he understood, for the command was so strange. Thy saints. Consecrated to the service of God, and therefore morally holy. This is the first time the word is applied to Christians. "This was a phrase likely to burn itself into Paul's memory." He uses it himself in his address before Agrippa, "and addresses at least six of his epistles to those who were 'called to be saints,' indicating that every Christian, as such, had this high calling."¹

15. For he is a chosen vessel, *σκεῖος ἐκλογῆς*, a vessel of choice, a chosen instrument, selected by God for his purpose. As a vessel he was filled with God's Spirit, with power and wisdom and love. As an instrument he was the means by which the gospel was spread among the Gentiles. "It was a polished and capacious vessel that the Great King wrenched from the hands of the arch-enemy near the gate of Damascus. One of the clearest intellects that ever glowed in a human frame changed hands that day."² It was this experience that led Paul to feel so deeply the divine side of conversion. God chose him before he chose God. **Unto me.** Not only chosen

by me, but prepared for me and devoted to me.

Gentiles. Paul was especially the apostle to the Gentiles. **And kings.** "Paul fulfilled this when he appeared before Agrippa at Caesarea (Acts 26: 1-32), and perhaps the Emperor Nero at Rome (2 Tim. 4: 16, 17), and when he pleaded before the tribunals of the Roman governors Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Felix, and Festus."⁸

16. I will shew him how great things he must suffer. Notice the peculiarity of the motive presented to Saul: not, Serve Christ and you shall be happy; not, Be a Christian, and you will have more of this world; but, Behold what great things you shall do and suffer for Christ. This is the motive that touches many souls. Ruskin has well said, "For love of their country or their leader or their duty, men fight steadily; but for massacre and plunder feebly. Your signal 'England expects every man to do his duty,' they will answer; your signal of black flag and death's head, they will not answer."⁴ Like Xavier, when a similar vision was shown him, Paul would cry out, "And yet more, O Lord, yet more," more sufferings, and more nations brought to Christ, more people welcomed into the kingdom of God.⁵ The grandest leader in existence is Jesus Christ, leading in the noblest cause that ever touched the heart of man, the redemption of the whole world from sin, the conquering of every evil, the transformation of earth into heaven.

17. **Brother Saul.** A Christian brother. Sight . . . **Holy Ghost.** He brought two great gifts. —

¹ Knowling.

² Arnot.

³ Schaff.

⁴ *Modern Painters*, vol. v.

⁵ See H. C. Fish's *Primitive Piety*, p. 162; Kip's *Conflicts of Christianity*, p. 185.

18 And ^{immediately straightway} there fell from his eyes as it ^{had been} scales; and ^{were} he received his sight; ^{forthwith} and he ^{he} arose and was baptized;

19 And ^{when he had received meat, he took food and} was strengthened. ^{u Then And he} was Saul ^{was} certain days with the disciples which were at Dā-mās-cūs.

20 And straightway ^{he preached Christ in the synagogues, in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus,} that he is the Son of God.

21 ^{But} And all that heard ^{him} him were amazed, and said; Is not this he ^{w that} that ^{destroyed in Jerusa-}

r ch. 22. 13.

s ch. 22. 16.

t Cp. ver. 9.

u ch. 26. 20.

v Cp. ver. 22.

w vers. 13, 14.

sight and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The receiving of sight expressed the opening of the eyes of his mind to the new light from heaven, and was to him a proof that he had received the power of the Spirit, the extraordinary gifts and qualifications needful for his work.

18. There fell from his eyes as it had been scales. Not actual scales, but something resembling them. "Some scaly substance had formed over the eyes, probably as the result of the dazzling brightness which had struck upon them. Compare Tobit 3: 17; 11: 13."¹ "He experienced the sensation as if there had fallen something like scales from his eyes."²

Scales, *λεπίδες*. Here we see traces of Luke's accuracy as a physician in the characteristic mention of scales or incrustations such as are incidental to ophthalmia.

Was baptized. As a confession of Christ and the divine method of admission to the membership of the disciples.

19. When he had received meat, *i. e.*, "food." The three days' fast (ver. 9) and the intense inward conflict had obviously brought about a state of extreme prostration. He was strengthened, both spiritually and bodily. His physical condition was attended to. So God fed Elijah when he was desponding. Due care of the body is sometimes a means of grace. Certain days. A few days.

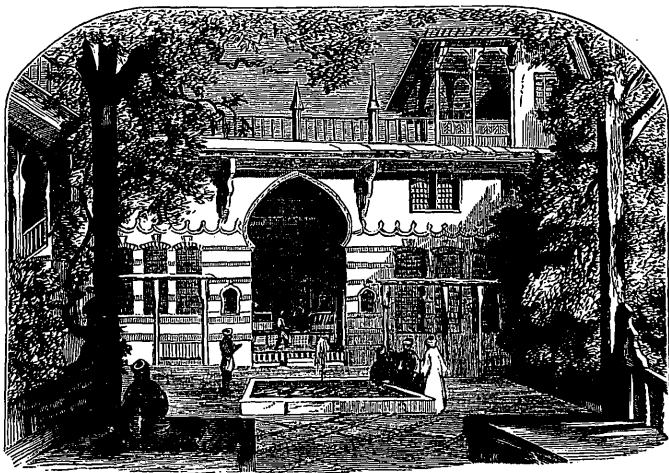
20. Straightway. Immediately. Preached, *ἐκήρυσσε*, proclaimed, Christ (Jesus) in the synagogues. He gave his religious experience, testifying to what Jesus had done for him, and that Jesus was the Messiah. The common version says *Christ*, that is, the true Messiah, who was

Jesus. The R. V. says "Jesus," that is, that Jesus was the true Messiah whom the Jews hoped for and the prophets had foretold.

21. All that heard him were amazed, *ἐξίστατο*. See on 8: 9.

Made havoc, *πορθῶσας*, laid waste, as an army ravages a country.

THE CHANGE WROUGHT IN PAUL BY HIS CON-



COURT OF HOUSE IN DAMASCUS.

The house is built around a quadrangle, containing a fountain and trees and vines.

From Dr. Davis' *Bible Dictionary* (1898), by per.

VERSION. 1. The purpose and trend of his life was changed. Henceforth he lived wholly for Jesus and for the salvation of men. The change was not in patriotism, or in care for religion, or in energy, or mental vigor, but in the use to which he put all these. He was like a fine engine with all its powers switched off on another track, in another direction. He was like a servant who changed masters; like an emigrant who took the oath of allegiance to another country.

2. He was changed in his relations to Jesus. He now accepted him as the Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

¹ Knowing.

² Gloag.

3. He was changed in the quality of his morality. Before, he was sincere, but sincerely wrong; now he was sincerely right. Before, he was self-righteous; now his morality was inspired by love. Before, he was formally legal, pharisaical, narrow, in his virtues; now his moral character grew out of a new heart and a right spirit.

4. He was changed in his views of religion and of God, and in his understanding of God's Word.

5. Hence he was changed in his life-work. Thus he was indeed a new creation, with new life, new character, new motives, new hopes, new love, new purpose, new work.

SUDDEN CONVERSIONS VERSUS GRADUAL CHANGES. 1. There are many ways in which persons become Christians; compare Paul with John; Matthew with most of the other apostles; Luther and his long struggle, with John Bunyan who could not tell the day of his conversion. There is no model or form to which all must conform. The City of God has twelve gates, four on each side, so that persons can enter from every direction.

2. The one essential question is, not how one becomes a Christian, but the fact. If one really believes in Christ, gives himself to him to love and obey, turns from sin to righteousness, he is a Christian in whatever way he reaches that condition.

3. In one sense there are seldom, if ever, absolutely instantaneous conversions, for there are always circumstances and influences preparing the way. On the other hand, there is, probably, a definite time when one has actually changed his course of life, whether he is conscious of it or not. The astronomers give us the exact moment when night becomes day, and winter changes to spring; but to our observation few can tell when the day actually begins, and none the moment when spring has arrived. But the day and the spring actually come. When a great ship is turning around in a large circle, it is impossible by sight to determine when it has ceased going north, and is moving to the south. But however unconsciously to the observer, the change of direction takes place.

4. It is often an advantage to have some definite expression of the change, some outward sign to mark its existence. Thus there was no different movement of sun or stars at the moment when the nineteenth century closed, and the twentieth

began, but many thousands of people marked the moment in some way, by prayer, or bugle note, or song.

5. It is well to guard against the error which Bishop Williams represents those who believe in sudden conversions as holding, "that the work of and for St. Paul, in character and life, was all done at once, 'in the twinkling of an eye,' in his conversion." No one so believes. Conversion is but the *beginning* of the Christian life and character. But the turning may be a sudden change of direction, or the movement in a circle so large that one does not know the exact time when the direction of his course was reversed.

THE MIRACULOUS CHANGES. The great miracles of the present day are moral miracles, the working of changes like that wrought in Paul. These are the unanswerable proofs of Christianity.¹

PAUL'S YEARS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HIS CONVERSION.

I. PAUL'S THREE YEARS' RETIREMENT.² Between verses 21 and 23 belong the three years spoken of in his Epistle to the Galatians (1: 17, 18): "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter."

1. Paul preached certain days in Damascus immediately after his conversion.

2. Then he went into Arabia, either in the desert regions near Damascus, or in the region of Sinai, full of memories of Moses and Elijah. Here he remained three years, or, according to the Hebrew method of computation, possibly one year, and larger or smaller parts of two others.

3. He returned to Damascus and preached there again, verse 22 describing this second period of preaching (Rendall), or being a general description of both periods.

There was need of no little meditation and study before Paul could understand the Scriptures sufficiently to preach them aright.

As astronomers now discover stars invisible even through the telescope, by placing in it highly sensitive photographic paper exposed in perfect stillness for a long time, till the image of the starry heavens is impressed thereon, so in silence

¹ See Lord Lyttleton's *Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul*, written in the reign of George II., by the Lord Lyttleton of that day, famous as a historian and a poet. Dr. Johnson said of it that it is "a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer."

² Compare Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Life*, "Lessons in the Wilderness." Hugh Miller's *My Schools and Schoolmasters* and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* give the

story of the preparation and training of men for their greater work. Almost every biography of great men shows a similar period, longer or shorter, of preparation. There is a process of mental crystallization going on in the hours of rest like that of hyacinth bulbs which need several weeks of rest in darkness after they are planted, in order to form roots, or they will not flower strongly.

them which called on this name in Jerusalem, ^{he} made havoc of them which called on this name? and ^{he came} hither for ^{that} this intent, that he might bring them bound ^{unto} the chief priests? ^{before}

22 But Saul ^v increased the more in strength, and ^z confounded the Jews which dwelt at Dā-mās'cūs, proving ^a that this is ^{very} the Christ.

23 And ^b after that ^{when} many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel ^{together} to kill him :

^x Gal. 1. 13, 23.

^y See 1 Tim. 1. 12.

^z ch. 18. 28.

^a Cp. ver. 20.

^b Cp. Gal. 1. 17, 18.

and alone great truths of the kingdom of heaven were written on the prophet's soul.

From a distance, too, he could gain the true perspective, and best understand the condition of his nation, its hopes, its sins, and its dangers, and connect all with the redemption of the world.¹ Compare the thirty years of Jesus before he entered upon his great work; the years of John the Baptist in the wilderness; the forty years which Moses spent in the desert before he entered

The increase in strength came (1) from his long abiding alone in the desert in communion with God, while the Holy Spirit he had received was enlightening his mind and renewing his nature.

(2) By the inward conflicts of his old opinions and feelings with the new, whereby he worked his way through doubts and prejudices to a clear and reasonable understanding of the great truths of the gospel, — so only are they written in clear, deep, ineffaceable characters on the soul. Every victory renews the strength.

(3) By using his power and experience in preaching the gospel.

Confounded the Jews, *συνέχυε*, from *σύν*, together, and *χέω*, to pour out; hence, to pour together; as the thoughts and feelings, in an indistinguishable mixture, to bewilder, to confound (which is the same metaphor in Latin).

Proving, *συμβιβάζων*, putting things together, as

dovetailing pieces of wood in joiners' work, or as the different parts of the body are compacted and knit together into one complete whole. Hence, metaphorically, of an argument in which the facts and reasons are put together for comparison and proof, woven into a complete demonstration. "Thus," says Pask, "we may conceive Saul fitting the prophecies of the Old Testament with the facts of the life of Jesus, and so proving him to be the Christ."

23. And after that many days, two or three years. See above; and Gal. 1: 18.

The Jews took counsel to kill him. "2 Cor. 11: 32 explains the imminence of Saul's danger. Caius (Caligula) Caesar had transferred Damascus



BASKET. LA CORBELLÀ.

Used by the Campanian peasantry in Italy, answering precisely to that used by the ancient Roman farmers. Baskets of the same kind are seen in drawings at Herculaneum. They were made of osiers twisted together.

From Harper's Classical Dictionary, by per.



WALL OF DAMASCUS, showing how Paul could have been let down over the wall through a window.

From Schaff's Bible Dictionary, by per.

upon his great work; and the long period of Elijah's youth before he suddenly appeared to King Ahab.

II. PAUL RETURNS TO DAMASCUS, AND IS PERSECUTED. 22. Saul increased the more in strength. "This remark describes his state after the lapse of some time subsequent to his conversion. It is made, apparently, not merely to indicate his Christian progress, but to suggest why he preached with such convincing power."¹

¹ Hackett.

24 But their ^c ^{laying awalt was} ^{plot became} known ^{of} to Saul. And ^d they watched the gates also day and night ^{that they might} ^{to} kill him :
 25 ^{Then the} ^{But his} disciples took him by night, and ^e let ^{him} ^{him} down ^{by} through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

c ch. 20. 3, 19 & 23. 30. Cp. ch. 23. 12 & 25. 3. d 2 Cor. 11. 32. e 2 Cor. 11. 33. Cp. Josh. 2. 15 & 1 Sam. 19. 12.

from the province of Syria to the dominions of his tributary ally, King Aretas, and his governor used his authority in support of the Jews,"¹ and "was desirous to apprehend" Paul.

24. And they watched the gates day and night. The governor of the city used his garrison soldiers for this purpose (2 Cor. 11 : 32).

25. Let him down by, *ἵδῃ, through, the wall, by means of a window* (2 Cor. 11 : 33). "On the walls were houses with windows looking out upon the country beyond. In one of these houses lived a Christian, and Paul was let down out of the window, . . . and so escaped the guards."²

In a basket, *συνψίδι*, something wound, twisted, or folded together; hence, a basket *plaited or woven from reeds, a hamper*.

As I stood with a friend, says a recent traveller, who resided at Damascus, looking at the place referred to, a couple of men came to the top of the wall with a broad flat basket full of rubbish, which they emptied over the wall. Such a basket,

said my friend, the people use here for almost every sort of thing. If they are digging a well, and wish to send a man down into it, they put him into such a basket; and that those who aided Paul's escape should have used a basket for the purpose was entirely natural according to the present customs of the country. Pilgrims are admitted into the monastery at Mount Sinai in a similar manner.³

III. PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM AFTER HIS CONVERSION. Two or three years after his conversion, *i. e.*, in A. D. 39. It lasted two weeks, during which time he was the guest of Peter. McGiffert well says, "It is certainly not without significance that it was Peter of whom Paul saw most during that fortnight in Jerusalem, and that it was Peter who of all the disciples of Jerusalem known to us showed himself most in sympathy with Christian work among the Gentiles."⁴

It is well to compare two other records of this visit with the one in the text.

ACTS 9.

26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples : but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians : but they went about to slay him.

30 Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

GAL. 1.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ :

23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

ACTS 22.

17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance ;

18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem : for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee :

20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consented unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart : for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.⁵

Note (1) the motives for leaving Jerusalem, one in chap. 9, the other in chap. 22. But they are in perfect harmony. The double motive, the out-

ward and the inward, comes continually into the lives of men.

Note (2) the apparent discrepancy between

¹ Rendall. ² Lyman Abbott.

³ Hackett.

⁴ *Apostolic Age*, p. 168.

⁵ Prof. Ramsay thinks that this account belongs to the second instead of the first visit to Jerusalem. (1) Because different reasons are given for Paul's leaving Jeru-

salem ; but Knowing, following Hackett, shows that there may easily have been two reasons, one the inner motive, the other the outer impulse. (2) Because Paul does not go at once to the Gentiles. But he was preparing for his work all the time he was in Cilicia, and the command came at the very time of his conversion.

26 And ^{Sanl} when he^{he} was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: ^{but} and they were all afraid of him, ^{and believed not} and ^{not believing} that he was a disciple.

27 But ^o Bär'nä-bās took him, and ^h brought ^{him} him to the apostles, and declared unto them ⁱ how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, ^j and how ^{he had k preached boldly at Damascus} he had ^{at Damascus he had preached boldly} in the name of Jesus.

28 And he was with them ^{i coming going} in and going out at Jerusalem;

29 ^{And he spake Preaching} boldly in the name of the Lord: ^{Jesus,} and ^{he spake and,} disputed against the ^{m Gre'cians:} ^{Gre'cian Jews;} but they ⁿ went about to ^{slay} kill him.

30 ^{Which} And when ^o the brethren knew ^{it,} they brought him down to Cæs-ä-rē'ä, and sent him forth ^p to Tär'süs.

^f ch. 22. 17-20 & 26. 20. ^g ch. 4. 36. ^h Cp. Gal. 1. 18, 19. ⁱ vers. 3-6. ^j vers. 19, 20, 22. ^k See ch. 4. 29. ^l ch. 1. 21. ^m See ch. 6. 1. ⁿ Cp. ch. 22. 18. ^o See John 21. 23. ^p Cp. ch. 11. 25 & Gal. 1. 21.

9: 28, 29, where Paul is represented as moving freely among Christians and disputing with the Grecian Jews in Jerusalem; and Gal. 1: 22, 23, where Paul says that he was unknown by face to the churches of Judea, of which the church at Jerusalem was one. This leads Weizsäcker, McGiffert, and others to regard Luke's account as an error. But the presumption is always in favor of both reports of reliable men being true. It is not possible for two perfectly reliable historians, telling the absolute truth from different standpoints, to write a brief general history without as great apparent discrepancy as here appears between Luke and Paul. Paul was only two weeks in Jerusalem; most of his time was spent in retirement with Peter and James, the other apostles being absent so far as the record goes, and the leading disciples had been driven from the city by persecution; his discussions were not held with Christians, but with Grecian Jews opposed to Christianity. Under these circumstances Paul must have been unknown by face to the vast majority of the church in Jerusalem, and to all the churches of Judea beyond the limits of the city.

26. When Saul was come to Jerusalem. There had been political changes in Judea since the persecution began three years before. A change of emperors and of policy had taken place, so that Jews were themselves being persecuted and had little time to persecute the Christians. See on ver. 31. This made it more possible for Paul to visit the city in safety, so long as he kept in retirement, as he did till he began to discuss with the Hellenists, and then he was driven away. They were all afraid of him. Communication with Damascus was difficult, especially on account of the hostility which had arisen between Aretas, ruler of Damascus, and Herod, ruler of Judea. Paul's escape had been too hurried for him to obtain letters of commendation.

He was in Damascus but a short time after his conversion, and the Christians in Jerusalem who had learned of his conversion had not heard from him for two or more years, and could not be sure that he had continued in the faith. "A burnt child dreads the fire," and they had too bitter memories of his past to risk getting again into his power.

27. But Barnabas, who was a native of Cyprus, and who "may well have been a fellow student with Paul in the schools of Tarsus." Barnabas was of such a whole-souled loving nature that he would more easily trust Paul's statements about himself. Brought him to the apostles Peter and James (Gal. 1: 18, 19), the representative leaders. The others may have been away on preaching tours, as we know Peter and John had been.

28. And he was with them, quietly at the home of Peter for fifteen days (Gal. 1: 18). Coming in and going out, visiting old friends and familiar places.

29. And he spake boldly. He did not hide his change of view, but freely acknowledged that he had become a disciple of Jesus.¹ "The vision of Christ in the temple charging him to depart, which Paul relates in 22: 17-21, belongs apparently to this time."² Disputed, συζητει, to seek or examine together; hence, to discuss, dispute. "The very same word 'disputed' is here used which was employed to describe the controversies with the protomartyr (6: 9), and it is found nowhere else in this book. But it is worth notice that the attack is now reversed. The Grecians disputed with Stephen, now Saul disputes with them."³ But they went about, ἐπεχειρουν, took in hand (ἐντ, upon; χεῖρ, the hand), undertook, attempted.

30. They brought him down to Cæsarea, the Mediterranean seaport, whence he could sail for Tarsus. They accompanied him thus far, and

¹ See on 4: 13, the boldness of Peter and John.

² Rendall.

³ Cambridge Bible.

31 Then had ^{So} ^{the churches rest} ^{church} throughout all Jû-dæ'ă and Găl'î-lee and Să-mă'rî-ă and were ^{and were} edified; and, 'walking in the fear of the Lord' and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, ^{had peace, being} ^{s were} multiplied.

q Cp. ch. 8. 1 & 16. 5. r Cp. Neh. 5. 9. s vers. 35, 42.

saw him on board the vessel. "Saul was probably safer at Tarsus than elsewhere, owing to the presence of his family there. Even at Jerusalem his life was afterwards saved by the watchful care of a relative. It offered, for the same reason, an advantageous sphere for his ministry. More than three years intervened between the flight to Tarsus in 39 and the visit to Jerusalem with Barnabas about the beginning of 43, the last of which was spent by them in Antioch (11: 26). This leaves upwards of two years during which Saul made Tarsus his home. He probably founded at that time the Cilician churches mentioned in 15: 41."¹ Paul spent part of the time in Syria (Gal. 1: 21), referring perhaps to his Antioch experience. Ramsay regards Syria-Cilicia as one country of two provinces.

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH, UNDER FAVORING CIRCUMSTANCES, ver. 31.

I. THE CAUSE OF THE CESSATION OF THE PERSECUTION. 31. Then had the churches rest. The persecution following the death of Stephen had continued two or three years. The probable reason for its cessation lay in the troubles the Jews were having with their Roman rulers.

Caius Cæsar Caligula became emperor of Rome in A. D. 37. His was a strange, self-willed, ungodly character. The Roman emperors claimed divine honors, and statues and altars were erected to them. Caligula not only demanded to be worshipped, but raised his horse to the consulship. At Jamnia, in upper Galilee, the Syrians, in A. D. 39, erected an altar to the emperor Caligula, and the Jews immediately tore it down. Caligula was enraged at the affront, and determined to erect his statue in the very temple at Jerusalem, and issued orders to the governor Petronius to set it up there, with the inscription, "Caius, the New Incarnation of Jupiter." This command meant the kindling of all the ferocity of a religious war. The Jewish officials declared that such an outrage could not be carried out except over the dead bodies of the citizens. The whole population streamed toward Ptolemais, the modern Acre, where the governor was, covering the country far and wide, and raising continually such cries and wailing as made the townspeople declare they would lose their hearing. Finally, a vast throng, arranged in six columns, of old

women, matrons, maids, old men, men in their strength, and boys, gathered before the palace of the proconsul, and threw themselves on the earth with wild and piteous outcries of despair, when he showed himself on the balcony. They declared they would die, but never give way. Petronius made every effort to have the emperor change the edict. But the most he could obtain was a command to leave the temple untouched. But many altars were raised to the emperor outside of its gates; and news came that all the synagogues in Alexandria had been turned into temples to Cæsar. These things lasted till January, A. D. 41, on the twenty-fourth day of which Caligula was murdered.² Under these circumstances the infant church enjoyed a period of four or five years of rest from persecution by the Jews, who were fully occupied with their own troubles. It was a time of outward peace, of rest from conflict, and hence a season of growth, of spiritual development, of Christian activity.

II. THE CHURCH EDIFIED. Had . . . rest. The church at rest is like a person in a healthy body, who does not need to spend time in thinking of his health, in seeking remedies, in looking after himself, but can devote all his energies and thought to the work he has to do.

They had the rest of *faith*, of a firm confidence in God, in Christ, in the Bible, in the promises. They had the rest of *certainty*. Amid the various conflicts raging around us to-day, it is well to look more steadily at the certainties. The essential truths of morality, of religion, and of the Bible are fixed and settled. They are like an island of rock amid mists and waves. The winds of conflict scatter the mists, but do not move the island. They had the rest of *free activity*, the easy and natural expression of their inner life.³

And were edified. This English word (from *ædis*, "a dwelling-house," "a temple," *i. e.*, "a house for God;" and *facere*, "to make") has almost exactly the same meaning as the Greek *οικοδομῆσαι*, *being built up*. It is a process like the building of a house. This is true of the church as a whole, and of individual Christians (Eph. 2: 20-22; 1 Cor. 3: 17; 2 Cor. 6: 16). The spiritual temple is builded not like Aladdin's palace, in an instant, but by a long process. The plan is given by God, the foundation is Jesus Christ; there are many parts for many uses; all

¹ Rendall.

² Condensed from Lewin and Geikie.

See the whole story told at length in Josephus' *Antiquities*, 18: 8, 8, and in his *Jewish Wars*, 2: 10.

³ See poem, one verse of which begins, "Labor is rest."

32 And it came to pass, 'as Peter ^{passed}_{went} throughout all ^{quarters,}_{parts,} he came down also to the saints which dwell at "Lyd'dā.

† Cp. ch. 8. 25.

u 1 Macc. 11. 34.

virtues are its precious stones; there are altars of worship; windows to let in light; it should be beautiful within and without; it should be filled with the Holy Spirit, the home of all that is heavenly.¹ "Edified" may also refer to the organization of the church as an institution, formulating its truths, and organizing its work.

III. THE CHURCH'S DAILY LIFE. Walking in the fear of the Lord. "Leading a God-fearing life, by which the edification exhibited itself in the moral conduct." "It is the temper of reverential awe, the scrupulous obedience to the commandments of God, which had been described of old as 'the beginning' of wisdom." It implies care to avoid everything which would grieve him. **In the comfort of the Holy Ghost,** *παράκλησει*, *from παρακαλέω, to call to one's side*, in order to help or comfort ("comforter" in John 14: 16, etc., is another form of the same word); hence *exhortation*, *i. e.*, aiding by words, or *consolation*, or *advocating*, as a counsellor aids by defending our cause against our adversary. "Comfort" means *strengthening together*, the strength that comes from the presence, the inspiration, the invigoration, the courage of another. So Æschylus, in describing the battle of Salamis, represents the commanders of both fleets as "comforting" the soldiers by going from vessel to vessel, and rousing their courage with brave and inspiring words.²

It is with persecution as it is with sorrow in our lives. Jeremy Taylor describes some lamps in the tomb of Terentia as burning brightly in the darkness of the tomb, but going out when brought forth into the light, as a type of Christians, whose piety burns brightly in the darkness of persecution and trouble, but goes out in the light of prosperity. Mr. Rogers, commenting on this, says that it by no means follows that all darkness is good for the Christian, for "then the bright lamps of which Taylor speaks would irradiate only a tomb."³

Now that while persecution and trouble develop certain virtues, there are others which are developed better in times of peace. Disciples need both kinds of training. Night is necessary as well as day, but all darkness is even more disastrous than all daytime.

IV. THE CHURCH MULTIPLIED. The result of this daily life showed itself in their rapid increase; they were multiplied. There are two ways to be multiplied, — in numbers and in quality and value. The disciples rapidly increased in numbers, and the aggregate of churches was greatly enlarged. Then each addition of zeal, of knowledge, of wisdom, of virtue, of spirituality, multiplies the value of each disciple and of the church. Every additional gift or virtue or talent in a man is not merely so much added to him, but is a multiplier, for it increases the value of each and every other gift. Add capital to labor, and both are multiplied. Add common sense to genius, and the man is multiplied many fold. Add to these consecration, zeal, grace, and love, and you multiply him many fold more. One note is a sound; add a score or two more and you have an anthem. One color, no matter how beautiful, is monotonous; add other colors and you have a cathedral window.

PETER ON A MISSIONARY TOUR, vers. 32-43.

I. PETER AND ÆNEAS AT LYDDA. 32. As Peter passed throughout all quarters. He went everywhere visiting and encouraging and teaching the new churches formed by the persecuted Christians, and keeping them in touch with the apostolic church in Jerusalem. The accounts which follow may fairly be taken as specimens of many such journeys of progress, inspection, and helpfulness.

Peter did more for the church at Jerusalem by going on these evangelizing tours than by concentrating all energies on Jerusalem alone. Work beyond its borders always aids the home church. "It is like the dew of heaven. It is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes." **The saints which dwell at Lydda.** All Christians were called saints, because that was their aim and the characteristic of their lives. Lydda, in the rich plain of Sharon in northwest Judea, was a city of considerable size, about a day's journey from Jerusalem. Here, according to tradition, was born St. George, "the patron saint of England," the hero of the mythical story of St. George and the Dragon, immortalized in poetry and painting.⁴ "As the place lay on the route

¹ Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* applies in its seven great principles to spiritual building; and the transformation of the rough hut of the fisherman into a silver temple of exquisite workmanship illustrates the possibilities of the final change of our earthly house into the heavenly. See Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, finely explained by Carlyle in his *Essays*.

² See William Burnett Wright's *Master and Man*, p. 77, on comfort; Aldis Wright's *Bible Word Book*, pp. 146, 147, for examples.

³ On the opposite danger of too much freedom from care and sorrow, see the story of "The Best Possible World" in Dr. Twombly's *Choir Boy of York Cathedral*.

⁴ See Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography*, pp.

33 And there he found a certain man named *Æ-nē'ās*, which had kept his bed eight years; ^{and was sick of the palsy. for he was palsied.}

34 And Peter said unto him, *Æ-nē'ās*, ^{he arose immediately. straightway he arose.} "Jesus Christ ^{maketh} ^{healeth} thee: whole: arise, and make thy bed. And ^{he arose immediately. straightway he arose.}

35 And ^{all} that dwelt at *Lýd'dā* and ^{in Shar'on} ^{Sa'ron,} saw him, and they ["] turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at ^z *Jōp'pā* a certain disciple named *Tāb'ī-thā*, which by interpretation is called *Dōr'cās*: this woman was full of "good works and almsdeeds which she did.

v Cp. ch. 3. 6. w Cp. vers. 31, 42. z 1 Chr. 5. 16 & 27. 29. S. of S. 2. 1. Isai. 33. 9, *al.* y ch. 11. 21. 2 Cor. 3. 16. z See Josh. 19. 46. a 1 Tim. 2. 10. Cp. Rom. 13. 3 & 2 Cor. 9. 8 & Eph. 2. 10 & Tit. 3. 1, 8, *al.*

from Azotus to Cæsarea, the planting or at any rate the strengthening of its Christianity may be referred to Philip the Evangelist, 8:40."¹

33. He found. As he went about doing good. It was not chance, but providence, in connection with his own seeking for ways to help others. **Named Æneas.** Very nearly the same as the Æneas, *Aivēlas* (with "ei" instead of "e" in the middle syllable), who was the hero of Troy in Virgil's poem. **Kept his bed eight years.** So that the cure must have been miraculous. **And was sick of the palsy.** *Palsy* is a contraction of the word "paralysis." The term is used by the ancient physicians in a much wider sense than by our modern men of science. It included not only what we call paralysis, which is rarely very painful, but also catalepsy and tetanus, *i. e.*, cramps and lockjaw, both of which were very painful and dangerous.

34. Jesus Christ. That is, the Messiah. Peter guards against being thought the source of the healing. He draws men not to himself, but to the Saviour. So the true preacher or teacher always "hides behind the cross." He draws attention not to himself, but to his Lord. **Maketh thee whole, *īarat*, healeth thee,** a medical term, as usual in Luke, instead of the *σάῃς*, *save*, or *διασάῃς*, *to save thoroughly* of Matthew and Mark. The translation "maketh thee whole" is a very expressive term for complete health, where every part of the body is present and in perfect condition. It is the type of a holy soul. **Arise and make thy bed, *στρώσον σεαυτῷ*, spread for yourself.** "The bed (*κρεβάτιον*, mentioned in ver. 33), even in wealthy houses, is, simply, it may be, a mat, or a Persian rug, or sheepskins or goatskins sewed together, or a quilted coverlet stuffed with wool. The first act on rising is, naturally, to roll up the bed, to prevent its being trodden on. This simple act of rolling up is here called making the bed."² He was henceforth to do for himself what others had done for him, as

the proof that he was cured and could take care of himself. **Immediately.** Showing that the cure was miraculous. Peter remembered what his Lord had done (Mark 2: 11, 12).

35. And all that dwelt at Lydda, etc. Rendall translates "All that dwelt at Lydda and in the Sharon who had turned to the Lord saw him." Both the A. V. and the R. V. "suggest that the whole population of this extensive district had been converted in consequence of the effect produced by the restoration of a single paralytic; but the real meaning is that all the Christians of the district attested the reality of the miracle."³ But most accept the ordinary view that there was a general turning of the population to the Lord.

Sharon, R. V. "Sharon," Rendall "the Sharon." "The valley of Sharon, the ideal Sharon of Hebrew poetry, formed a rich and well-watered pasture, extending along the western base of the Carmel range, between the mountains and the sandy strip of seashore, as far south as the neighborhood of Joppa. Lydda was the principal centre of population in the southern portion of the valley."³

II. PETER AND DORCAS, AT JOPPA. 36. There was at Joppa, nine or ten miles northwest of Lydda, and 30 miles northwest of Jerusalem, of which it is the seaport, and with which it is now connected by a railroad.

Joppa was a flourishing city at this time, and the only seaport between Egypt and Mount Carmel that can offer shelter to vessels. The modern Jaffa has about 8000 inhabitants. "The main street leading from the harbor is steep, narrow, crooked, dark, and dirty, with lanes still darker and dirtier leading off among the huddle of houses on each side."

It was a seaport of Solomon. It is the port from which Jonah is said to have sailed for Spain. "Mythology points to the rock on the southern side of the gap as the spot where Andromeda was

141, 160; and Schürer's *Jewish People*, div. ii., vol. i. p. 159.

¹ Knowling.

² Canon Tristram.

³ Rendall.

chained when Perseus slew the sea-monster and delivered the maiden."¹

A certain disciple named Tabitha. This in Syriac, the common language of the region, means *splendor, beauty*. Called Dorcas (Gazelle), which in the East was a favorite type of beauty. Dorcas is Greek, the language of the cultured class and of the officials. The gazelle is the type of timidity, beauty, and grace. It is "called *dorcas*

by the Greeks on account of its bright, flashing eyes." We do not know whether this expresses her outward appearance as "a lovely and beautiful woman, full of alertness and grace; or her spiritual loveliness and grace, which all can have, and which brings an attractiveness that no outward grace alone can produce." There is no way to be so attractive, personally, as to be full of good works done in the most graceful, that is, heavenly



JOPPA, THE MODERN JAFFA.

manner. "I will make you," said the Roman maiden, "love me not only in spite of my deformity, but because of it." So good works can transform even homeliness into charm, as in the reflection of the rays we forget the form of the jewel. **Was full of good works and almsdeeds.** Especially in making coats and garments for widows, who in that country were a most unfortunate class (ver. 39). She was full not of works she thought of and dreamed of doing, but of those which she did (imperfect tense), was in the habit of doing. The tense is imperfect because the action was not completed; she was still doing.

NOTE. 1. Good works for the poor are characteristic of the Christian religion as Christ commanded (Matt. 25).

2. They are proofs of discipleship (Matt. 25:

34-46; Jas. 1: 27). Not much flows from the stagnant pool of formal religion, but much from a fountain of living water in the soul. Good trees must bring forth good fruits in their season. We are God's children when we do God's works.²

3. The personal element, the giving of one's self with the gift, is a necessary part of good works for the sick and poor. It is as necessary for the giver as for the receiver.

4. Daily deeds of personal help, done with the highest motives, exalt, ennoble, and transfigure the life.

5. Doing good works for the poor saves us from the dangers and the narrowness of worldliness. It broadens our thoughts, uplifts our motives.

6. This is the way to lay up treasures in heaven.

¹ Rev. Geo. M. Mackie, M. A., chaplain at Beyrout, in Hastings' *Bib. Dic.* See Geo. A. Smith, *Historical Geog.*, pp. 121, 136, etc.

² See Leigh Hunt's poem, *Abou ben Adhem*, who, when the angel appeared to him with his book, in which were

written "the names of those who love the Lord," asked that his own name might be written as "one who loves his fellow men." The angel appeared again, — "And showed the names whom love of God had blessed, And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she ^{was} fell sick, and died: ^{whom} ^{and} when they had washed ^{her}, they laid ^{her} in ^b an upper chamber.

38 And ^{forasmuch} as Lŷd'dā was nigh ^{unto} Jōp'pā, ^{and} the disciples, ^{had heard} ^{hearing} that Peter was there, ^{they} sent ^{unto him two men, desiring him, e that he would not delay to come to them.} ^{two men unto him, intreating him, Delay not} ^{on unto}

us. 39 ^{Then} ^{And} Peter arose and went with them. ^{When} ^{And when} he was come, they brought him into the ^d upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dōr'cās made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter ^e put them all forth, and ^f kneeled down, and prayed; and turning ^{him} to the body, ^{he} ^g said, Tāb'ī-thā, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

^b ver. 39. ^{ch. 1. 13 & 20. 8.} ^c Num. 22. 16 (Heb. & Gk.). ^d ver. 37. ^e Matt. 9. 25. ^f See ch. 7. 60. ^g Cp. Mark 5. 41 & John 11. 43.

It develops the heavenly character. It makes sweeter music, greater raptures, wider visions possible.¹

37. She was sick, and died. Possibly as a martyr to her over-exertions in behalf of the poor; and she may wear a martyr's crown as really as Stephen or Peter.

"These, though their names appear not on the scroll Of martyrologists, laid down their life Not less a martyrdom in Jesus' eyes — For his dear brethren's sake, watching the couch Of loathsome sickness, or of slow decay, Or visiting the captive in his cell, Or struggling with a burden not their own Until their weary life-strings were away — These, too, are martyrs, brother."²

Even the best of people sometimes die early. God knows the best time for us to die. An immortal life beyond, enabling us to unfold our powers and carry out the work of our lives, renders it of less account to ourselves when we die. Laid her in an upper chamber. "In Jerusalem no corpse lay over night, but outside Jerusalem three days might elapse between death and burial, in special cases."

38. Heard that Peter was there. "It was too late to send for a physician, but not too late to send for Peter. A physician after death is an absurdity, but not an apostle after death."³ The burial preparations, and the delay in order to reach Peter, showed that death had actually taken place. That he would not delay, *ὀκνησάι*, *hesitate, delay from hesitation*. It is not said that they expected Peter to work a miracle. But they knew that

Peter had wrought some great miracles in Jesus' name, though he had not restored the dead; and they hoped that he might help them in some way. He must hasten, as every hour's delay tended to decay of the body, and lessened the hope of restoration.

39. When he was come . . . the widows stood by him weeping. The poor widows for whom Dorcas had made the coats, *χιτῶνας, close-fitting under-garments*. "The word was used in classical Greek of men and women, more perhaps like a dressing-gown or cassock."⁴ Garments, *ἱδρία, long-flowing outer robes, or mantles, which, ὅσα, as many as, with the thought of abundance and multitude, Dorcas made, was accustomed to make. Shewing. By pointing to the garments they had on (so the Greek).*

40. Peter put them all forth. This was a most natural reminiscence of what Peter had seen Jesus do in the case of Jairus' daughter. It is interesting to note in this case of Dorcas how many things show Peter's vivid memory of what Jesus had done in his presence. So Elijah acted. This would keep him from interruption; he could concentrate his mind on the Lord's will as to Tabitha; it would avoid all appearance of display. Probably Peter did not know at first what the result would be. Kneeled down, and prayed, to learn the Lord's will, and to receive his power. "Peter had been three times present at the raising of the dead; but he does not venture, like his master, to speak at once the word of power, but kneels down alone with the dead in silent prayer, after the manner of Elijah and

¹ See the story of the apostle Thomas and the palace he built for King Gondoforus, in Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, and many other places. "Legend of Strasburg Cathedral," in *The Uplands of God*. Hood's *Poems*, "The Lady's Dream," "The Angels in the Kitchen," in Wm. Gannett's *Blessed be Drudgery*. "Beau-

tiful Hands," in Dr. J. R. Miller's *Practical Religion*. The poem, "Wrought into Gold," and many other illustrations in *Suggestive Illustrations, Acts*. A beautiful poem, "Doing Good," in Foster's *Cyclopedia of Poet. Ill.*

² Bickersteth. ³ Matthew Henry.

⁴ See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "Coats," "Dress."

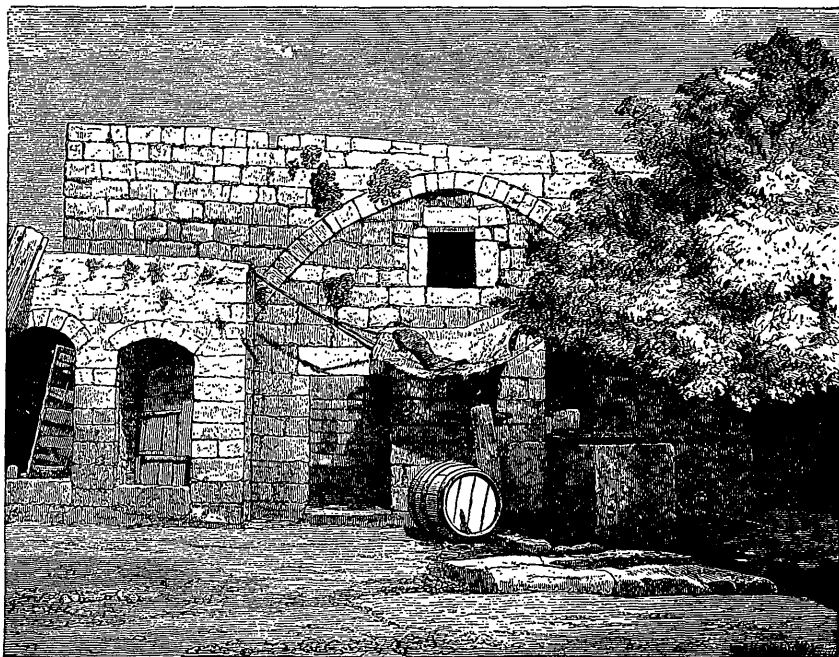
41 And he gave her ^{his} hand, and ^{lifted} raised her up; and ^{when he had called} calling the saints and widows, ^{he} presented her alive.

42 And it ^{was} became known throughout all Jōp'pā: ^{and} many believed ⁱⁿ on the Lord.

h Cp. John 11. 45 & 12. 11.

Elisha."¹ *Tabitha, arise.* If he used the Aramaic, the common language, the expression would be *Tabitha cumi*, differing but one letter from the *Talitha cumi* of Mark 5: 41, which he heard the Master speak in the sick-chamber at Capernaum.

And she opened her eyes, as one awaking from sleep. She sat up, *ἀνέκθισε*, used only by Luke here and in his Gospel (7: 15). "In both cases of a person restored to life and sitting up. In this *intransitive* sense it is almost entirely confined to



EXTERIOR OF THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER.

The open space is the little courtyard at the rear of the house. The well from which Peter is said to have baptized is sunk into the ground on the right.

From a Photograph of the Palestine Exploration Fund, in Lewin.

medical writers, to describe patients sitting up in bed. It occurs in Plato, *Phædo*, 60, but in the middle voice, and with the words *ἐπὶ τῇ κλίνῃ*, upon the bed, expressed."²

41. Gave her his hand, to help her up *after* she was alive. Jesus took Jairus' daughter's hand *before* she was restored.

42. And it was (became) known . . . and many believed in the Lord. The good works which the disciples did, on the one hand, and the power of the Lord to heal and save, on the other,

both commended the gospel to the people, and made it known everywhere.

THE RESTORATION OF DORCAS. 1. It brought into prominence Christian care for the poor.

2. It called attention to the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead, and was still alive in heaven, and could do the same wonders through his disciples as he himself had done when on earth. It was no dead Saviour, but a living Saviour, whom the apostles preached.

3. It revealed more clearly the character of

¹ Rendall.

² Knowling.

43 And it came to pass, that he ^{tarried}_{abode} many days in Jōp'pā with one 'Sī'mōn a tanner.

† ch. 10. 6.

Jesus, reminding the people of his teachings and his works of mercy and love.

4. It was a lesson on immortality, teaching that the soul has an existence separate from the body; and that eternal life, begun here, and continuing forever, is the life that should be most earnestly sought.

5. Her life and deeds of charity were an imperishable monument, more enduring than monuments of bronze or stone.

6. The natural wonder to know what effect such a restoration would have upon a person's after life, Robert Browning has attempted to satisfy in his poem, *An Epistle*, supposed to have been written by an Arab physician who was visiting Palestine while Lazarus was still alive. It describes the way Lazarus looked at this life after he had returned from his four days' dwelling in heaven; earthly cares and hopes were so small and dim in that light. How many cares and worries would disappear if viewed through Lazarus' or Dorcas' glasses! "On the other hand, through these same wonderful glasses, how important and weighty is any seemingly slight occurrence if it plants the seed of vice or virtue in any human heart."¹

"The man who once has looked

Behind the veil which severs death from life,
He would not venture all the world to win
One single thought against the eternal law."

The event would also be a marked era in Dorcas' experience, and one which all her life would give new power to her influence.

III. PETER AND SIMON THE TANNER. 43.

Tarried many days. Peter struck while the iron was hot. The harvest was ripe, it was great, the laborers were few. **Joppa** was a large city, a busy seaport, and hence an excellent centre from which to send forth the knowledge of the gospel. **With one Simon a tanner**, whose house was by the seaside (Acts 10: 6). "An order was issued not long ago, by the Sultan, for removing the old walls and dismantling the fortifications of Jaffa. In cutting a gate through a water battery at an angle of the sea wall built by Titus Vespasian, and directly in front of the reputed 'house of one Simon a tanner,' they came upon three oval-shaped *tanners' vats* hewn out of the natural rock, and lined with Roman cement, down very near the sea, and similar in every respect to those in use eighteen centuries ago."²

Why Peter dwelt with Simon the tanner we do not know. The business was extremely obnoxious to the Jews as unclean, because it required contact with dead animals. A wife could claim a divorce, it is said, if the husband was a tanner, and had kept the fact secret before marriage.³ We can suggest several reasons.

1. Peter was welcome there.

2. He went where he was most needed, as Jesus, among publicans and sinners.

3. He showed that Jesus was no respecter of persons.

4. He himself was bursting the bonds of Jewish narrowness, and becoming prepared for the further revelation of God's will described in the next chapter, where he instructed and baptized the Gentile Cornelius.

¹ See, also, *Robert Hardy's Seven Days*, by Rev. C. M. Sheldon; and E. H. Plumptre's *Lazarus and other Poems*.

² H. L. Hastings, D. D., 1890.

³ See Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, p. 158.

CHAPTER 10.

THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS.

PETER
AND
CORNELIUS.

Character sketch of Cornelius,
vers. 1, 2.
Vision of Cornelius, at Cæsarea,
vers. 3-8.
Vision of Peter, at Joppa, vers.
9-20.
Peter goes to Cæsarea, vers. 21-23.
Meeting in the house of Cornelius,
vers. 24-33.
The gospel according to Peter,
vers. 34-43.
The witness of the Spirit, vers.
44-46.
Cornelius and other Romans ad-
mitted to the church by bap-
tism, vers. 47, 48.

TIME. A. D. 38-40. Not long after our last lesson. During the "many days" while Peter was preaching at Joppa, after the raising of Dorcas.

PLACE. Peter was at Joppa, in the house of Simon the tanner. Cornelius was at Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Judea, about thirty-three miles to the north.

PLACE IN THE HISTORY.

One of the later preparatory steps in the transition period from a church of Jews to a universal church for all nations and races. During also the preparatory period of Paul for his great work.

THE PROBLEM, which divine providence was solving, was the reception of the Gentiles into the Christian church on the same terms as the Jews.

ON THE WAY. Note the methods of the divine providence:—

1. The natural character of Peter.
2. His training and broadening.
3. The spiritual development of Cornelius.
4. The way Cornelius and Peter were brought together.
5. The silent preparation of Paul to carry on the work thus begun.

THE GOAL is seen: 1. In the conversion of the Roman soldier.

2. In the endorsement by the Holy Spirit.
3. In the action of the church in our next chapter.

1 ^{THERE WAS} ^{Now there was} a certain man in Cæs-ä-rē'ä, called Côr-nē'lī-ūs' by name, a centurion of the ^j band called the Ī-tāl'jān ^{band,} ^{band.}

^j Matt. 27. 27. Mark 15. 16. John 18. 3, 12.

CHARACTER SKETCH OF CORNELIUS,

vers. 1, 2.

1. There was a certain man in Cæsarea, at this time the virtual capital of Palestine. Cæsarea was built by Herod the Great as the seaport of Sebaste (Greek for "Augustus"), which he had founded on the ruins of Samaria, and this Mediterranean city, with its palaces, temple, theatre, and lavish architecture, he named Cæsarea after Cæsar Augustus. At the time of the crusades it was held at different times by Saladin, Richard I., and St. Louis.¹

Called Cornelius, a member of the ancient and distinguished Italian family, the Cornelian gens (something like a Highland clan), to which belonged also the famous Roman generals, the Scipios and Sulla.²

A centurion, *ἐκατονάρχης*, commander of a hundred, the same rank as a captain in our army, placed over a company of a hundred soldiers with various subordinate officers. In practice, as in our companies, the actual number varied from 50 to 100 men. Of the band, *σπεῖρας*. "Originally anything wound or wrapped round; as a ball, the coils of a snake, a knot or curl in wood. Hence, a body of men-at-arms. The same idea is involved in the Latin word *manipulus*, which is sometimes (as by Josephus) used to translate *σπεῖρα*. *Manipulus* was originally a bundle or handful. The ancient Romans adopted a pole with a handful of hay or straw twisted about it as the standard of a company of soldiers; hence, a certain number or body of soldiers under one standard was called *manipulus*."³

¹ Geo. A. Smith, in *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

² Prin. J. W. Dawson's *Modern Science in Bible Lands* gives a picture and description of one of the Cornelian

family found in Pompeii, a cast of whom is now in the Pompeian Museum.

³ Prof. M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, on Mark 15: 16.

2 ^A devout ^{man,} and ^k one that feared God with all his house, ^{which} ^{who} gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

^k ver. 22. ch. 13. 16, 26.

The "band" here means a cohort, one tenth of a legion. It consisted of six centuries. Cornelius was one of the centurions of this cohort.

Called the Italian. "Josephus mentions that five of these cohorts were stationed at Cæsarea at



ROMAN CENTURION, by Lindenschmidt.

From Cæsar's *Gallie War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

the time of the death of Herod Agrippa, composed to a great extent at all events of the inhabitants of Cæsarea and Sebaste, *Antiq.*, 19: 9, 2; 20: 8, 7. There were in the provinces Italic cohorts composed of volunteer Roman citizens born in Italy, and in answer to the strictures of Schürer, who contends that there was no Italic cohort in Cæsarea at this time, Blass, *in loco*, asks why one of the five cohorts mentioned by Josephus may not have been composed of Roman citizens who had made their home at Cæsarea or Sebaste, a cohort known by the name mentioned."¹ Professor Ramsay argues strongly against those who say there was no Italian band at Cæsarea, and confirms his argument by an inscription recently

found at Carnuntum, one of the great military stations on the Danube, a little below Vienna. It is the epitaph of a young soldier of the Italic cohort, sent from Syria on a special temporary service. It shows that within a few years of the time we are now studying an Italian cohort belonged to Syria.²

2. A devout man, and one that feared God. "The words have a technical sense, and indicate that Cornelius was one of that large class of Gentiles who worshipped the God of the Jews, and endeavored to conform their lives in a general way to his will, while they did not accept circumcision and thus become proselytes."³

With all his house, not only the family, but the whole household.

Gave much alms, *ἐλεημοσύνας*, the virtue or quality of one who is *ἐλεήμων*, merciful, hence, mercy shown in giving to the needy. Our word *alms* (singular, not plural), contracted from *almesse*, is an abridged form of the Greek word, and *eleemosynary* is a transliteration.

The giving of alms was regarded by the ancient Jews as even more meritorious than the fulfilment of the commandments of the law, because it is not exactly prescribed, but left, as to the extent and amount at least, to the individual.⁴

And prayed to God alway. He cultivated piety toward God as well as man, and filled the fountain of his spiritual life from the river that flows from the throne of God. What he prayed for with the earnestness of fasting can be seen by the sequel, for the answer to the prayer shows what the heart of the prayer was. (1) He wanted more and clearer light. (2) He wanted assurance of forgiveness of sins. (3) He wanted the fulness and freedom of holy living, which no alms, no good deeds alone, can work within us. (4) He wanted many doubts and difficulties solved. (5) He wanted to be closer to God, with a consciousness of his love and presence and care. (6) He wanted to know more about the life to come. Cornelius gained these only by overcoming many and very great obstacles,—his early training, his heathen friends and associates, the immoralities encouraged by a military life, especially at that time, the danger of losing his promotion, the worldliness of his surroundings. The sea captain sails for his port whichever way the

¹ Knowing.

² See Ramsay's *Was Christ born in Bethlehem*, pp. 260-269, and a discussion by him with Schürer in *The*

Expositor, 1896, 1897. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 2, 4.

³ McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, p. 101.

⁴ Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, art. "Almsgiving."

3 'He saw in a vision ^{evidently} ^{openly, as it were} ^m about the ninth hour of the day, "an angel of God coming in ^{unto} him, and saying ^{unto} him, Cōr-nē'i-ūs.

4 And ^{when} he, ^{looked on} fastening his eyes upon him, ^{he was afraid, and} ^{and being affrighted,} said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are ^o ^{come} ^{gone} up ^p for a memorial before God.

^l vers. 17, 19. ^m See ch. 3. 1. ⁿ See ch. 8. 26. ^o Rev. 8. 4. ^{Cp.} Ps. 141. 2 & Dan. 10. 12. ^p Matt. 26. 13. Mark 14. 9. ^{Cp.} ver. 31 & Tobit 12. 12 & Heb. 6. 10.

winds blow or the currents run. The true soul steers, not drifts.

A SUMMARY OF CORNELIUS' CHARACTER. We know nothing of his early training, except that he must have been brought up in heathenism, with all its cruelties and unsatisfactory worship, which left his heart hungry, like the prodigal feeding on husks. While Cornelius must have had very much to contend with in his early education, his associations and the whole environment of his life, yet a man in his position must have had abundant opportunities of becoming acquainted with the Jewish religion, its one true God, and the loftiness of its code of morals. Cornelius, like the Roman centurion at Capernaum, received the truth, and worshipped God in spirit and in truth, but did not become a Jewish proselyte, accepting all its ritual and forms of worship. He was (1) a devoutly religious man;

(2) worshipping the one true God, and in the best way he knew, fasting and adopting the Jewish hours of prayer. (3) He was openly religious, his whole household going with him, and his kinsmen and intimate friends feeling his influence (ver. 24). (4) He expressed his piety in almsgiving, helping his fellow-men. (5) He was honest and upright in his dealings (ver. 22). (6) Doubtless, like the most devout Jews, he was looking and longing for better things, for fuller truth for higher life.

THE VISION OF CORNELIUS, CÆSAREA, vers. 3-8.

We will put the three accounts of Cornelius' vision side by side, from the Rev. Ver., with what is peculiar to each narrative in italics. They are all harmonious, but each one supplements the other.

Acts 10: 3-8.

He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius. *And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said, What is it, Lord?* And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside.

And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; and having rehearsed all things unto them: he sent them to Joppa.

3. He saw in a vision evidently, *ὁρμαυρί, something seen*. Not the same word as is used for Peter's trance, *ἐκστασις*, ver. 10, which see.

Evidently, *φανερώς, clearly, manifestly*; "plainly meant to exclude any illusion of the senses."¹

About the ninth hour. Three o'clock in the afternoon. Cornelius was keeping the regular Jewish hour of prayer in his house (ver. 30). The messenger was sent to him during prayer and in

Acts 10: 30-33.

Four days ago until this hour, *I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house*; and, behold, a man stood before me *in bright apparel*, and saith, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside. Forthwith therefore I sent to thee.

Acts 11: 13-15.

And he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, Send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter; *who shall speak unto thee words whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house.*

answer to prayer. The long-delayed answer had now come in the best time and manner.²

An angel of God coming in to him. The divine messenger came in the form of a man, but in bright apparel (ver. 30) to show his angelic nature. This appearance would not only assure Cornelius, but would be a strong argument with the Jews for receiving the Gentiles.

4. When he looked on him, *ἀνέβλεψας, fastening*

acter of his church. Recorded in *How Christ came to Church*.

² See the booklet *Expectation Corner*, "Delayed Blessings Office." The best allegory on prayer.

¹ Compare Dr. A. J. Gordon's dream one Saturday night soon after he began his ministry in Boston, a vision which changed the course of his ministry and the char-

5 And now send men to Jōp'pā, and ^{call for one} Simon, ^{whose surname is} Peter:

6 He lodgeth ^a with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side; ^{he} shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

7 And when the angel ^{which} spake unto ^{Cornelius} him was departed, he called two of his ^r household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

8 And ^{when he had declared} ^{having rehearsed} all ^{these} things unto them, he sent them to Jōp'pā.

q ch. 9. 43.

r Luke 16. 13 (mg.). Rom. 14. 4 (mg.). 1 Pet. 2. 18 (mg.).

his eyes on him, from *relaxo*, to stretch, just like our word *attention*, stretched to.

He was afraid. Such a messenger coming so unexpectedly and looking so intently, as if seeing into his very soul, would naturally make him afraid lest he had done something wrong, or lest some strange thing was to take place.

Are come up for a memorial, a remembrance offering. "A name given to that portion of the vegetable oblation which was burnt with frankincense upon the altar, the sweet savor of which ascending to heaven was supposed to commend the person sacrificing to the remembrance and favor of God." "The language is suggested by the material cloud of incense and steam of sacrifice." What was to come was not a reward for praying and giving, but the state of heart which was expressed in those acts made it possible for Cornelius to receive still greater blessings.

Only to him that hath can more be given. No one can see the vision from the mountain top unless he has climbed the mountain's side. It is the faithful scholar in the lower schools who is called to come up higher, and can make use of the higher.

5. Send men to Joppa. The new blessing must come through human instrumentality. One Simon, one of the many Simons in Joppa, designated by his other name Peter. The expression implies that he was unknown to Cornelius.

6. In this verse the address is given.

House is by the sea side. "The sanitary laws of the ancients, it is said, required tanners to live out of the city, 'not only because of the dead animals which the nature of their business called them to use, but also because of the disagreeable odor and filth of their premises.' The convenient prosecution of their business and the removing the disagreeable refuse, required that they should be near the water."¹ "So in India, at this day, tanneries are not allowed among the Jews inside a town, a space of fifty cubits' distance from the walls being imposed on 'corpses, graves, and tanneries.'"²

He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. Given more fully in 11: 14; — "shall speak unto

thee words whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house."

7. Two of his household servants, having some leading position, and intimately acquainted with Cornelius' character and desires.

And a devout soldier, not a personal servant,



ROMAN SOLDIER, AQUILIFER, EAGLE-BEARER, bearer of one of the legionary standards. By Lindenschmidt. From Caesar's *Gallie War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

but one detached for military guard and attendance. He was sent for the protection of the servants on their journey.

8. When he had declared all these things. He confided in them the whole story of his vision and the angel's message, so that they could convey the message correctly and impressively to Peter.

¹ Hackett.

² Geikie.

9 ^{On} Now on the morrow, as they ^{went} were on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, [°] Peter went up ' upon the housetop to pray, about "the sixth hour :

10 And he became ^{very} hungry, and ^{would have eaten : desired to eat :} but while they made ready, he fell into " a trance ;

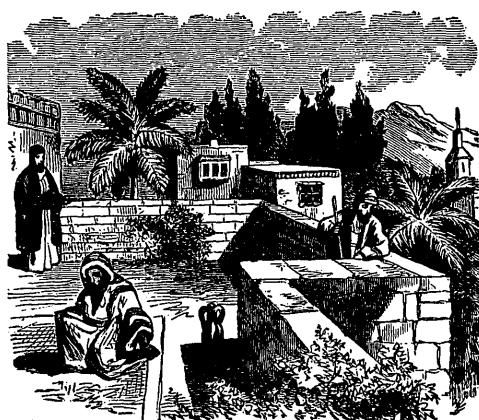
^s For vers. 9-32, see ch. 11. 5-14.
^u Ps. 55. 17. ^v ch. 22. 17.

^t Cp. 2 Kin. 23. 12 & Jer. 19. 13 & 32. 20 & Zeph. 1. 5. See 1 Sam. 9. 25.

THE VISION OF PETER, JOPPA, vers. 9-20.

9. On the morrow, as they went (were going) on their journey. The distance being over 30 miles, they would have to spend one night on the way. If they left Cæsarea the same afternoon as Cornelius' vision, they could easily reach Joppa by noon of the next day.

Peter, all unconscious of the approaching messengers, went up upon the housetop to pray,



Housetop, with balustrade around it.
From Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

in cool retirement at the regular hour of prayer. "Every one acquainted with the flat roof of Eastern houses knows how well adapted it is for prayer and meditation. For Biblical illustrations, see Deut. 22 : 8 ; 2 Kings 23 : 12 ; Jer. 19 : 13 ; Zeph. 1 : 5 ; Luke 5 : 19."¹ His active work was done in the early morning and in evening hours, when only he could reach people. "The roof, according to the Oriental manner, was flat or but slightly inclined. It was the place often chosen for the performance of religious duties. A wall or balustrade three or four feet high surrounds many of the roofs in the East, where a person may sit or kneel without being observed by others."²

"Unheard by all but angel ears,
The good Cornelius knelt alone.

The saint beside the ocean prayed,
The soldier in his chosen bower.

To each unknown his brother's prayer.
Yet brethren true in dearest love
Were they."³

Some one has compared the movements of Providence to those of pieces on a chessboard, which, however moved, in whatever part of the board, in whichever direction, all bear upon one purpose, however unrecognized that purpose may be by those who look on.

About the sixth hour. Twelve o'clock ; noon. "The second of the Jewish stated hours of prayer."

NOTE how the apostles and devout men of old kept stated hours of prayer. The value of regular hours of devotion is very great ;⁴ as much so as regular hours for meals. There are dangers of formality in both cases, but the losses from the want of regular hours and habits are infinitely greater than the dangers. The spiritual life flows most easily in the regular channels, however much there may be also a necessity for prayers at all times to express our feelings and meet our needs. But this kind of prayer flows more naturally and freely from those who have also regular seasons of devotion.

10. He became very hungry, for the time had come for his usual meal, and we know not how hard his labors had been during the morning. This hunger was his preparation for the vision he saw in his trance ; for it would impel him to partake of the food he saw descending from heaven, and aid him to appreciate the spiritual hunger of the Gentiles.

He fell into a trance. Lit., "a trance fell (or came) upon him ;" *ἐκστασις*, a throwing of the mind out of its normal state, as "of the man who by some sudden emotion is transported, as it were, out of himself, so that in this rapt condition, although he is awake, his mind is so drawn off from all surrounding objects, and wholly fixed on things divine, that he sees nothing but the forms and

¹ Schaff.

² Hackett.

³ Keble's *Christian Year*, "Monday in Easter week."

⁴ See some excellent remarks in W. C. Gannett's *Blessed be Drudgery*.

11 And ^{he saw} he beholdeth the ^w heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, ^{unto him,} as it ^{had been} were a great sheet, ^{knit at the} let down by four corners ^{and let down to} upon the earth :

12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts ^{of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping} and creeping things, ^{and creeping things of the earth} and fowls of the ^{air,} heaven.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter ; kill and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord ; ^x for I have never eaten anything that is ^v common ^{or} and ^z unclean.

15 And ^{the} voice ^{spake} unto him again the second time, "What God hath cleansed, ^{that call} make not thou common.

w See John 1. 51. *x* Ezek. 4. 14. Dan. 1. 8. Tobit 1. 10, 11. 2 Macc. 7. 1. *y* ver. 23. *z* Lev. 11. 2-47 & 20. 25. Dent. 14. 4-20. *a* Rom. 14. 2, 14, 20. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15. Cp. Matt. 15. 11 & Mark 7. 15, 19 & 1 Cor. 10. 25.

images lying within, and thinks that he perceives with his bodily eyes and ears realities shown him by God."¹ The trance is the state in which visions are seen. Here it is in contrast with the vision, *ἑραμα*, of Cornelius in ver. 3. "It differs from the dream in that it is unconnected with any natural sleep ; and from the vision because in the latter the person retains his consciousness, and the objects shown to him possess a real existence."²

11. And saw heaven opened, to show that the vision and its teaching came from God.

Descending . . . as it had been a great sheet knit, bound, tied, at the four corners, to the cords by which it was let down. The Rev. Ver. omits *knit*. "What the apostle saw was an extended sheet, the four corners of which were held up, as it were, by cords let down from the four extremities of the opened sky. The significance of the outstretched sheet, as a figure of the wide world, and the four corners as the directions into which the gospel was now to be borne forth into all the world, has often been dwelt upon."³ But this is a mere illustration from the facts, and does not belong to the natural interpretation of the vision. The easiest way such a sheet could be let down would be by the four corners. According to Professor Vincent, the corners, *ἀρχαίς*, beginnings, extremities, are attached to heaven, and the suggestion of ropes holding the corners is an unwarranted use of the word. It is the technical expression in medical language for the ends of bandages.⁴

12. Wherein were all manner, all varieties, clean and unclean alike, of fourfooted beasts, including wild beasts, which were unclean, for though the oldest MSS. omit these words here, they belong to the story, being found in 11 : 6. And creeping things, reptiles, unclean to the Jews, and representing here the lowest and most degraded nations.

"We must conceive of those animals which were ceremonially unclean as being more peculiarly conspicuous in the vision." Stier suggests that 'probably the unclean beasts presented themselves first at the edge of the sheet.'"⁵

13. Rise, Peter. From his knees in prayer, or his reclining posture.

Kill and eat. This direction, which could not have been obeyed literally, shows the trance or vision character of the occurrence.

14. Not so, Lord. He refused to satisfy his hunger by breaking the law of God, which he felt was still binding upon him. The refusal reminds us of Christ's refusal to satisfy his hunger by changing stones into bread ; and also of Peter's own blind self-will in opposing Christ's plan of redemption through suffering, so far that it was said to him, "Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

I have never eaten anything that is common, unholy, contrary to the Mosaic ritual, common to Gentiles and all the rest of the world, but forbidden to Jews. Or unclean. To eat seemed to be almost treason to God and his nation. "No greater shock to a Hebrew could be imagined than to be told to assuage his hunger by eating unclean meats. It is recorded in the Second Book of Maccabees (6 : 18 ; 7 : 1) that Hebrews submitted to death that they might escape such an indignity."⁶ It was such distinctions which separated the Jews from the Gentiles, and which were essential to their training as the people of God, until there came a better, truer distinction between God's people and the world in the faith and character and life of Christians. Jesus had given some instruction on this subject a dozen years before (Mark 7 : 14-23), which no doubt Peter remembered as he thought more on this vision.

15. The voice spake . . . What God hath

¹ Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon*.

² Lyman Abbott.

³ Cambridge Bible.

⁴ Hobart, in *Medical Language of St. Luke*, says that

thus we have a technical medical phrase which hardly any one except a medical man would think of employing.

⁵ Schaff.

16 ^{This} And ^{this} was done thrice: and straightway the vessel was received up ^{again} into heaven.

17 Now while Peter ^{doubted} ^{was much perplexed} in himself what ^{this} ^{the} vision which he had seen ^{should} ^{might} mean, behold, ^{the} ^{men} ^{which} ^{that} were sent ^{from} ^{by} Cór-né'i-ūs, ^{had} ^{having} made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

b ver. 3.

c vers. 7, 8.

cleansed, that call not thou common, *μη κοινον*. "The original admits of a more forcible rendering, *make not common*, as though man by his harsh verdict actually created uncleanness where God has already bestowed his cleansing mercy in Christ."¹ "Do not *profane* it by *regarding* and calling it common."²

16. This was done thrice, both to emphasize the truth as of the utmost importance, and to assure Peter beyond doubt that the message was from God.

THE NEED OF THE VISION. 1. It was necessary that there should be a broadening of the church from a Jewish to a universal church, including Gentiles as well as Jews. How it could be done was to be the burning question of the day, and one which threatened to rend the church in twain as by an earthquake shock.

2. Cornelius, a Gentile, was knocking at the door.

3. But the Jews were separated from the Gentiles by a divine law, which hindered intercourse by forbidding to the Jews some articles of food in common use among the Gentiles, and forbidding the Gentiles to enter into the most sacred places of the Jewish worship. The Jewish interpretations were stricter than the law itself.

4. The Gentiles, as Gentiles, could therefore be received into the same church with the Jews, only by the same divine authority that had ordained the law.

5. This authority was given (1) through the vision to Peter; (2) through the Spirit bidding him to go to Cornelius; (3) through new and larger views; and (4) through the endorsement by God by the same visible gift of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentile converts as he had bestowed upon the first disciples.

6. The meaning is not that "all forms of humanity, though debased in ignorance and vice," are clean, but that all of them whom God hath cleansed are clean, and are to be received into the new kingdom on equal terms with the Jews,

without their becoming Jews. We should "see in every human being a soul for which Christ has poured out his cleansing blood," and do our utmost that he may receive the divine cleansing. And when he is cleansed, he is our brother, be he native or foreigner, black or white, ignorant or educated, from the slums or from a palace.³

17. Now while Peter doubted, *διηπόρει*, was perplexed; from *διδ*, through or thoroughly, and *ἀποπέω*, to be without a way out, not to know which way to turn. "The radical idea of the compound verb seems to be of one who goes through the whole list of possible ways, and finds no way out."² Hence, to be perplexed thoroughly.

Behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry, *διερωτήσαντες*, from *διδ*, through, thoroughly, *ἑρωτῶ*, to question, to inquire. They asked constantly, thoroughly, for Simon's house as they passed through the streets.

NOTE the insight here given us of the workings of Providence, and of God's providential answers to prayer. There is no interference with the laws of nature, nor with the free wills of men. But God by his guiding spirit brings the answer. While we pray for help, the help is being provided and guided.

"O souls which sit in upper air,
Longing for heavenly sight,
Glimpses of truth all fleeting fair,
Set in unearthly light, —
Is there no knocking heard below,
For which you should arise and go,
Leaving this vision, and again
Bearing its message unto men?"

"Sordid the world were vision not,
But fruitless were your stay;
So, having seen the sight and got
The message, haste away.
Though pure and bright the higher air,
And hot the street, and dull the stair,
Still, get thee down, for who shall know
But 't is the Lord who knocks below?"⁴

¹ Rendall.² M. R. Vincent.

³ See Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, vol. v., where he shows how a cup of black factory mud contains the elements which make the sapphire, the opal, the diamond, and the snow crystal.

⁴ Susan Coolidge, *The Vision and the Summons*. Longfellow's "Legend Beautiful," in his *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, furnishes a fine illustration:

"Rapt in silent ecstasy
Or divinest self-surrender,
Saw the vision and the splendor. . .
Should he alight his radiant guest?"

When the blessed Vision said,
'Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled.'

18 And called and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

19 ^{While} And while Peter thought on ^b the vision, ^a the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

20 ^{Arise therefore,} But arise, and get thee down, and ^c go with them, ^{doubting nothing:} nothing doubting: for I have sent them.

21 ^{Then} And Peter went down to the men, ^{which were sent unto him from Cornelius;} and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what ^e is the cause wherefore ye are come?

22 And they said, Cōr-nē'li-ūs ^{the} a centurion, a ^{just} righteous man: ^f and one that fear-eth God, and ^{of good report among} well reported of by ^g all the nation of the Jews, was warned ^{from God} by a ^h holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to ⁱ hear words ^{of} from thee.

23 ^{Then called he} So he called them in and lodged ^{them.} And on the morrow ^{Peter} he arose and went ^{away forth} with them, ^j and certain ^{of the} brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And on the morrow ^{after} they entered into Cæs-ā-rē'ā. And Cōr-nē'li-ūs ^{waited} was waiting for them, ^{and had} having called together his kinsmen and ^{his} near friends.

^b ver. 3. ^d See ch. 8. 29. ^e Cp. ch. 15. 7-9. ^f See ver. 2. ^g See Mark 8. 38. ^h ch. 11. 14. ⁱ ver. 45. Cp. ch. 11. 12. ^j See John 21. 23.

18. And called. "Having called out some one of the servants."¹

19. While Peter thought, *διενθυμούμενον*, having thoroughly in mind, thinking of the matter on all sides.

The Spirit said, thus giving the divine application of the vision.

20. Go with them, doubting nothing, having no hesitation or doubt as to the lawfulness and duty of going. Peter, of all the twelve apostles, was the one best prepared by his natural character to receive the vision and act upon it. He had "the impulsive and uncalculating spirit," to which "such a request as that of Cornelius would appeal most strongly, and he was just the man who would accept most unquestioningly the divine evidence of his conversion, and be quickest to act upon that evidence and receive the new convert as a Christian brother."² He would do what he knew to be right without regard to consequences, perhaps without seeing them.

Moreover, Peter was one of the most influential of the apostles, and what he did would have more weight with the church than the same act done by most of the others.

PETER, WITH SIX COMPANIONS, GOES TO CÆSAREA, vers. 21-23.

21. Peter went down the outside stairway to the men. What is the cause? Peter was still entirely ignorant of what he was to do or who sent for him.

22. Of good report. Cornelius must therefore, like the Capernaum centurion, have done some-

thing in connection with the Jews, in worship, or charity, or financial aid.

Warned from God by a holy angel. Peter now had double reason for going with these Gentiles.

23. Called he them in and lodged them. "In this Christian hospitality to Gentile strangers, Peter had taken another step towards understanding what the will of the Lord was."³

And certain brethren, six of them (11: 12). During the afternoon Peter prepared for his journey, doubtless conferring with the Joppa disciples, and finding six wise ones who would go with him as witnesses and advisers for himself, and would reinforce his own witness to the gospel at Cæsarea, reporting what they had seen and experienced of its effects.

A MEETING IN THE HOUSE OF CORNELIUS, vers. 24-33.

24. And the morrow, after spending one night on the way, — the fourth day since Cornelius' vision. Entered into Cæsarea, about three o'clock,⁴ in the afternoon (ver. 30).

Cornelius waited for them. Not knowing exactly when the messengers would arrive, Cornelius had assembled his friends in good season, probably to a feast.

Called together his kinsmen, *συγγενεῖς*, *σύν*, and *γένος*, offspring, or family together, of the same family, blood relations.

And near friends, *ἀγαθαίους*, originally, necessary, connected by strong bonds of nature or friendship. Here it must mean intimate friends, since

¹ Blass.

² McGiffert.

³ Knowling.

⁴ On the route. See Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, p. 27.

25 And ^{as Peter was coming in,} when it came to pass that Peter entered, Côt-né'li-ūs met him, and ^k fell down at his feet, and ^l worshipped ^{him.}

26 But Peter ^{took} ^{raised} him up, saying, ^m Stand up ; I myself also am a man.

^k ch. 16. 29. Dan. 2. 46.

^l See Matt. 8. 2.

^m Rev. 19. 10 & 22. 8, 9. Cp. ch. 14. 15.

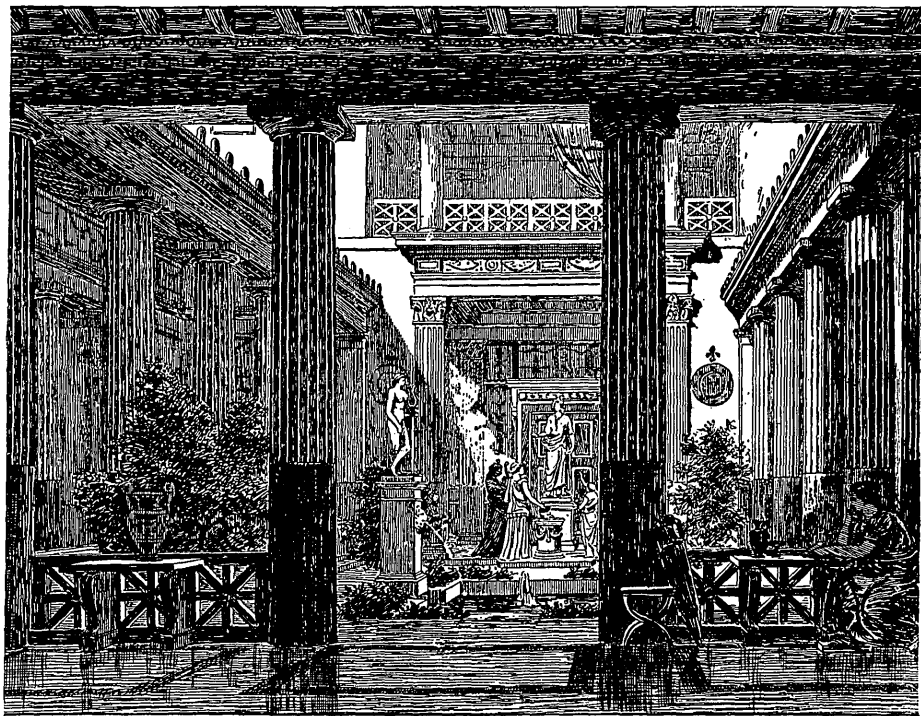
blood relations is expressed by the previous term. They were probably sympathizers with Cornelius in character and spirit.

25. Was coming in to the house. Ver. 27 describes his going into the room.

Cornelius . . . fell down at his feet, in Oriental

fashion, and worshipped him, not as a divine being, for he was a worshipper of the one God, and had been told in his vision that Peter was a man, but with the deepest feelings of awe and gratitude, as an ambassador of God.

26. I myself also am a man. "Peter may



AULA, OR FRONT COURT OF A GREEK HOUSE, with rooms on each side, similar to the large Roman houses discovered at Pompeii. In such a court, and in the rooms opening upon it, was probably the meeting at Cornelius' house. By Von Falke.

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

have been surprised at such a mode of salutation from a Roman, whose national habits were so different ; he had reason to fear that the centurion had mistaken his character — was exceeding the proper limits of the respect due from one man to another. He recoiled at the idea of the possibility of having a homage tendered to him which might partake of the reverence that belongs only to God. In other words, it is more

probable that Peter, in his concern for the divine honor, warned the centurion against an act which he apprehended, than that the centurion committed an act so inconsistent with his religious faith. . . . Compare with this conduct of Peter that of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra (14 : 14, sq.). The Saviour, on the contrary, never repressed the disposition of his disciples to think highly of his rank and character. He never reminded them

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and ^{found}_{findeth} many ^{that were} come together;

28 And he said unto them, Ye ^{yourselves}_{keep company} know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to ^{join himself} or come unto one of another nation; ^{but God hath shewed me} and ^{yet} unto me hath God shewed that I should not call any man common or unclean;

29 ^{Therefore came I unto you} ^{Wherefore also I came} without gainsaying, ^{as soon as}_{when} I was sent for: I ask therefore ^{for} ^{with what intent ye have} sent for me?

30 And Côr-nê'lî-ūs said, "Four days ago, ^{I was fasting until this hour; and at}_{until this hour, I was keeping} the ^{ninth} hour ^{I prayed}_{clothing, apparel,} in my house; and, behold," a man stood before me in bright

31 And ^{said,}_{saith,} Côr-nê'lî-ūs, "thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call ^{hither}_{unto thee} Simon, ^{whose surname is}_{who is surnamed} Peter; he ^{is} lodged ^{in the house of}_{one} Simon a tanner, by the sea side: ^{who, when he cometh, shall} speak unto thee.

33 ^{Immediately}_{Forthwith} therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore ^{are we}_{we are} all here present ^{before}_{in the sight of} God, to hear all things that ^{are} ^{have been} commanded thee of ^{the}_{God.} the Lord.

34 ^{Then}_{And} Peter opened ^{his} mouth, and said, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no "respector of persons:

ⁿ Cp. ch. 11. 3 & John 4. 9 & 18. 28 & Gal. 2. 12. ^o Cp. ver. 35. See vers. 14, 15. ^p vers. 9, 23, 24. ^q See ch. 3. 1. ^r Cp. ch. 1. 10. ^s See ver. 4. ^t Cp. ver. 28 & ch. 15. 19 & Deut. 1. 17 & Rom. 3. 29. See Deut. 10. 17. ^u Prov. 24. 23. James 2. 1, 9. Cp. Jude 16.

of the equality of his nature with their own, or intimated that the honor paid to him was excessive."¹

27. He went in, to the room where the assembly was gathered. We here first learn that there were many of them. This fact seems to have impressed Peter.

28. Ye know that it is an unlawful thing, ἀθέμιτον, from ἀ, not, like our "un," and τίθημι, to place, to lay down as a law, to establish; hence, contrary to established principles or venerable customs.

A Jew to keep company, etc. Objection has been made to this statement from two directions. One is the fact that "we know of instances where Jews went without scruple into the houses of Gentiles. (Compare Josephus, *Antiq.*, 20: 2, 3.)" But the unlawful thing here refers "to the custom of eating together at the same table. This is the point specified in chap. 11: 3 (see Gal. 2: 12). It is possible that at this moment provisions were set forth to view, made ready for the refreshment of the travellers after their journey. It is precisely in this particular that there would be the greatest risk of a violation of the law of Moses. From this point of view, too, we see the peculiar significance of St. Peter's vision."² The other is

that "there is no precise and explicit text in the Old Testament which forbids such intercourse." But there were laws which made such intercourse impossible, and there is abundant evidence that it was contrary to Jewish customs and interpretation of the law.

But God hath shewed me. It is probable that he here related the vision that came to him in his trance.

29. Came I unto you without gainsaying, etc. This is a good text for a preacher called to a parish, or a teacher asked to take a class.

30. Cornelius said. Here Cornelius relates his experience to Peter, his six friends, and the assembled company. Vers. 30-32 can best be studied in connection with the other accounts given together under ver. 3.

33. Thou hast well done, καλῶς, beautifully, "a courteous and handsome thing in coming," something choice, admirable, "excellent in its nature, and therefore well adapted to its ends."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PETER, vers. 34-43.

I. THE GOSPEL IS FOR ALL. 34. Of a truth I perceive, καταλαμβάνομαι, from κατά, from top to bottom, thoroughly, and λαμβάνω, to take hold of;

¹ Hackett,

² Schaff. See Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, pp. 26-28. Bartlett's *Apostolic Age*, p. 43.

35 But 'in every nation he that feareth him, and ^v worketh righteousness, is ^{accepted with} him.

36 ^{accepted with} The word which ^{God} ^{he} sent unto the children of Israel, ^x preaching ^{good tidings} of ^v peace by Jesus Christ: (^z he is Lord of all)^y—

37 That ^{word, I say,} ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, ^{and began} from ^b Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

38 ^{How God} ^{Even} anointed Jesus of Nazareth, ^{how that God} anointed him with the ^d Holy Ghost and ^e with power: who went about doing good, and healing all ^f that were oppressed of the devil; ^g for God was with him.

ⁱ Cp. ver. 28 & ch. 15. 19 & Deut. 1. 17 & Rom. 3. 29. See Deut. 10. 17. ^v Isai. 64. 5. ^w ch. 13. 26. Pa. 107. 20 & 147. 18, 19. ^x Isai. 52. 7. Nah. 1. 15. Eph. 2. 17. ^y See Luke 2. 14. ^z Rom. 10. 12. Cp. Rev. 17. 14 & 19. 16. See ch. 2. 36 & Matt. 28. 18. ^a Luke 24. 47. ^b Matt. 4. 12. Mark 1. 14. ^c Cp. Matt. 3. 16 & John 1. 32, 33. See ch. 4. 26. ^d Cp. ch. 1. 2 & 2. 22 & Matt. 12. 28 & Luke 4. 18 & Rom. 1. 4. ^e Cp. Luke 6. 19. ^f See Matt. 4. 24 & Luke 13. 16. ^g See John 8. 29 & 10. 38.

hence, to lay hold of so as to make one's own, to obtain complete possession of a spiritual truth gained by personal experience.

God is no respecter of persons, *προσωπολήπτῃς*, from *πρόσωπον*, the face, the front part of the human head, and hence, secondarily, as here, a mask, something before the face, the appearance one presents to others through outward circumstances such as wealth, rank, dress, and *λαμβάνω*, to receive, to accept. Hence, a "respector of persons" is one who receives or treats others, not according to what they are, but according to their outward circumstances, such as wealth or social position, nationality, color. (1) All men alike need salvation. (2) God loves all men and wants all to be saved. (3) There is one and the same condition of salvation for all. (4) Those who honestly and earnestly seek shall certainly find.

"The central belief of Judaism, as represented by Sadducean priests and formalizing Pharisees, was that God was 'a respecter of persons,' and was full of partiality for special favorites. The Pharisee would not speak a word in public to 'a woman.' He drew back the hem of his garment if he chanced to pass a Gentile, or a publican, or one of 'the masses.' This whole system of uncompassionate arrogance St. Peter sweeps away in a single sentence. He now sees for the first time the glorious truth which gives us the Universal Father." . . .

This is the voice of the deepest and most spiritual utterances of Holy Writ. It is the voice of

Moses, Deut. 10: 12.

Samuel, 1 Sam. 15: 22.

David, and the Psalmists, Ps. 1: 8.

Isaiah, 1: 11, 16, 17.

Jeremiah, 7: 22, 23.

Hosea, 6: 6.

Micah, 6: 6-8.

Our Lord, Matt. 12: 7; 22: 35-40.

The Apostles, Rom. 13: 10; 1 Tim. 4: 8; 1 John 2: 29; 3: 7.¹

35. But in every nation, Jew or Gentile. He that feareth him, and worketh righteousness. These two particulars include the observation of both tables of the law. Is accepted with him. If the things done were good in themselves, they were equally good, whoever did them. "Peter shows a belief that there were some men who feared God, and worked righteousness among non-Jewish races and nations, who were accepted of God."² God's only test is what a person really is in moral character. All must be saved in the same way, on the same conditions, subject to the same penalties if they refuse, and open to the same blessings if they repent and believe.³

II. THE GOSPEL CAME BY JESUS CHRIST.

36. The word (the message) . . . unto the children of Israel, who first received it, and who had been prepared for it by a long training. Preaching, *εὐαγγελιζόμενος*, evangelizing, preaching the good tidings of peace, i. e., salvation. (1) Peace with God; (2) peace from the condemnation of conscience; (3) peace among men, who now become brothers; (4) peace in the soul, whose powers are now all in harmony under one supreme Lord. By Jesus Christ. The divine Saviour. He is Lord of all. Jew and Gentile. Not a mere prophet, but the Lord himself.

37. That word (tidings, not the same Greek that is rendered word in ver. 36) . . . ye know. This implies that they had already some knowledge of the life and works of Christ. The works of Christ were so public and so widespread that some knowledge of them must have come to the ears of Cornelius.

III. THE EFFECTS OF THE GOSPEL WERE WORTHY OF THE SON OF GOD. 38. God anointed. Set him apart for this special purpose, as kings and priests were set apart for their work by anointing

¹ Farrar, *Texts Explained*, pp. 140-142.

² President Woolsey.

³ Whittier's *Poems*, "Our Master."

39 And ^h we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the ^{land} ^{country} of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; ⁱ whom ^{also} they slew, ^{and} ^{hanged} ^{hanging} him on a tree:

40 Him ^j God raised up the ^k third day, and ^{shewed} ^{gave} him to be ^{openly} ^{made} manifest,

41 ^m Not to all the people, but unto witnesses ^{that were} ⁿ chosen before of God, ^{even} to us, ^o who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And ^p he ^{commanded} ^{charged} us to preach unto the people, and to testify ^q that ^{this} ^{is} he which ^{was} ^{is} ordained of God to be the Judge ^r of quick and dead.

43 ^s To him ^{give} ^{bear} all ^t the prophets witness, that ^u through his name ^v whosoever ^{every one} that believeth ^{on} him shall receive ^w remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, ^x the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

^h ver. 41. See ch. 2. 32 & Luke 24. 48. ⁱ ch. 5. 30. ^j See ch. 2. 24. ^k See Luke 9. 22. ^l ch. 1. 3.
^m Cp. John 14. 21, 22. ⁿ ver. 39. ^o See ch. 1. 4 (un.). ^p See ch. 1. 2. ^q ch. 17. 31 & 24. 25. John 5. 22,
 27. 2 Cor. 5. 10. See Matt. 16. 27. ^r 2 Tim. 4. 1. 1 Pet. 4. 5. Cp. Rom. 14. 9, 10 & 1 Thess. 4. 15, 17. ^s ch. 26.
 22. Rom. 3. 21. Cp. Jer. 31. 34. ^t ch. 3. 18, 24. Luke 24. 27. ^u ch. 2. 38 & 4. 12. John 20. 31. 1 John 2. 12.
^v ch. 11. 17 & 13, 39 & 15. 9. Rom. 9. 33 & 10. 11. Gal. 3. 22. ^w ch. 5. 31. ^x ch. 11. 15 & 15. 8. 1 Thess. 1. 5.
 See ch. 2. 4.

with oil. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. These were the true anointing, and proof that he was sent from God. There was no self-seeking, but only service of others, doing good, the most good, and good only. Oppressed, *καταδυναστευόμενος*, under the power of, *κατὰ*, against, i. e., exerted for harm. "This word forcibly expresses the tyranny with which the devil domineers over the wretched victims of moral and physical disease."¹ Oppressed of the devil. Demoniacs. Christ's triumph over this form of Satanic agency is singled out as the highest exhibition of his wonder-working power. But many forms of evil are in some way oppressions of the devil, especially moral evil.

IV. THE PROOFS WERE INFALLIBLE AND ABUNDANT. 39. We are witnesses. Peter spoke what he knew to be true. He had been with Jesus and seen all these things.

40. Him God raised up. Not only were the apostles witnesses, but God himself bore witness by raising Jesus from the dead. The Jews imagined that they had destroyed Jesus by crucifying, but this only gave God an opportunity to prove more conclusively that Jesus was his messenger, and his Son.

41. Not to all the people. For that would have impressed them that he had never been really dead, and would have hindered the training of the disciples into a full conception of his continued life in heaven. Theophylact well remarks, "If even the disciples were incredulous, and needed touch and talk, what would have happened in the case of the many."

Witnesses chosen before, *προκεχειροτονημένους*, from *πρό*, before, and *χειροτονεῖν*, to stretch

out the hand for the purpose of giving a vote; hence, to appoint, elect, ordain. "Plato uses the word of the election of leaders of choruses,"²

42. He commanded us. Peter now shows Cornelius his commission from Christ, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." And to testify. Bear witness to what they had seen and heard and experienced. The best part of all true preaching of Christ is simply bearing witness. The preacher proclaims the truth, and then witnesses to it from his own experience. Judge of quick (living) and dead. Christ is now the judge; his life and character are the standard by which every man is to judge himself; he shows what is the ideal of humanity, and so, how far we have fallen from it. He is also to be the judge at the Last Day.

V. THE WELCOME TO ALL. 43. To him give all the prophets witness. The prophets as a body bore witness to Jesus. From the very beginning prophets have foretold the Messiah, and ceremonials have set forth his mission. Both have pictured him before the people. And Jesus is the one pictured in every particular. Jesus was not isolated. His coming was not a sudden, unintended movement, but the fruitage and consummation of a plan unfolding through the ages. Remission of sins. The sending away, release as from debt or penalty. This is man's first need. The debt is too great for him to pay, the burden too heavy to carry, the penalty too great to bear. His sins, unforgiven, keep him from his Father and his Father's home. "This is God's first message to man,—Forgiveness free and ample; sure and immediate."

¹ Rendall,

² Laws, 765,

45 ^u And they of the circumcision which believed were ^{astonished, amazed,} as many as came with Peter, ^z because that on the Gentiles also was poured out ^a the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them ^b speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can ^c any man forbid ^{the} water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost ^d as well as we?

48 ^e And he commanded them to be baptized ^f in the name of ^{the Lord.} Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

^y ver. 23. Cp. ch. 11. 2. ^z See ch. 2. 17. ^a See ch. 2. 38. ^b See Mark 16. 17. ^c ch. 8. 36. ^d ch. 2. 4 & 11. 17 & 15. 8. ^e Cp. 1 Cor. 1. 14-17. ^f ch. 2. 38. See ch. 8. 12, 16.

THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, vers. 44-46.

44. **While Peter yet spake.** The speech was a completed whole, and it was while Peter was uttering the last words without any interval that the Holy Spirit came. It is probable that Peter would have continued in exhortation had not the interruption occurred, but at the wisest time the divine witness came.

The Holy Ghost fell on all them. The Jews from Joppa and the Gentiles of Cæsarea. This was the testimony of the Holy Spirit that God treated Jews and Gentiles alike, and that, therefore, the Christians should so treat them. They all spoke with tongues, and it is probable that there was the same visible manifestation of flaming tongues as on the day of Pentecost; for Peter in his report to the disciples at Jerusalem (Acts 11: 15) says that the Holy Ghost fell on them "as on us at the beginning." This was the proof of Peter's saying at the opening of his address (ver. 34).

This gift had the same symbolic meaning as on the day of Pentecost; the symbol of the tongue, the symbol of the flame; the gospel for all nations and races; the unity of the church; the new power from heaven; the new life.

46. **They heard them speak with tongues.** In real languages as at Pentecost. There were doubtless in the company from that cosmopolitan city those from different countries acquainted with a great variety of languages. It was not merely the jubilant, ecstatic utterances referred to in 1 Cor. 14, although these utterances may have been in actual languages, as well as in languages of the soul, like music, or art, and other methods of expression. Each language would seem like an ecstatic utterance to all except those who were acquainted with that tongue.

There was the same kind of need of the outward manifestations of the Spirit at this time that there was at Pentecost.

CORNELIUS AND OTHER ROMANS ADMITTED TO THE CHURCH BY BAPTISM, vers. 47, 48.

47. **Can any man forbid water** for the outward ceremony of baptism, since God had baptized them with the Holy Spirit? The question answered itself. "As though Peter had said, If no one has been able to hinder the Spirit from coming upon these people, so also no one can restrain the water which wills to flow over them at baptism." ¹

48. **Commanded them to be baptized,** as the public profession of their faith in Jesus. If Philip the evangelist was then living at Cæsarea (8: 40; 21: 8) the baptism may have been entrusted to him, and he would be able to confirm Peter's gospel, and foster this young Gentile church.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Note how both Peter and Cornelius were prepared for the new light that flashed upon them, as the plant is long preparing for the blossoms of spring, as the inventor is long preparing for the great invention which at length crowns his labors.

2. The change wrought by Jesus in Cornelius, though he was a good, devout man before, was very great. He had a new revelation of God's will, he had assurance where before he had longings and hope. He had new life, new love, a new master, a new power. The change was like coming from moonlight — which is yet real light, and reflected from the sun — into the clear light of the sun, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Goodness in those who have never known the gospel is like a flower in some sunny nook in winter, — beautiful, but lonely, restrained, undeveloped, surrounded by cold winds. The gospel brings the cheer of spring and the free growth of summer.

3. That God is no respecter of persons, and therefore his church must also be no respecter of persons, is a truth that everywhere needs reinforcement. "No respect of persons" should be

¹ Lechler, in Lange's Commentary.

written over the church doors, and in the hearts and on the hands of all Christians, so that foreigners, the stranger, the Indian, our colored brother, the poor, the laborer, shall see it and feel that among Christians, as with God, there is no respect of persons.

4. The Holy Spirit has given his testimony and

endorsement of missions by his marvellous works of conversion. Almost every great missionary denomination of Christians has had one or more among its missions where the Holy Spirit has wrought wonders of transformation in whole communities, besides marvellous conversions of individuals.

CHAPTER 11.

FURTHER PREPARATION FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH TO THE GENTILES. AT JERUSALEM. AT ANTIOCH.

ENDORSEMENT BY THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM, vers. 1-18.	{ Peter returns to Jerusalem. He is called to account for his action at Caesarea. His defence. The church accepts his position.	} About A. D. 41.
THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH, vers. 19-30.	{ Founding of the church Consisting of Gentiles and Jews. Barnabas, a delegate from Jerusalem. Paul comes from Tarsus. Antioch sends relief to Jerusalem.		{ A. D. 38-40. A. D. 42. A. D. 42 or 43. A. D. 44-46.

1 ^{AND NOW} the apostles and ^o the brethren that were in Jû-dæ'ă heard that the Gentiles ^{had also} received the word of God.

2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they ^h that were of the circumcision contended with him,

g ver. 29. See John 21. 23. *h* ch. 10. 45. Gal. 2. 12. Col. 4. 11. Tit. 1. 10. Cp. Rom. 4. 12.

PETER CRITICISED FOR HIS COURSE AT CÆSAREA, vers. 1-3.

1. The apostles and brethren that were in, rather, throughout (*κατὰ*), Judæa heard. The news of such an event in the capital, connected with such prominent men as the apostle Peter and the Roman centurion, would rapidly spread throughout the church, all the more rapidly because it was a strange event, contrary to the common strongly held beliefs, and such as to awaken a great deal of very earnest, if not bitter, discussion.

Had . . . received the word of God, not merely heard it, but accepted it, as their religion and life.

2. When Peter was come up to Jerusalem. He came with the six leading Christians of Joppa, who had witnessed the scenes at Cæsarea (11:12). We see now Peter's wisdom in taking witness with him when he went to Cornelius. This taking of the witnesses with him implies that Peter went to Jerusalem at least in part to defend his course, and to correct misapprehensions which were certain to arise from exaggerated reports and the distortions of prejudice.

"Rumor is a pipe
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures;
And of so easy and so plain a stop
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still discordant, wavering Multitude,
Can play upon it."¹

"Rumor doth double, like the voice and echo,
The numbers of the feared."²

They that were of the circumcision. Not merely Jews, for all present were Jews, but a strict, conservative party in the church who were "champions of circumcision," laying special emphasis on the necessity that all Christians should conform to the entire Jewish law and customs as an essential condition of salvation; "a party which played so great a part in the drama of subsequent years."³

Contended with him. The same word is used of Michael the Archangel contending with the devil (Jude 9). It is difficult to "understand the vehemence and intensity of the battle which the most enlightened apostles had to wage against the Judaic Christians."

WHY THE DISCUSSION WAS SO INTENSE. All

¹ Henry IV., part ii., Induction. ² Henry IV., part ii., 3:1. ³ See Ramsay's *St. Paul*, pp. 44, 45.

3 Saying, Thouⁱ wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst^j eat with them.

4 But Peter rehearsed ^{the matter from the beginning,} ^{begin,} and expounded ^{it by order} ^{the matter} unto them^k

in order, saying,

5 I^k was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel ^{descend,} ^{descending,} as it ^{had been} ^{were} a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even ^{to} ^{unto} me:

ⁱ Gal. 2. 12, 14. Cp. ch. 10. 28.

^j Cp. Luke 15. 2.

^k For vers. 5-14, see ch. 10. 9-32.

the Jewish Christians desired the Gentiles to become disciples. At first it was the general feeling that the only divine way was through the Gentiles becoming Jews as well as Christians. But gradually there was growing a wider vision on the part of some, so that there came to be two divisions or parties in the church. The "champions of circumcision" felt that everything depended on their position. The Jews were divinely set apart from the Gentiles by the distinction of unclean and clean in food and social customs.

All the promises of the Messiah, of the redemption of the world, of the enlargement of the kingdom of God, were made to the Jews. The forces of the Gentiles were to come to them, — "the sons of the strangers shall build up thy walls;" "the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish" (Isa. 60). The Jews were God's chosen people, their religion was divine and true. To ignore this, to receive men into the kingdom in another way than that commanded to proselytes by God himself, and practised for ages, was not this an insult to God, to religion, to the Bible, to all their past history for eighteen hundred years? Says Farrar, "Those who supported the cause of Paul rendered themselves liable to those charges, so terrible to a Jew, of laxness, of irreligion, of apostasy, of unpatriotism, of not being believers in revealed truth." Peter's action was to them contrary to God, destroying the very foundations of religion, blotting out the promises, blasting their most precious hopes. Nothing but a new divine command could reverse the divine commands of the past. But Jesus himself, the Son of God, the latest revelation from God, was a Jew, who kept the Jewish law, preached to the Jews, declared that not a jot or tittle of the law should fail till all was fulfilled.

PETER'S ARGUMENT IN REPLY, vers. 4-17.

I. THE QUESTION AT ISSUE. This involved two points. (1) Ver. 3, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them, thus breaking over the Jewish laws and customs, and breaking down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles.

(2) The other issue was the receiving of Gen-

tiles into the church without their becoming Jews, as we learn from Peter's reply, and the subject of the Jewish Christians' rejoicing.

McGiffert says, "It is a striking fact that, in the address which follows, Peter does not defend himself against that charge, but against the charge of recognizing a Gentile as a Christian disciple, and admitting him to baptism, which is an entirely different matter." "Luke evidently did not recognize the difference between the two steps."¹ That would be a very strange dulness in an author writing years after the whole matter had been discussed and settled. Moreover Luke's business was to report the facts; and the fact that Peter answered one complaint by a reference to another shows that he, and Luke with him, recognized the fact that the two acts were so intertwined that the answer to the last charge implied of necessity an answer to the first. For if Gentiles were acknowledged as disciples and admitted to the church without becoming proselytes, then Jews must eat with them at least in the Lord's Supper. So that Peter, answering the charge of admitting Gentiles to the church, answered also the charge of eating with Gentiles. At the same time it is plain that the emphasis all through this discussion was laid upon the reception of the Gentiles, while the other question was only a necessary inference, which probably the disciples at Jerusalem did not recognize or realize, and which only a practical experience in the working out of the principle would bring clearly before them. McGiffert is doubtless right in saying, "that they admitted that it was lawful for a Jewish Christian to break bread with his Gentile brethren, or in other words, to disregard the Jewish law in any particular, must be unequivocally denied." Herein lies the great difference between the vote of the church at this time and the decision recorded in chapter 15.

II. THE ARGUMENT. 4. Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning. He stated in the order of their occurrence the facts that had convinced him. They had doubtless been more or less distorted in transmission. What convinced Peter was the best argument for others. Luke, also, in giving two accounts of this transaction

¹ *Apostolic Age*, pp. 104-107.

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw the fourfooted beasts of the earth^{air} and wild beasts^{heaven} and creeping things^{air} and fowls of the ^{heaven}.

7 And I heard ^{also} a voice saying unto me, ^{Arise,} Peter; ^{Rise,} ^{slay} and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath ^{at any time} ^{ever} entered into my mouth.

9 But ^{the} a voice answered ^{me again from} ^{the second time out of} heaven, What God hath cleansed, ^{that call} ^{make} not thou common.

10 And this was done ^{three times:} ^{thrice:} and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And behold, ^{immediately there were} ^{forthwith} three men ^{already come unto} ^{stood before} the house ^{where I was,} ^{in which we were,} having been sent from Cæs-ā-rē-ā unto me.

12 And ^{the} ^{spirit} Spirit bade me go with them, ^{nothing doubting.} ^{Moreover} ^m these six brethren ^{also} accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house:

13 And he ^{shewed} ^{told} us how he had seen ^{an} the angel ^{standing} in his house, ^{which stood and said} ^{and saying,} Send ^{men} to Joppa, and ^{call for} ^{fetch} Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 "Who shall ^{tell} ^{speak} unto thee words, ^{whereby} thou ^{and all thy house shall be saved.} ^{shall be saved,} thou and all thy house.

15 And as I began to speak, the ^h Holy Ghost fell on them, ^{even} ^a as on us at the beginning.

16 ^{Then remembered I} ^{And I remembered} the word of the Lord, how that he said, "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 ^{Forasmuch} ^{as} then ^{as} God gave unto them ^{the like gift as} ^{he did} ^{also} unto us, ^{who} ^{when we} "believed on the Lord Jesus Christ: ^v ^{what} ^{who} was I, ^w that I could withstand God?

18 ^{When} ^{And when} they heard these things, they held their peace, ^{and} glorified God, saying, "Then ^{hath God also to the Gentiles} ^{that the Gentiles also hath God} granted ^a repentance unto life.

l ch. 15. 9. m ch. 10. 23, 45. n ch. 10. 22. o ch. 10. 2 & 16. 15, 31-34 & 13. 8. John 4. 53. p ch. 10. 44.
q ch. 2. 4. r ch. 1. 5. Cp. ch. 19. 2. See Matt. 3. 11. s See ch. 10. 47. t See ch. 2. 38. u Eph. 1. 13. See
ch. 10. 43. v Cp. Rom. 9. 20. w ch. 10. 47. See ch. 5. 39. x ch. 21. 20. y Cp. ch. 13. 47 & Matt. 8. 11.
See ch. 10. 34, 35. z See ch. 5. 31. a Cp. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

shows that he attached great significance to the event.

(1) God himself, the God of the Jews, directed Peter plainly to do what he did. Vers. 5-10.

(2) He did this, first, by a vivid illustration while Peter was in a trance. Ver. 6. I considered, *κατενόουν*, denoting "observation of external objects issuing in thought or action."¹

(3) God's own voice bade him go to Cornelius. Ver. 12. Nothing doubting, *μηδὲν διακρινόμενον*, as in 10:20, having no hesitation as to duty. The R. V. has *μηδὲν διακρίναντα*, making no distinction between Jew and Gentile.¹

(4) To confirm the fact that the matter was from God, a shining angel was sent to Cornelius, bidding him send for Peter. Vers. 13, 14.

(5) God made disciples of these Gentiles without their becoming Jews. Ver. 15.

(6) He sent the Holy Spirit upon these Gentile disciples exactly as he had sent the Holy Spirit on the Jewish disciples at Pentecost, making no distinction. Ver. 15.

(7) I bring you six good witnesses to confirm my statements.

III. THE CONCLUSION, ver. 17. Who believed belongs both to them and to us. "In each case the Holy Spirit was bestowed, and in each case as a result of the preceding belief, and not as a result of circumcision or of uncircumcision."²

What was I, that I could withstand God? "The Greek gives a complex question, *Who was I? Able to withstand God?*—i. e., How was I, being such a one as I am, able to withstand?"³ No human power could resist the onward movement of God. Peter must either oppose God himself, or yield obedience as he did. This also placed the same choice before the church.

THE CHURCH ACCEPTS PETER'S POSITION, ver. 18.

They held their peace. They were silenced for a time. There was no answer to Peter's argument from facts, and they ceased from their criticisms. More than this they glorified God, for

¹ Rendall.

² Knowling.

³ Plumptre.

19 ^{Now they & which} ^{They therefore that} were scattered abroad upon the ^{persecution} ^{tribulation} that arose about Stēphēn travelled as far as ^{Phē-nī'ce,} ^{Phœ-nī'cia,} and Cŷprūs, and An'ti-ōch, ^{preaching} ^{speaking} the word to none ^{but unto the Jews only.} ^{save only to Jews.}

b ch. 8. 1, 4.

it was a new manifestation of God's glory, his gracious love, his goodness and wisdom and power. So when Moses saw God's glory, it was his goodness that passed before him, and he proclaimed, "I . . . will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy" (Ex. 33 : 18, 19).

Long had God shown mercy to Israel, but now the door was thrown wide open to the Gentiles, and God also to them had granted repentance unto life. So, like the angels in heaven, the church on earth "rejoiced over one sinner that repented." *Glorified* is in the imperfect tense, denoting continued and repeated action. It is probable that this was not a complete change in Jewish Christian thought, but only an isolated case, under special influences, and many on second thought were unconvinced, for there are traces of the old feeling in the subsequent history, and a few years later the question was decided in relation to Paul's missionary work. The action of the church was an onward movement. The Jews could live as Jews, and yet be Christians; the Gentiles could be Christians and remain Gentiles. It was a movement toward Unity, Liberty, and Peace.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. By this action God did not contradict what he had ordained before, or show any changeableness in God, but it was the natural and necessary result and outcome of his previous commands and ordinances. Thus a builder commands a scaffold to be put up around the house he is building. When the time comes, the same builder commands it to be taken away. The rules for the education of children are changed by the same authority which made them, when the children grow up into young men and women.

2. The promises to the Jews were to be fulfilled by the very change which they thought was destroying them. They could not be fulfilled in their way by an outward Jewish kingdom, but only by a spiritual kingdom, in which the people inherited the promises by faith, through Jesus Christ. The acorn must burst its shell, and perish as an acorn, or never become an oak. It must take on new forms and rise up into the air and sunlight. The shell was intended to protect the seed till the time came for a further development, and then must be thrown aside.

"Where the Vanguard camps to-day
The Rear shall rest to-morrow."

3. The action of Peter was exactly in accordance with the principle laid down in Matt. 9 : 14-17, where Jesus teaches that new wine requires new bottles; and in Matt. 5 : 17, 18, where he says he came not to destroy, but to fulfil.

4. In all changes the essential truth and life were preserved, a character and a life fitted for heaven, through believing in Christ.

5. These perplexing questions were a part of the discipline and training of the church. They are so still. They keep the church awake and thinking. They keep it out of dulness and deadness. They train it in the virtues of kindly judgment and forbearance. Unrest, change, criticism of the past, are often a sign of fuller life, of spring-time, of growth.

6. There will always be conservative and progressive elements in the church, and both are needed. Only it is necessary that both sides should distinguish between the great underlying principles and the manifold forms in which those principles are expressed. The one essential thing is a devout and holy life, a Christian character, pious deeds, and faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Master. There may be great variations in doctrines, in tastes, in amusements, in forms of worship, and yet the Christian life flourish. Some things are right at one time, but wrong at another.

FOUNDING OF THE FIRST GENTILE CHURCH ; AT ANTIOCH, vers. 19-21.

19. Now, *μὲν οὖν*, introducing a general statement, while the *δε*, but, of ver. 20 marks a particular instance.¹

They which were scattered abroad, *διασπαρέν-τες*, from *δίᾳ*, thoroughly, everywhere, and *σπέρω*, to scatter seed, to sow, "derived from the quick, jerky motion of the hand." The thread of the narrative returns to the persecution described in Acts 8 : 1-4, in order to show a new line of influence proceeding from that event. The authorities tried to blow out the gospel fire kindled by the Holy Spirit, but it only made it burn the brighter. They lashed the fire, but it only sent the sparks over the world. The wrath of man is made to praise God, and the Christian sings many of his sweetest songs to his enemies' harps, as the psalmist sang the 84th Psalm to the Gittite instrument of music. As far as Phenice. Phœnicia, the strip of coast between the Mediterranean and the mountains of Lebanon, extending one

¹ See Rendall, note on *μὲν οὖν*.

20 But there were some of them, ^{were} men of *Ḳy'prūs* and *Ḳy-rē'nē*, ^{which,} ^{who,} when they were come to *Ān'ti-ōch*, spake unto the ^c ^{(Gre'cians,} ^{Greeks also,} 'preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And ^e the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number ^{that} believed ^{and} ^f turned unto the Lord.

^c See John 7. 35 & ch. 6. 1 (for mg.).
^f ch. 9. 35.

^d See ch. 5. 42.

^e ch. 13. 11. Luke 1. 66. Cp. Ps. 80. 17 & 89. 21.

hundred and twenty miles from a point a little below Tyre, northward to Beirut, from which, in the autumn of 1895, a railroad was opened to Damascus. **Cyprus**, a large island in the Mediterranean, sixty miles from the Palestine coast. **And Antioch**, the most northern large city on the coast; see below. **Preaching the word to . . . Jews only.** According to the practice and feelings of the Jewish Christians when they left Jerusalem. The new impulses broadening the church had not yet reached them (Acts 1: 8). They began at Jerusalem, but had not yet begun to practise the rest of Christ's command.

20. **And**, rather "but." Contrasting these with those who confined their labors to the Jews in ver. 19. **Men of Cyprus.** The island opposite Tarsus, which Paul had been making the headquarters of his preaching for several years. **And Cyrene.** On the coast of Africa. These were Hellenists, Greek-speaking Jews, who, having lived abroad, were not so intensely Jewish as those who had always lived in Jerusalem, and they had been under the influence of the broad-minded Paul. **Spake unto the Grecians.** The best manuscripts have *Ἑλληνας*, *Greeks*, as in R. V., and this is clearly the correct reading. The New Testament uses *Hellenistæ* (Grecians) to mean those Jews who had been abroad and spoke Greek; but *Hellenes* (Greeks), for Gentiles who did not become Jewish proselytes. The contrast and the new departure lie in the fact that before this the disciples sought to convert to Jesus only the Jews (including the Grecians who were Jews), but now they began to preach to the Gentiles as such.

21. **The hand** (the symbol of power and of work) of the Lord, the head of the church. Thus a great number believed. The Lord proved by his power in touching their hearts and renewing their lives that he wanted these people in his church. They were received apparently without contention or opposition, as the logical result of their believing and of the divine favor. This result was more easy, because the Gentile influences were so much stronger than the Jewish.

THE CITY OF ANTIOCH AS A MISSION FIELD.
THE CITY. Antioch was so named by Seleucus Nikator, Alexander's greatest general, who built the city, 300 B. C., in memory of his father Anti-

ochus. It was situated in western Syria on the river Orontes, sixteen miles from its mouth, as London is situated on the Thames. It was near the northeastern angle of the Mediterranean, and about three hundred miles north of Jerusalem. It was the capital of Syria at this time, the seaport rival of Damascus on the desert.

POPULATION. Gibbon estimates its population at this time at five hundred thousand, making it the third city in the Roman Empire, only Rome and Alexandria being greater. Three centuries later Chrysostom, the golden-mouthed preacher (a native of Antioch), estimated the population at two hundred thousand, besides children and slaves, and that half the population were Christians.

TRADE. It was the centre of an immense trade in almost all directions. Its ships sailed to every seaport of the Mediterranean. Its roads ran toward Asia Minor, toward Egypt, and toward the empires of the East. "It was the emporium of the commerce of the East, at which caravans from Persia and India were continually arriving."

WEALTH. This trade brought in great wealth and luxury. The city abounded in beautiful buildings. "The principal street traversed the entire length of the city from east to west, a distance of about four miles, having four parallel rows of columns, forming a broad road in the middle, open to the sky, and on each side a narrower covered way or portico. The road in the middle was laid with granite in the time of Antoninus Pius."¹ The orator Libanius, a native of Antioch, who lived three hundred years later than St. Paul, boasts of its waterworks, baths, and fountains, and tells us that the streets of the city were lighted at night with public lamps.

NATIONALITIES. The population was cosmopolitan; Jews, Greeks, Syrians, Romans, and all nationalities, races, and languages, freemen and slaves, cultured and ignorant, wealthy and poverty-stricken, philosophers and debauchees. Wherever there was trade, thither the Jews were attracted, so that at this centre of trade there was naturally a large colony of Jews.

MORALS. "In such a mixed population, while art and literature could gain the praise of Cicero, vice as well as luxury made the city infamous as well as famous."² When the Roman satir-

¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

² Knowing.

ist Juvenal, writing about this period of which we treat, would fain account for the excessive dissoluteness of morals which then prevailed at Rome, his explanation of it was that the manners of Antioch had invaded Rome and corrupted its ancient purity."¹ Juvenal's words are, "The Orontes flows into the Tiber," expressing how the vices, quacks, debaucheries, panders, dancing girls, and all the worthless rabble and dregs of dissipation and degradation of Antioch flowed into Rome and corrupted even Rome's corruption. Four or five miles from the city were the famous pleasure grounds of Daphne, known all over the world, where was a temple to Apollo and his colossal statue, "where, under the climate of Syria and the wealthy patronage of Rome, all that was beautiful in nature and art had created a sanctuary for a perpetual festival of vice."² Daphne had become proverbial for its luxurious festivals, unbridled debauchery, and unnatural vices. "The temple and village were deeply bosomed in a thick grove of laurels and cypresses, which reached as far as a circumference of ten miles, and proved in the most sultry summers a cool and impenetrable shade. A thousand streams of the purest water, issuing from every hill, preserved the verdure of the earth and the temperature of the air; the senses were gratified with harmonious sounds and aromatic odors; and the peaceful grove was consecrated to health and joy, to luxury and love. The soldier and the philosopher wisely avoided the temptations of this sensual paradise, where pleasure, assuming the character of religion, imperceptibly dissolved the firmness of manly virtue."³

ITS STRATEGIC POSITION. As a basis for missionary operations: (1) It was within easy, but not too easy, reach of Jerusalem; it could keep in touch with the mother church without being tied by its conservatism.

(2) It was on the borders of the heathen world.

(3) It had trade and commerce with all nations.

(4) There was abundant material on which to work.

(5) The natural tendency of the people was aggressive and energetic.

(6) Its population was made up of all races and languages, who would be in communication with their native lands.

(7) It was a popular resort for travellers from all over the empire.

REASONS WHY THIS CHURCH GREW STRONG.

1. It was founded by strong, earnest, tested, devoted, large-hearted, energetic men, — men who had endured persecution for their Master's sake,

who had resisted temptation, who had felt the power of the Holy Spirit. Such founders exert a mighty and enduring influence upon the community they found.

2. The church was planted where it was most needed, and where there were always some who were repelled by the open immorality, and felt a heart-hunger for better and more satisfying things. The community could see the contrast between the earthly and the heavenly paradise, between the fruits that grow upon the upas tree of vice and those that grow upon the tree of life. There is apt to be less enthusiasm in a country where the gospel has so far gained its end that those outside the church have many of the Christian virtues and graces, and the shadow is so pervaded with light that the contrast with the sunshine is small compared with the contrast between midnight and noonday. We see this often in temperance and other reforms.

3. Another reason is found in the strong, energetic, active, wide-awake character of the inhabitants, as shown in their trade, commerce, beauty of the city, and even in their vices. The soil in which thorns and weeds grow most luxuriantly is the very kind of soil in which fruitful vines and trees, when they take the place of these, flourish most abundantly. The great strong engine that has been drawing great trains on the wrong track in the wrong direction can pull just as great trains on the right road in the right direction.

4. The best and strongest Christians often spring up and grow amid the worst corruption. Their very efforts to conquer the evil, and save others from it, strengthen their own character and faith. "It takes live fish to swim up stream."

Christians here were like the three men in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, safe from the fire because the Son of God was with them. Or like the good monk in the legend of Basle, who was sent to hell; but no fire could burn him and no evil spirit could torment him, because he carried heaven with him.

5. The new development and enlargement was made by individuals, and not officially by the old leaders. It was made as an individual experiment. It is not at all probable that a vote of the church could have been obtained in advance, because they could not see clearly the result. But when the act was done, and the leaders saw that it was not only right, but the right could and would prevail, they favored it. A large part of the progress in the Christian church is still made in this way, and it is doubtless the best way. I know churches where probably the Christian

¹ Prof. Stokes.

² Conybeare and Howson.

³ Gibbon. See his *Decline and Fall*, chaps. xxiii., xxiv.; Renan's *The Apostles*, xii., xiii. Lewin, in his *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, and Farrar, in his *St. Paul*,

chap. xvi., picture the wickedness of Antioch, and the scenes that met the apostles' eyes here. Lew Wallace's *Ben-Hur*, Book IV., chaps. i., ii., v., xii., and Book V., chap. xii., gives vivid descriptions of Antioch in this age.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Bār'nā-bās^{that he should go} as far as Ān'tī-ōch:

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord:

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

g ch. 13. 43 & 14. 26 & 20. 24, 32. Rom. 5. 15. 2 Cor. 6. 1. Eph. 3. 2, 7. Col. 1. 6. Tit. 2. 11. Heb. 12. 15. 1 Pet. 5. 12. Cp. ch. 4. 33 & 15. 40. *h* 2 Tim. 3. 10. *i* ch. 6. 5. *j* ch. 5. 14. Cp. ver. 26.

Endeavor movement would have been voted down if proposed at first to the body, but where that movement is probably unanimously commended and loved now.

The largest individual liberty, and the smallest official interference, are one of the conditions of greatest progress.

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH SENDS BARNABAS AS ITS DELEGATE TO ANTIOCH, vers. 22-24.

22. Then tidings of (the report concerning) these things came unto . . . Jerusalem. They were doubtless received with joy mingled with fears as to what the outcome might be. Some would be prepared for the new régime by the conversion of Cornelius and Peter's vision; others would see in it impending disaster and the ruin of the new religion. The reports would necessarily be variant according to the persons through whom they came.

Then the church at Jerusalem did a very wise and right thing: they sent forth Barnabas. (1) To learn the exact truth about the reports. (2) To prevent any abuses or discord from arising between the Jewish and Gentile converts, of which the sequel shows the real danger (Acts 15:1-25). The difficult question of eating together could not but arise. (3) To encourage the new disciples in everything that was good. (4) To warn them against error, if error there was.

As far as Antioch. Implying that he visited other churches on the way. It would have been difficult to find a man in all the early church more adapted to this mission than was Barnabas. He was a man of unblemished character, of great wisdom, of ripe enthusiasm, and able to kindle enthusiasm. "An apathetic Christian is an anomaly as incongruous in conception as a frozen sunbeam or a petrified flame."

On the one hand, the church at home had perfect confidence in him, in his judgment and his character. He was a Levite, and therefore would be especially bound to the laws and customs of the Jews, so as not to compromise them in any way. He had been very generous, selling some of his property for the benefit of the poor; and

even his name, Barnabas, had been given him by the apostles, because he was "a son of consolation," with power to comfort and exhort (Acts 4:36, 37). He was full of the Holy Spirit.

On the other hand, he was a native of Cyprus, only sixty miles from Antioch, and was familiar with the place and the people. He was a friend and acquaintance of those who had gone there from Jerusalem, some of them also being from Cyprus. And as a Grecian Jew, he would naturally be in sympathy with the new movement, and would be welcomed by the Christians of Antioch of both parties.

23. When he came, and had seen the grace of God, as shown in the converts, their changed character, their numbers, their good deeds. There were doubtless many imperfections in these disciples, but that which shone brightest and was seen first was what the grace of God had wrought in them; as when we look at a black coal or a piece of glass in the sunshine, it is the shining rays that we see first and most.

Barnabas saw the evil in Antioch, but his gaze was fixed on the grace of God delivering from such evil; just as in a battle for a noble cause, our hearts dwell on the heroism and faith and courage more than on the bloodshed and pain.

Was glad. One test of character is what a person rejoices in. There is nothing worthier of great joy than the conversion of men: (1) joy at their deliverance from sin; (2) at their escape from the awful punishment of sin; (3) joy for the great blessings to which they are saved; (4) joy for the good influences they may exert; (5) joy for the new stars in the crown of our Redeemer.

Exhorted them all, *παρακάλει*. The word is the same as that from which the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is named. It means much more than exhort or comfort. He strengthened, encouraged, stimulated them by his gift of eloquence. That with purpose of heart. With the will and affections, the whole choice of the soul. They would cleave unto the Lord. Rendall translates, "cleave to their purpose of heart in the Lord." The only way to stand firm and strong amid the many temptations of life, and to

25 Then departed Barnabas ^{And he went forth} to ^{for to seek} Tär'sūs ^{to seek for} Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Ān'ti-ōch. And it came to pass, that ^{even for a whole year} they ^{assembled themselves} ^{were gathered together} with the church, and taught much people; ^{And} ^{and that} the disciples were called ¹ Christians first in Antioch.

l ch. 9, 30. l ch. 26, 28. 1 Pet. 4, 16.

hold on to the end, is by cleaving to the Lord, as the branch to the vine.

24. For he was a good man. Not merely honest and upright, but generous, kindly, loving, conciliating. This was shown in his joy that Gentiles were converted as well as Jews, and through others as well as himself. He had the beauty of holiness, the graces of religion. Full of the Holy Ghost. He lived in the Spirit, and was endowed with power by the Spirit. And of faith. Perfect trust in the Lord, perfect confidence that Jesus was the Messiah; perfect devotion to his cause. He preached what he most heartily believed. And much people was added unto the Lord. Through the labors of such a good man. All his exhortations had the power of a good man behind them. As Bp. Phillips Brooks once said, the best part of a sermon is the man behind it.

PAUL COMES TO ANTIOCH TO AID THE CHURCH, vers. 25, 26.

25. Then departed Barnabas. (1) The great success of Barnabas brought more work than he could do alone, more open doors than he could enter, more opportunities than he could use. The fields were white to the harvest, and the laborers were few. (2) There was need of counsel and great wisdom to guide the new church aright, especially as there were two elements in the church. (3) There was need of another element, of instruction and training in doctrine, than Barnabas' special talents would provide. And Barnabas was wise enough to see this, and good enough to provide for it. To Tarsus, for to seek Saul, ἀναζητῆσαι, to seek or hunt up, ἀνά, denoting repetition. The word suggests that Barnabas had some difficulty in finding Paul.

"Luke in 9: 30 mentions that Saul was sent away to Tarsus; and he now takes up the thread from that point. . . . He implies that the reader must understand Tarsus to have been Saul's headquarters during the intervening period."¹ See, also, Paul's own statement in Gal. 1: 21, 22.

It was during these years that Paul had the visions and revelations spoken of in 2 Cor. 12: 1-5, which may have prepared him for his great work. 2 Corinthians was written A. D. 56-58, and the revelations occurred more than fourteen years before, or in 42 or 43.

26. A whole year t'ey (Barnabas and Paul) assembled themselves with the church, συναχθῆναι ἐν τῇ. Rendall holds that the ἐν, in, is fatal to this rendering, and that the phrase means that Barnabas and Saul were brought together for a year in intimate association, as a providential preparation for their joint mission. Hort, Wendt, and others give to the phrase the meaning "were hospitably received in the church." And taught. The young church, just delivered from heathenism, had especial need of instruction.

NORE the true Christian spirit in this whole movement. Two opposite tendencies of mind worked together, because both were needed in the training of that young church, as in every church to-day. Barnabas was full of heart, of enthusiasm, of appeal to the feelings, of inspiration, of help for the poor, of comfort for the afflicted, of encouragement for the weak. He, equally with Paul, held the truth and loved the truth, but his mind worked in a very different manner. Paul was logical, though it was logic on fire. He reasoned out everything, he was educated and trained in the truth. He was enthusiastic, but he never abandoned himself to his enthusiasm. Each supplemented the other. More people would be reached by each than by either one alone. They needed the mutual influence of one upon the other; and they were good enough and great enough to recognize each the good qualities in the other.

The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. Not by the disciples themselves, for it is not used by them of one another during the apostolic age, but brethren, saints, disciples, "of the Way," elect. The only case of its use in the New Testament is in 1 Peter 4: 16, where it is spoken from the point of view of the persecutor, as the name of a criminal paralleled with murderer and thief.

Nor was it given by the Jews, for they would not use their Messianic title in such a connection, but spoke of the disciples as Nazarenes, this sect. It was doubtless given by the heathen population of Antioch, to distinguish the members of this new religion from the Jews. There were so many Gentile converts in the Christian body that it was not sufficiently distinctive to regard them as a sect of the Jews. It was necessary to give them a separate name since they had become an independent community. "The keen-witted popula-

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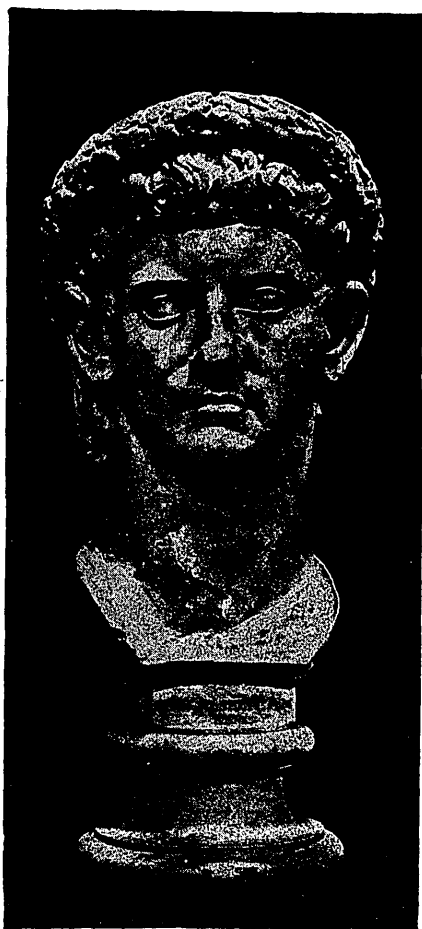
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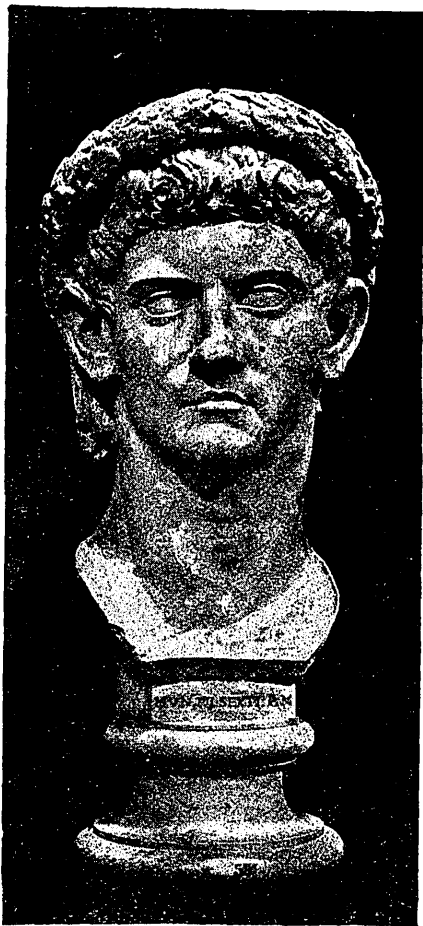
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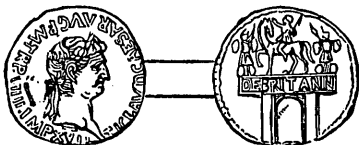
¹ Prof. Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 48-50; *Was Christ born in Bethlehem?* 251, 252. See Suetonius, *Claudius*, 18; Tacitus, *Annot.*, XII., 43; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 2, 5;

Dion Cassius, IX. p. 949; Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical Hist.* 2: 8.

² Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 2, 6; and 5, 2.

³ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 50.

begun, and after the persecution by Herod, and Herod's death in A. D. 44. Most of the early Christians at Jerusalem were probably poor; and



COIN OF CLAUDIUS.

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

the persecutions would be most likely to drive away those best able to support themselves. By the hands of Barnabas and Saul. This was Paul's second visit to Jerusalem. If this took



COIN OF CLAUDIUS.

Thought by some to refer to the great famine. *Obverse*: Tl. Claudius Cæsar Aug., with a hand holding a pair of scales with the letters P. N. R. (Pondus Mummi Romani). *Reverse*: Cos. II. (consul second time) Pon. M. Tr. P. Imp. P. P. S. C. (= Senatus consulto). Lewin, from British Museum.

place in A. D. 44, as Lightfoot, Hort, Rendall, and others maintain, at the time of the Herodian persecution, Rendall may be right in saying that

becoming aware of the danger, they "hurried away as soon as they had placed their alms in the hands of the elders without even seeing the twelve." Ramsay, by putting this visit in A. D. 45 or 46, avoids this difficulty. He, differing from most others, regards it as the same visit as that described in Gal. 2: 1-10. McGiffert regards this visit as the same one described in Acts 15 as well as in Gal. 2.¹

This distribution, by the hands of the leaders in the Gentile church, of the bounty gathered in Antioch, would make a most favorable impression. It was an expression of gratitude for the



COIN OF CLAUDIUS.

Fr. British Museum. Thought to refer to the famine. *Obverse*: Tl. Claudius Cæsar Aug., with emblem of a bushel. *Reverse*: Cos. Des. It. (consul designated the second time) Pon. M. Tr. P. Imp.

spiritual favors received. It would bring the churches together in brotherly love. It would tend to dissipate any prejudices or fears the Jews may have entertained. It would show that the gospel produced the same fruits among Gentile believers as it had produced in the Jerusalem disciples. It was a means of grace and spiritual growth to the church at Antioch.

¹ See *Apostolic Age*, on the chronological order involved in the two views of the date. See Ramsay's *St. Paul*, 48-69; *The Expositor* for Feb. and March, 1896;

Hort's *Judaistic Christianity*, 61; Lightfoot on *Galatians*, 124, note.

CHAPTER 12.

THE HERODIAN PERSECUTION. JAMES AND PETER.

JAMES, vers. 1, 2.	{ Herod Agrippa. Persecution at Jerusalem. Martyrdom of the Apostle James.	A. D. 44. March.
PETER, vers. 3-17.	{ Peter thrown into prison. The church makes unceasing prayer for him. The prayer answered. Peter released by an angel. How the answer was received.	A. D. 44. Early in April. The Passover was April 1-8.
HEROD, vers. 18-23.	{ Astonishment at the deliverance. Punishment of the prison keepers. Death of Herod at Cæsarea.	A. D. 44. Last of April.
PAUL and BARNABAS, vers. 24, 25.	{ The Word of God multiplies. Mission of Barnabas and Saul. They return to Antioch. John Mark goes with them.	TIME, A. D. 46.

1 Now about that time Hēr'ōd the king stretched^{put} forth^{his} hands to^{very} afflict certain of the church.

THE MARTYRDOM OF THE APOSTLE JAMES, vers. 1, 2.

1. Now about that time. During the events occurring in Antioch. It was the spring of A. D. 44, on which date authorities agree. Herod, Agrippa I.

It is well to keep in mind the four Herods most intimately connected with the gospel history:—

1. *Herod the Great*, the founder of the family, was the murderer of the innocents at Bethlehem.



COIN OF HEROD AGRIPPA.

From *Oxford Bible*, by per.



fended himself. (Acts 26: 28.) "I know a volume of sermons by a preacher of no small celebrity, in which the dying terrors of Herod (Agrippa I.) when 'eaten of worms,' in the book of Acts, are traced to his remorse of conscience for the murder of John the Baptist, in the Gospels" (by Herod Antipas, his uncle).¹

Herod the king. "Born in B. C. 10 and educated in his early life in Rome, he rose from a rash adventurer to good fortune and high position, first through the friendship of Caligula and afterwards of Claudius. He united under his own sway the entire empire of his grandfather, Herod the Great."²

Claudius Cæsar began to reign A. D. 41. His mother wittily called him "the outline of a man which had not been filled up." He did not attempt to force the Jews to worship him, nor to set up his statue in the temple. Herod Agrippa, a Jew in part by descent, a "scapegrace adventurer," "a fugitive bankrupt," had helped Claudius to be accepted as emperor, and saved him from a violent death. In return the new emperor showered favors upon Herod and made him king. He reigned only about three years.

"There was no portion of time for thirty years before, or ever afterwards, in which there was a king at Jerusalem, a person exercising that authority in Judea, or to whom that title could

He died the spring after the birth of Jesus, B. C. 4.

2. *Herod Antipas*, his son (B. C. 4-A. D. 39), was the Herod who murdered John the Baptist.

3. *Herod Agrippa I.*, grandson of Herod the Great, was the king who murdered the Apostle James (A. D. 37-44).

4. *Herod Agrippa II.*, before whom Paul de-

¹ Leonard W. Bacon, D. D. See *The Herods*, by Farrar; Josephus, *Antiq.* 18: 6; 19: 8, 9; Schürer's *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, 1st div., vol. ii. pp. 150-165.

The pathetic story of Herod in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles (A. D. 41) is told by Farrar, p. 179, and Schürer, p. 150. ² Knowling.

2 And he killed ^v James the brother of John ^w with the sword.

3 And ^{because when} he saw ^{that} ^x it pleased the Jews, he proceeded ^{further} to ^{take} seize Peter also. ^(Then were y the days of unleavened bread.)
^{And those were the days of unleavened bread.}

4 And when he had ^{apprehended taken} him, he put ^{him} him in ^z prison, and delivered ^{him} him to four ^a quaternions of soldiers to ^{keep guard} him; intending after ^{Easter the Passover} to bring him forth to the people.

^v Matt. 4. 21 & 20. 23. ^w Heb. 11. 37. ^x Cp. ch. 24. 27 & 25. 9. ^y ch. 20. 6. ^{Ex.} 12. 14, 15 & 23. 15. ^z See Luke 21. 12. ^a Cp. John 19. 23.

be applied, except the last three years of Herod's life, within which period the transaction here recorded took place." ¹

The policy of Herod was to curry favor with the Jews in every way (ver. 3). He hung in the temple as a votive offering the gold chain the Emperor Caligula had given him. He lived in Jerusalem, and punctually observed the traditions of the fathers, and secured the fervent loyalty of the Pharisees. At the feast of tabernacles in 41 he took the readers' stand and read the whole book of Deuteronomy aloud, "bursting into tears as if quite overcome when he reached the words, 'Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, who is not thy brother.'" He feared that because he had Edomite blood in his veins he might incur the hatred his grandfather Herod the Great had borne, and took this way to gain the political favor of the Jews who cried out, "Don't weep, Agrippa, thou art our brother."

In pursuance of this policy he stretched forth his hands to *vex*, *κακῶσαι*, to do evil (*κακός*) or injury to, to oppress, to maltreat. *Vex* is used in the old English sense of *torment*, *oppress* (not in the signification of petty annoyances which modern usage gives to the word). To vex certain of the church. Because the Jews were intensely opposed to them, all the more because of their rapid growth.

2. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. James was the son of Zebedee. He was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and with John and Peter was one of the most advanced and favored of his followers. These three were admitted to the death chamber in Jairus' house, to the Mount of Transfiguration, and to the nearest place in the Garden of Gethsemane. He, with John, was ambitious to be nearest Jesus in his kingdom, and felt sure that he could drink of the same cup of suffering as his Master (Matt. 20: 20-24), and his death shows that he stood the test. He, with his brother John, was named by Jesus "Boanerges," a son of thunder, probably on account of his fiery, impetuous disposition, and perhaps his burning eloquence. It was this prominence and activity in the cause that probably led Herod to select him for his first victim.

A touching tradition concerning his martyrdom is given by Eusebius.² "The messenger who led him to the judgment seat, beholding his witness, was moved to confess himself a Christian. Both were therefore led away, says he, and on the road (to execution) he asked forgiveness from James. And he, having considered for a little, said 'Peace be to thee,' and he kissed him tenderly. And thus both were beheaded together."

THE IMPRISONMENT OF PETER, vers. 3, 4.

3. Because he saw it pleased the Jews, according to his character and policy as stated above.

He proceeded further to take, to seize, to arrest Peter also. Herod Agrippa had the reputation of mildness and gentleness; but such a nature would not prevent him from persecuting Christians. Some of the greatest persecutors have been mild and gentle men. The man who "ordered a fight between fourteen hundred gladiators, whom he hypocritically declared criminals, requiring them to continue the combat till all were killed,"³ to please the populace, would not hesitate to kill an apostle to gain popularity with the Jewish leaders. Days of unleavened bread. The Passover feast, April 1-8 of the year 44.

4. And when he had apprehended him, *καὶ πύλας*. "*Kai, and*, lays stress on a delay of the actual arrest for some time after the order had been given." . . . "Probably Peter had concealed himself after the execution of James, but ventured forth to the feast relying on the sacredness of the season, and so gave Herod's officers opportunity to arrest him."⁴

Put him in prison. "The military prison within the fortress of Antonia, which was also the residence of King Herod in Jerusalem."⁴ (See pictures of Antonia, at ch. 22: 24, and in connection with the temple, at ch. 21: 28-36.) Delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers. A *quaternion* is a band of four soldiers on guard at one time, two within, one on each side of Peter, bound one to each of his arms with chains, a third posted outside the door, and a fourth in the passage leading to the outside gate. The guard was relieved every three hours, at each of the watches night and day. All this besides prison doors and

¹ Paley, *Horæ Paulinæ*.

² *Eccl. Hist.*, 2: 9.

³ Josephus, 19: 9, 5.

⁴ Rendall.

5 Peter therefore was kept in the prison : but prayer was made ^{without ceasing earnestly} of the church unto God for him.

b 2 Cor. 1. 11. Eph. 6. 18.

great iron gates, belonging to the strongest government on earth. Escape was humanly impossible. Peter had once escaped from the prison of the Sanhedrim (Acts 5: 19), and they did not in-

tend that he should get away again. **Intending after Easter** (that is, the Passover) **to bring him forth**, to sentence him to death before the people. He would not execute him during the Passover festival, because that would offend the Jews whom he wished to please.

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON IN ANSWER TO PRAYER, vers. 5-11.

5. Peter therefore was kept in prison for some days, so that there was a possibility of release, by divine interference through a miracle, or through a change in Herod's purpose. "In ver. 5 there is a pitched battle. Read it: 'Peter therefore was kept in prison:' there is one side of the fight; after the colon — 'but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.' Now for the shock of arms! Who wins? Prayer always wins."¹ **But prayer was made.** According to Christ's promise to prayer, with the emphasis on united prayer. They would have acted as well as prayed, if there was anything they could do. But "man's extremity is God's opportunity." Prayer was the only weapon they could use. It was Herod with all the power of the Roman Empire, on one side, and the feeble church holding on by prayer to the almighty power of God, on the other.

Without ceasing, *ἐκτενῆς*, stretched out, either in time or intensity, either continually, or earnestly, with intense strain, as if stretched out on a rack. The R. V. uses the corresponding adverb. The same term is applied to the prayer of Christ in Gethsemane (Luke 22: 44). Both meanings are included; for intense prayer would naturally be continuous, unceasing, the intensity unfailing till the answer came.

Of the church. "The members of the church were so numerous that they must have met in different companies." The central point of meeting was the well-known "house of Mary, the mother of John, which is called Mark" (ver. 12). As the season of prayer lasted at least through the week of the Passover, there may have been a continual gathering at this place of the saints, while the individuals composing the meeting were changing. But at home, at business, — everywhere, — prayer was going up from their hearts, as fragrance exhales from a rose wherever it is carried. It was the fervent, effectual prayer of righteous men which availeth much.

"Could Herod have seen those saints upon their knees, he might have exclaimed, as did Ethelred,



A QUATERNION OF ROMAN SOLDIERS. From the Arch of Constantine.

From Dr. Davis' Bible Dictionary, by per.

¹ Joseph Parker.

6 And when Herod ^{would have brought} ^{was about to bring} him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, ^{bound} with two chains: and ^{the keepers} ^{guards} before the door kept the prison.

7 And behold, ^{the} ^{an} angel of the Lord ^{came upon him,} ^{stood by him,} and a light shined in the prison: ^{and} ^{he} smote Peter on the side, and ^{raised} ^{awoke} him, ^{up,} saying, ^{Arise} ^{rise} up quickly. And ^{his} chains fell off from ^{his} hands.

c ch. 21. 33.

d See ch. 8. 26.

e Luke 2. 9 & 24. 4.

f Cp. 1 Kin. 19. 7.

g ch. 16. 26.

the Saxon king, when he saw the monks of Bangor praying against him for the success of their countrymen: 'They have begun the fight against me. Attack them first,'¹

FOR WHAT THEY PRAYED. We shall misunderstand their faith, and their reception of the answer, unless we note for what they prayed.

(1) Plainly it was first for the release of Peter, if it was God's will. They well knew their Master's prayer in Gethsemane, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26: 39).

(2) In connection with a former imprisonment, they prayed "that with all boldness they may speak thy word" (Acts 4: 29), so here they prayed that Peter might be sustained and strengthened and comforted. Perhaps the shadow of his former denial of his Lord made their prayer for him more intense. But they knew how unfaltering he had been ever since, more true to Christ than needle to the pole. (3) Most of all, that Christ's kingdom might prosper; and all that came to Peter might, in some wise way, aid the cause dearer than life to him and to them. This was a great crisis in the history of the church, as we can see if we consider what would have been left out of its history had Peter died at this time. We know too little of what is best for ourselves or the cause to insist on any particular form of answer without the addition, "Thy will, not mine, be done."

6. When Herod would have brought him forth, after the close of the Passover festival (ver. 4). The same night. The night before his trial. "It is always darkest before dawn." Perhaps the delay was to test and increase the faith of the disciples. Peter was sleeping. In conscious peace and trust in God, like David, in Ps. 3: 5, who, pursued by his son and surrounded by dangers, still slept in peace. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep." With how many psalms Peter may have sung himself to sleep, as Paul and Silas did in the prison at Philippi. Wonderful are the songs in the night. His peaceful sleep was the triumph of faith.²

"That lovely bird of paradise, Christian content, can sit and sing in a cage of affliction and confinement, or fly at liberty through the vast expanse of heaven with almost equal satisfac-

tion: while 'Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight,' is the chief note in its celestial song."³

Between two soldiers, bound with two chains. Probably to the soldiers, as was a common Ro-



BOUND BETWEEN TWO SOLDIERS. From an old Roman drawing.

From Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

man mode of securing prisoners; each hand being bound to the hand of a soldier, one on either side of him. Compare Paul's case (Acts 21: 33). The keepers before the door outside of the cell. "Everything was done to make his escape impossible. He could not move without disturbing the slumbers of two soldiers, lying close beside him," and every avenue of escape was guarded.

7. And, behold. Peter was not missed by the guards till sunrise, — about six o'clock (see ver. 18). It was then in the fourth watch, some time between three and six o'clock, that the angel presence entered the prison chambers, for the



CATENÆ — CHAIN-LINKS. (British Museum.)

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

The links were of various ingenious forms. The lower figure of the illustration is made of links closely entwined, like the gold chains now manufactured at Venice.

loss would have been discovered at the change of guards at three o'clock, had Peter then been

¹ Prof. Churchill.

² COMPARE Christian and Hopeful in the dungeon of Giant Despair.

³ Swain.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and ^{and} bind on thy sandals. And ^{so he did.} ^{he did so.} And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed; ^{him;} and ^{he} wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought ⁱ he saw a vision.

10 ^{When} ^{And when} they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth ^{unto} ^{into} the city; ^j which opened to them of ^{his} ^{its} own accord:

¶ Mark 6. 9.

¶ Ps. 126. 1.

¶ ch. 5. 19 & 16. 26.

missing. The (an) angel of the Lord came upon him, ἐπέστη, stood over him, with the notion of coming suddenly. "I believe that angels wait on us as truly as ever they waited on Abraham, or Jacob, or Moses, or Elijah, or Mary, or Jesus himself. The mediæval painters were fond of filling the background of the Infancy with countless angels; the representation, though literally false, was morally true. I believe that angels are encamping around them that fear the Lord." ¹

"O, weary ones; ye may not see
Your helpers in their downward flight;
Nor hear the sound of silver wings
Slow beating through the hush of night!

"There are who, like the seer of old,
Can see the helpers God has sent,
And how life's rugged mountain side
Is white with many an angel tent."

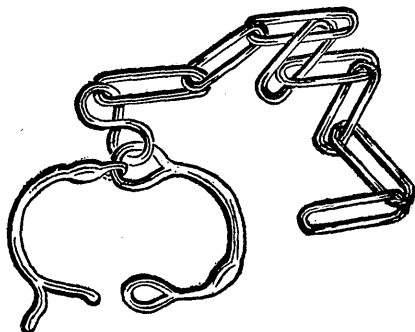
And a light shined. The natural effluence of angelic presence. In the prison, οἰκηματι, cell, or chamber, in the φυλακή, prison; the word used generally in this account for prison. And he smote Peter on the side, "to rouse him, an indication of the sound and quiet sleep which the prisoner slept in spite of the fateful morrow (so Weiss)." ²

And raised him up, ἤγειρεν, awoke him from sleep, not assisted him to rise. In the beautiful fancy of Keble, the wearied apostle, sleeping, as he thought, his last sleep, and dreaming of the glorious witness to his Lord he was to bear when the day dawned, would naturally mistake the angel's touch and voice for the summons to execution. At the eternal gates he waits in his blissful trance, —

"The unexpressive notes to hear
Of angel song and angel motion,
Rising and falling on his ear
Like waves in Joy's unbounded ocean.
His dream was changed — the tyrant's voice
Calls to that last of glorious deeds;
But as he rises to rejoice,
Not Herod, but an angel leads." ³

His chains fell off, that bound him to the sleeping soldiers.

8. Gird thyself. "Bind thy tunic with thy girdle." The Orientals, when they go to rest,



A FETTER OR HANDCUFF WITH CHAIN. From one preserved in the Church of S. Pietro in Vinculis (St. Peter in Chains) at Rome. They claim that it is the identical chain with which he was bound.

do not change their dress as we do, but loosen the long, flowing tunic undergarment, by removing the girdle. But when they rise they fasten it again, so as not to impede the movements.

Bind on thy sandals, σανδάλια, "wooden soles, the shoes of the poor as distinguished from those of the more wealthy." "Peter still observed his Master's rule" (Mark 6: 9). Cast thy garment, ἱμάτιον, his outer cloak, or mantle laid aside with his sandals. He would need these articles, and the action showed him that the appearance was a reality and not a dream.

9. And wist. Imp. of the Old English *wis*, "to know;" from the same root as *wise*.

10. First and the second ward. Guard, sentinels, or guard-rooms, where a guard would be. "The first ward might be the place outside the cell where the other soldiers of the quaternion

¹ Geo. Dana Boardman, D. D. Whittier's *Poems*, "The Angel of St. Mark," gives a beautiful story of angelic deliverance.

² Knowling.

³ *Christian Year*, "St. Peter's Day."

and they went out, and passed on through one street; and ^{forthwith straightway} the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter ^k was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a ^{surety, truth,} that 'the Lord hath sent forth his angel' and ^m hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and ^{from} all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of ⁿ John' whose surname was Märk; where many were gathered together and were ^o praying.

13 And ^{as Peter from} when he knocked at the door of the gate, ^a a damsel ^{maid} came to ^{hearken, answer,} named Rhō'dā.

^k Cp. Luke 15. 17. ^l Ps. 34. 7 & 91. 11. Dan. 3. 28 & 6. 22. ^m Ps. 33. 18, 19. 2 Cor. 1. 10. ⁿ ver. 25. ch. 13. 5, 13 & 15. 37, 39. Col. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 11. Philem. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 13. ^o ver. 5. ^p John 18. 16, 17.

were on guard, and the second ward might refer to some other part of the prison or fortress Antonia where sentinels were stationed."¹ There must have been various gates and rooms for them to pass through. The guards were probably sleeping. The iron gate. Heavy, locked, and barred. "Perhaps a suggestion of what is meant by the 'iron gate' may be found in the great door by which you enter the fortress of Acre from the shore. The entrance is strongly guarded, and the door of thick wood is covered by heavy plates of iron, attached by stout bolts which pass through the wood, and are riveted on the other side. The doorposts and lintels are similarly armed with iron."² Peter could not have opened it. Lead-eth unto the city. This "may have formed the termination of a court or avenue which connected the prison with the town."³ The angel departed. Having done his work. Peter could now find his own way.

"The seraph's wing
Outspread in parting flight. With snowy trace
Awhile it hovered, then like radiant star
From its orbit loosed, went soaring up,
High o'er the arch of night. Then Peter knew."⁴

11. Was come to himself, *γενόμενος ἐν ἑαυτῷ*, had become present in himself, had awakened from his semi-dazed condition, and had his senses all about him, so that he realized as a fact all that had taken place. Now I know. Hitherto he did not know what the Lord's plans for him were, whether to die as a martyr, or go on and preach the gospel. Now he understood.

12. When he had considered, *συνιδὼν*, to see together, to take in the whole situation at a glance. He saw all the elements of the case, and in view of them all decided what course to take. "I do not think that any of the commentators have suf-

ficiently emphasized the force of *σύν*, together, as indicating his *comprehensive perception* of all the elements of the case."⁵

Came to the house of Mary. Because it was probably here that the disciples were frequently gathered for their meetings. Mother of John, whose surname, "super name," the name over and above his family name, was Märk. John is his Hebrew name, and Mark (Marcus) his Latin name. He was a cousin of Barnabas (so "nephew" should read in Col. 4: 10), the author of the Gospel according to Mark, and the companion of Paul and Barnabas in their first missionary journey.

13. Peter knocked at the door of the gate, *τοῦ πυλῶνος*, of the gateway, the passage leading from the street to the inner court. The word also applies to a city gateway with its elaborate set of buildings. The door at which Peter knocked was the outer door of this gateway-passage, or porch, always kept fastened. Just inside was a small room, like a porter's lodge such as is frequent in European cities, for the maid whose duty it was to open the door. The description, according to Tristram, shows that it was a house of the better class.⁶

A damsel . . . Rhoda, the name means Rose. It was a very old custom "to name the daughters of the house after the most beautiful objects in nature, as Esther = Star, Hadassah = Myrtle, Dorcas = Antelope, Margarita = Pearl, Lulu = Pearl, Susannah = Lily, Deborah = Bee, Tamar = Palm Tree."

The word *παῖδισκη*, damsel, "was used of a young female slave, as well as of a young girl or maiden generally. The narrative implies that she was more than a mere menial, if a servant at all. Her prompt recognition of Peter's voice

¹ Knowing.

² William Ewing in *S. S. Times*. The description of the gate of an Eastern city in Van Lennep's *Bible Lands* represents the probable structure of this outer prison gate.

³ Hackett.

⁴ Lydia Sigourney.

⁵ M. R. Vincent. See use of the word by Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 1: 519; and by Plato, *Laws*, 904.

⁶ A curious account of Eastern customs, respecting knocking at the door, is given by Professor Porter in his notes to Kitto, *Daily Bible Illustrations*.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate ^{for gladness, but joy,} and ran in, and told ^{how that} Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she ^{constantly confidently} affirmed that it was even so. ^{Then said they, And they said,} "It is his angel."

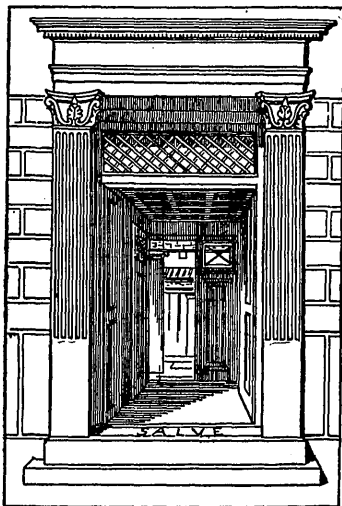
16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened, ^{the door, and they} saw him, ^{they} and were ^{astonished, amazed.}

q Luke 24. 41. Cp. Gen. 45. 26.

r Matt. 18. 10. See Heb. 1. 14.

and her joyful haste, as well as the record of her name, indicate that she was one of the disciples gathered for prayer." ¹

Came to hearken, *ἰπακοῦσαι*. "This is the regular Greek term for answering a knock at a



RESTORATION OF ENTRANCE TO A POMPEIAN HOUSE, showing outer and inner doors (Rich).

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

closed door, as it denotes obeying a summons. The portress did not come to *listen*, as the A. V. renders it, but to answer: before opening, however, she inquired, as usual, who was there."²

"The lovely outline sketch of Rhoda has made her immortal. This rose (so the name means) 'smells sweet and blossoms in the dust.'"³ "God, who leaves in oblivion names of mighty conquerors, treasures up that of a poor girl for his church in all ages."⁴

14. When she knew Peter's voice. Peter must have been a frequent visitor at this house, and his voice often heard in the meetings held

there. She opened not the gate for gladness. "She was so eager to make the others assembled there that night partakers of the great joy she felt in knowing that Peter was alive and free, that she ran back and forgot to open the door when she heard his well-known loved voice."⁵ Dr. Porter says that this has often happened to himself on his return home from a journey.

15. Said unto her, Thou art mad, a colloquial expression, just as we often say, "You must be crazy to think so." But she constantly affirmed, *δυσχυρίζετο*, strongly asserted (*ἰσχύς*, strength) through (*διὰ*) all contradiction and opposition. It is his angel. His guardian angel, assuming his form and voice, a common Jewish belief. "This belief in guardian angels was common to the Greeks and Romans. Every scholar will recall the famous instance of Socrates."⁶ Compare Matt. 18: 10; Heb. 1: 14. The *Midrash Rabbah* on Eccles. 4: 4, says that "six hundred thousand of the angels of the presence came down on Sinai at the giving of the Law, and each one bore a crown to crown Israel, one for each Israelite."⁷

16. They were astonished, *ἐξέστησαν*. Lit., driven out of their mind or senses, amazed, astounded, beyond conception of the possibility of such a fact. This does not indicate, as so many commentators have inferred, that these praying disciples "had small expectation of an answer." It is not "a striking instance of how slow of heart to believe are even the most devout." It is not "an example of weakness of faith." On the contrary, where could we find the true prayer of faith if not in this week of unceasing prayer by the whole church, continued all night, and spoken of as the human cause of the release. They were astonished, not at the FACT of an answer, but at the STRANGE WAY in which it came. They had no way of knowing how God would answer their prayers, nor what was really best. They knew that the best men had died martyrs. And if God should release Peter, they probably had some plan of their own as to how God would do it, perhaps through working on the mind of Herod. They could not plan an angel visit from God.⁸

¹ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

² Rendall.

³ Maclaren.

⁴ Quessel.

⁵ Schaff.

⁶ Glogoc.

⁷ Cambridge Bible.

⁸ Compare the beautiful poem "Strive, yet I do not promise," in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, 266.

17 But he, ^sbeckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him ^{forth} out of the prison. And he said, ^{Go shew} Tell these things unto 'James, and to "the brethren. And he departed, and went ^{into} to another place.

s ch. 13. 16 & 19. 33 & 21. 40.

t ch. 15. 13 & 21. 18. Cp. Gal. 1. 19 & 2. 9, 12.

u See John 21. 23.

17. He, beckoning unto them with the hand, *καταείλας . . . χερί, shaking down with the hand, waving it up and down as a signal.* "It was a familiar gesture of St. Paul." In the confusion and tumult of their joy, they could not hear his story, unless they quieted into silence. **Go shew these things unto James.** The brother of our Lord (Gal. 1: 19), and leading disciple in the church at Jerusalem. He must have been very close to Peter. **He departed,** out of the house, and possibly out of the city. Mary's house was too well known for him to remain there, if he would escape from Herod (Matt. 10: 23). He could not count on deliverance if he refused to use the means. But he lived many years after Herod was dead.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Prayer is a real power. God can give, to those who pray, blessings which it would not be wise to give to the prayerless. Thus "I never was deeply interested in any object, I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything, *but it came,* at some time, no matter at how distant a day; somehow, in some shape, probably the last I should have devised, it came."¹

2. God has many angels of many kinds to do his will. We see the sicknesses and accidents and death that come to good people, and sometimes ask where are God's answers to prayer? Where are his guardian angels?

"Around our pillows golden ladders rise,
And up and down the skies,
With winged sandals shod,
The angels come and go, the
Messengers of God."

3. We, with our narrow vision, cannot tell what is the best answer to our prayers, whether long life, or an early heavenly crown; whether victory, or defeat that brings larger victory; whether bodily relief, or spiritual gifts; whether the bitter cup removed, or, as in Christ's case, drained to the dregs, bringing salvation to the world; whether Paul's thorn be removed, or grace given to bear it; whether the answer comes in this life, or the next.

4. **CONTRAST JAMES AND PETER.** Questions will arise why James was allowed to die, while an angel was sent to deliver Peter. We can only say, as Jesus once said to Peter, "What I do thou

knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," and his other words, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." "James' work was done on earth to be taken up in heaven. How different to the eye of sense the dealings of God with some of his servants from his dealings with others. Those he gloriously delivers; but shall we, therefore, conclude that those God delivered, and these he did not deliver? Should we not rather say those were delivered openly, and in the face of the world—these as really delivered; however, their deliverance did not as manifestly appear."

5. **CONTRAST JAMES AND STEPHEN.** The only notice of James in the Acts is the simple notice of his name at the ten days' prayer-meeting before Pentecost (Acts 1: 13), and the story of his death in one short verse (Acts 12: 2); while Stephen, the deacon, has a chapter and a half, sixty-eight verses. The reason seems to lie in their position in reference to the development of the church. One was a single stone in the foundation of the church, the other was a seed out of which grew a new order of things, having to do with the conversion of Saul, the reception of the Gentiles, and the missionary work throughout the world.

6. **CONTRAST JAMES AND JOHN.** These two brothers, sons of Zebedee, served God and aided his cause in very different ways; the one brother dying early, the other living to become the oldest of the apostles, ninety to one hundred years old. But the youthful martyr was a success, as well as the aged saint. It is the work done, not the length of life, that makes success. Some men can serve God best by proving the reality of faith and love, the supremacy of principle, the power of Christ to sustain in affliction and death. It does not make so much difference on which side of the stream of death we do our work. The crown of success may be in heaven. That crown can be seen in Rev. 2: 7, 17; 3: 5, 12, 21; 7: 13-17.

7. **CONTRAST JAMES AND HEROD.** Both died the same month, the fisherman apostle and the king who, with an annual income of \$2,000,000, died in debt. One closing a life of usefulness, the other a life most of which he could wish were blotted out of the book of remembrance. One obtained an earthly crown, the other a heavenly.

¹ Adoniram Judson. See Longfellow's *Sandalphon*. Trench's *Poems*, "The Suppliant."

18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.

19 And when Hēr'ōd had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the ^{keepers,} and "commanded that ^{they} should be put to death. And he went down from Jû-dæ'ă to Cæs-ă-rē'ă, and ^{there abode.}

20 ^{And Herod} ^{Now he} was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sî'dōn: ^{but} and they came with one accord to him, and, "having made Blās'tūs the king's chamberlain their friend, ^{desired} they asked for peace; because "their country was ^{nourished by} ^{fed from} the king's ^{country.}

21 And upon a set day Hēr'ōd arrayed ^{himself} in royal apparel, and sat ^{upon his} ^{on the} throne, and made an oration unto them.

v Cp. ch. 16. 27 & 27. 42.
Ezra 3. 7 & Ezek. 27. 17.

w 2 Macc. 4. 45 (Gk.). Matt. 23. 14 (Gk.). Cp. 2 Macc. 10. 20.
y See Matt. 27. 19 (for mg.).

z Cp. 1 Kin. 5. 9 &

THE DEATH OF HEROD, vers. 18-23.

18. As soon as it was day, and the soldiers could see that their prisoner was gone, there was no small stir, *τάραχος*, commotion, agitation of the sea in a storm.

19. He examined, *ἀνακρίνας*, implying a thorough (*ἀνά*, up, from bottom to top) judicial examination.

Commanded that they should be put to death, *ἀπαχθῆναι*, lit., to be led away, i. e., to execution. So nearly all commentators. But Rendall says that the word does not mean capital punishment, unless "to death" is expressed. They were led away to any sort of custody, with a view to trial or punishment. "Capital punishment was, according to Roman usage, the almost inevitable penalty for allowing a prisoner to escape. So at Philippi, the gaoler, when he thought the prisoners had escaped, was on the point of anticipating the sentence by suicide (chap. 16: 28)." ¹

And he went down from Judæa, his customary residence, ² to Cæsarea, the imperial capital of the province. We are not told why he went, but it may have been either the trouble with Tyre and Sidon (ver. 20); or the magnificent festival given in honor of Claudius' safety, probably from his journey to Britain, "to signalize the pretended triumphs of the poor mock emperor there." ³

20. Herod was highly displeased, *θυμομαχῶν*, fighting with angry heat, carrying on war with great anger and exasperation. Here it is used figuratively, not of open war, but of a violent, passionate quarrel.

Blastus. From his name we may infer that he was Roman or Greek.

King's chamberlain, *τὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ κοιτῶνος*, the one over his bedchamber. "He had the charge of his master's sleeping apartment, and, to some ex-

tent, of his person; was charged with the duty of introducing visitors to him; usually remained for this purpose in an anteroom during the hours when the king received guests; was often a person of high rank, and always maintained a peculiarly confidential relation to the king or chief person whom he served." ⁴

Desired peace; because their country was nourished, received their food supplies, from the king's country. Tyre and Sidon were commercial cities, and drew their supplies from the rich agricultural districts of Galilee. The quarrel though not an open warfare, yet by tariffs and various restrictions on trade, and official interference, could bring almost a famine on these cities.

21. And upon a set day, the day appointed for the great festival in honor of the emperor.

Arrayed in royal apparel. A vast multitude assembled to see the festival and games, and before these, the king, in all the pride of high state, appeared on the second day in a robe "made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a terror over those that looked intently upon him." ⁵

Sat upon his throne. The royal seat in the amphitheatre "from which the king saw the games and made his harangues to the people."

Made an oration, *ἐδημηγόρει*, from *δῆμος*, the people, and *ἀγορεύω*, to harangue the popular assembly in the market place (*ἀγορά*).

Unto them, the deputation from Tyre and Sidon, but in the hearing of the people, with them in view, and in the manner of a demagogue.

¹ Plumptre.

² Josephus, *Antiquities*, 19: 7, 3.

³ See Farrar's *St. Paul*, 1: 315; Josephus, *Antiq.*, 19: 8, 2.

⁴ Lyman Abbott. ⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 19: 8.

- 22 And the people ^{gave a shout, shouted,} *saying*, ^{It is the} *The* voice of a god, and not of a man.
- 23 And immediately ^{the} *an* ^{an} angel of the Lord smote him, because ^{he} *he* gave not God the glory : and ^{he} *he* was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.
- 24 But ^c the word of God grew and multiplied.
- 25 And ^a *Bār'nā-bās* and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled ^{their ministry, and took} *with them* ^{their ministration, taking} *John* whose surname was Mark.

^z Cp. 2 Sam. 24. 16 & 2 Kin. 19. 35. See ch. 8. 26. ^a Ps. 115. 1. ^b Cp. 2 Macc. 9. 9. ^c See ch. 6. 7. ^d ch. 11. 29, 30. ^e See ver. 12.

22. And the people gave a shout, saying, *It is the voice of a god.* Josephus says one from one place, another from another, his flatterers, always at hand beside a king, raised the cry, echoing a reminiscence of the days of Caligula when he attempted to set up his own image in the temple, "Deign to be gracious to us, thou divine one! hitherto we have honored thee as a man; and henceforth we own thee more than mortal!"

23. And immediately the (an) angel of the Lord. Not in any visible form. The disease may have been the messenger, as the wind and fire are said by the Psalmist to be God's angels. The intention is to represent the sudden disease as in some way coming from God as a public punishment for his blasphemy. He being a Jew knew better than the heathen emperors that the flattery was a lie.

He was eaten of worms. "A severe pain also arose in his stomach, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends, and said, 'I, whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death.' . . . When he said this his pain became violent, and he was carried into the palace."¹ Josephus does not say he was eaten of worms, nor does he say anything contrary to it. Compare the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, in 2 Maccabees 9: "The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an incurable and invisible plague, for as soon as he had spoken these words a pain of the bowels that was remediless came upon him and sore torments of the inner parts." Then after a verse or two describing the pride of Antiochus we read, "So that the worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man, and while he lived in sorrow and pain, his flesh fell away, and the filthiness of his smell was noisome to all his army."

Herodotus relates a similar death of Pheretima, the cruel queen of Cyrene: "On her return to Egypt from Libya, directly after taking vengeance on the people of Barca, she was overtaken by a most horrid death. Her body swarmed with worms, which ate her flesh while she was still alive."²

And gave up the ghost, *ἐξέφυγεν*, *breathed out* his spirit. This was the final result of the plague, though according to Josephus he lived five days in great agony before he died. During these days "vast numbers of Jews in sackcloth and ashes lay prostrate, shrieking, and imploring the Holy One to spare the king's life."

A SUMMARY OF THE PERIOD, ver. 24. The result of all the labors, the miracles, the preaching, visions, persecutions, since the summary of 9: 31, a period of about six years, is summarized in this verse.

The word of God, the message he had sent by Jesus, promulgated through the apostles. Grew, increased as a seed or young tree. It reached many more people. It was better understood. It had wider applications.

And multiplied, referring especially to the great increase in the number of believers; on the principle of Ten Times One is Ten; or as plants multiply from the seeds they bear, each seed becoming a plant bearing many more seeds; or like the leaven in the parable.

RETURN OF BARNABAS AND SAUL, ver. 25. This verse is really the introduction to the next chapter. It carries us a year or two later in the story, to A. D. 46 or 47. Returned from Jerusalem to Antioch, whence they had been sent out.

Fulfilled their ministry. The bringing to Jerusalem of supplies on account of the famine. Took with them John . . . Mark. The young man whose mother's house was such a centre of gospel work. He was inspired by such intense devotion, filled with the missionary spirit, and desired to enter upon the active work of the gospel.

¹ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 19: 8.

² Herodotus, 4: 206.

CHAPTER 13.

PAUL'S FIRST GREAT MISSIONARY JOURNEY. CYPRUS AND ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA.

ANTIOCH. THE FIRST FOREIGN MISSIONARY CHURCH, vers. 1-3.	{ Character of the church. Call of Paul and Barnabas. Set apart for missionary work.	A. D. 47. Spring.
CYPRUS. FIRST FOREIGN MISSIONARY FIELD, vers. 4-12.	{ Preaching in the synagogues throughout the island. Elymas the sorcerer. Sergius Paulus, the governor, becomes a Christian.	A. D. 47. Spring and Summer.
ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA. Mission in Asia Minor, vers. 13-52.	{ The missionaries enter Asia Minor. John Mark returns home. The synagogue service. Paul's address. Jews oppose. Gentiles receive the gospel. Evangelizing the region. Missionaries driven away by persecution.	A. D. 47.

1 Now there were ^{in the church that was at Antioch certain} ^{at Antioch, in the church that was *there*,} ^ⁱ prophets and ^ⁱ teachers; ^{as}
^⁹ Bār'nā-bās, and ^{Sim'e-on} ^{Sym'e-on} that was called Nī'gēr, and ^ⁱ Lū'cī-ūs of Cŷ-rē-nē, and
Mān'ā-ēn ^{which had been brought up with} ^{the foster-brother of} ^ⁱ Hēr'ōd the tē'trārch, and Saul.

^ⁱ ch. 11. 27 & 15. 32 & 19. 6 & 21. 9, 10. Rom. 12. 6, 7. See 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29. ^ⁱ ch. 11. 22-26. ^ⁱ Rom. 16. 21 (?). ^ⁱ See Luke 3. 1.

THE FIRST BOOK of the Acts has been completed. It extended over about sixteen years of time, over Palestine and Syria in extent, and over the origin and early development of the church in history.

THE SECOND BOOK now begins, and is a history of foreign missions, chiefly under Paul. Henceforth we spend most of our time travelling with him over a large part of the Roman Empire, with occasional visits at home.

THE NEW CENTRE. Everything at first radiated from Jerusalem, some of the rays reaching to Damascus, to Antioch, Samaria, Joppa, Tarsus, Cyrene in Africa, Ethiopia. One of these rays reaching to Antioch kindled, as it were, a new sun, from which light radiated over Asia Minor and Europe.

THE MISSIONARY CHURCH AND SOME OF ITS MEMBERS, vers. 1, 2.

1. Now there were . . . at Antioch. On Antioch and the beginning of the church there, see on chapter 11.

Certain prophets, *προφήται*. See on 11 : 27. The prophet is one who speaks for God, the interpreter of God, one who brings a message from God, inspired by God. The forthtelling may be to announce future events, or to declare truth and

duty. These were men of insight and foresight, with minds especially susceptible to divine influences. Teachers. Instructors in truth and duty; those who studied God's Word and his providence and the nature of men, and instructed the church. The difference is something like that between preachers and teachers, evangelists and more permanent pastors, poets and logicians.

There has been a discussion whether some of these five were prophets and others teachers, or whether all had both qualifications. It is most probable that all partook of both powers, but that the emphasis of some, according to their natural tendencies, was more on the prophetic work, and of others on the teaching element. Barnabas. Mentioned, as is Saul, without remark because he has just been named in the narrative. Simeon. Another spelling of Simon and "Symeon," R. V. Called Niger, *i. e.*, black. The name had no more to do with his race or color than now you can tell the color or race of Mr. Black, or Mr. Brown, or Mr. White from his name. Simon Black was a useful, worthy saint, a power in Antioch, but unknown to history. Lucius (not Luke, Greek *Lucas*, but a different name) of Cyrene, a province of northern Africa. He may be the same person as is described by Paul as his kinsman (Rom. 16 : 21);

2 ^{As} And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, ^j the Holy Ghost said, ^k Separate me Bār'nā-bās and Saul ^l for the work whereunto I have called them.

^j Cp. ch. 20. 28. See ch. 8. 29.

^k Rom. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 15.

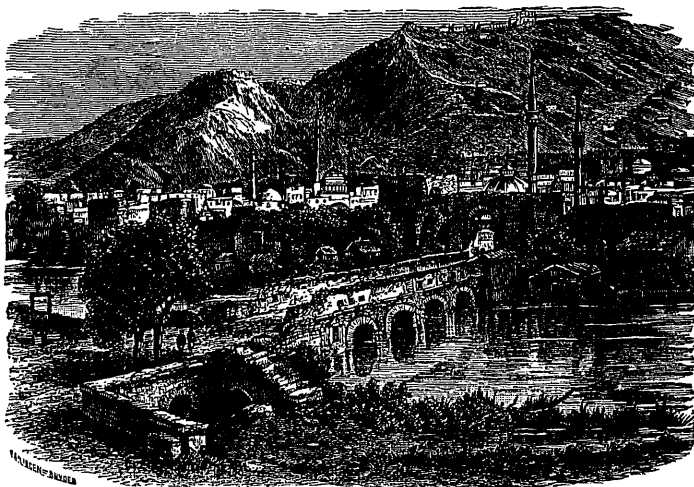
^l See ch. 9. 15.

and one of the men of Cyrene mentioned in Acts 11 : 19, 20, as carrying the gospel to Antioch.

NOTE how useful persons may be who are unknown to history. So Phillips Brooks says that the larger part of the world's work is done by

persons of the one or the two talents, the vast multitude of good people unknown to history.¹

Manaen. The same as Menahem, one of the kings of Israel. Which had been brought up with. One word in the Greek, the *σύντροφος*,



ANTIOCH OF SYRIA.

The arched bridge is over the Orontes. Mount Casius is in the background.

From Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

either the *comrade* or the *foster-brother* of Herod the tetrarch (Antipas). "There are two views as to the import of *σύντροφος*. One is that it means *comrade*,—literally, *one brought up*, educated, with another. It was very common for persons of rank to associate other children with their own, for the purpose of sharing their amusements and studies, and by their example serving to excite them to greater emulation. Josephus, Plutarch, Polybius, and others speak of this ancient practice. The more approved opinion is that it means *collectaneus*, nourished at the same breast, *foster-brother*. The mother of Manaen, according to this view, was Herod's nurse. In either case the relation is mentioned as an honorary one."²

He was, no doubt, a person of considerable influence and rank. But he must have become a Christian from out of the worst influences, as the

companion of such a wicked, unscrupulous, debauched man as this Herod Antipas who murdered John the Baptist. Manaen must have been a man of strong character and devoted piety; and have been an old man at this time, as Herod Antipas began to reign B. C. 4, fifty years before.

It is worthy of remark how two men, brought up in the same family, under the same influences, lived such different lives and reached such different ends as Manaen and Herod. Compare Abel and Cain. No surroundings are so bad, but a child may grow into a saint from amidst them; and none so good, but a child may become bad in spite of them.

"So from the heights of will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns the slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends.

¹ See Gray's *Elegy* :—

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear."

² Hackett.

3 ^{And} Then, when they had fasted and ^m prayed and laid ^{their} ~~their~~ hands on them, ⁿ they sent ~~them~~ away.

m See ch. 6. 6.

n ch. 14. 26.

"From the same cradle side,
From the same mother's knee,
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the peaceful sea."

And Saul. Mentioned last as the latest comer, perhaps the youngest, and as Luke was writing probably what Paul himself told him, he would naturally place himself last.

2. As they ministered to the Lord, λειτουργούντων. Derived from the unused word *laëros* (λαός, the people), public, belonging to the state; and *ἐργω*, to work. Hence, serving the state at one's own expense, and thence, the free service of God, as in worship, teaching, giving, or any other way. Our word "liturgy" is derived from it. "Here the context seems to point to some unusual public religious service."¹ Ramsay translates, "As these were leading a life of religious duties and fasts." They were giving themselves up to special meetings for religious services, seeking the higher life and a fuller knowledge of duty. **And fasted.** Fasting would seem to have its basis in, first, a grief over sin so deep and intense that all desire for food is taken away; or such a strong desire for holiness, for the progress of God's work, for the removal of all that hinders it, that we forget to eat. Therefore it implies that we are doing that which fasting expresses. It is saying, I desire this good gift of God more than food, more than bodily pleasure, more than all else besides. So putting away every sin at any cost, taking up hardest duties, confession of sin to our neighbors, doing all we can for the love of Christ, are expressions of the same principle which underlies fasting. The second basis of fasting is in the aid to devotion furnished by a body unburdened with food, so as to leave the mind and heart in their most active and free condition. Exactly the same principle is employed by all our college athletes in preparation for a great contest. They go without, they fast from, many good things which they freely use at other times.

PAUL AND BARNABAS SET APART AS MISSIONARIES, vers. 2, 3.

The Holy Ghost said. In answer to their prayers, and to their spirit of service. It is not stated by what means the Holy Spirit voiced his will, whether through prophets or through a general simultaneous impulse pervading the church. We must be careful not to limit the ways in

which the Holy Ghost speaks to us. Impressions on the feelings are not the only language of the Spirit. He speaks to us by conscience, by reason, by providence, by his word, and by inspiration, speaking unmistakably within our souls, and within the church as a whole. **Separate me, i. e.,** set apart for this special work. **For the work whereunto I have called them.** Paul was called definitely at the time of his conversion, Barnabas perhaps in a more general way, by fitness, by providence, by an inward call, by spiritual longing.

The reformer has one ear opened toward God and he hears by that alone and goes forward. The politician has only one ear open, and that to man, and he marches to that anthem alone. The statesman has one ear open to God, and the other to man, and when he hears the same anthem in both ears he goes forward. Paul and Barnabas heard the anthem of the call of God and the anthem of the needs of man, and both sang the same marching song.²

FINDING OUR MISSION. God has called each of us to some special work in his kingdom. It is of the first importance that we find out what that work is, and enter upon our Father's business. We can find out in the same way that Paul and Barnabas did: (1) The Holy Spirit will teach us. The promise is as true to us as to them. (2) We shall find out the will of the Spirit by prayer and fasting; that is, by intensely earnest seeking, with a complete yielding to God, to do with us as he will. (3) The knowledge of our work will come gradually to us, as we prove our fitness, and are led on in the duties and work that come to us day by day.³

3. And, rather, "then." In response to the command of the Holy Spirit. **When they (the church) had fasted and prayed,** indicating a special meeting held for the purpose. **And laid their hands on them.** By representatives of the church; thus recognizing their commission as from the church, guided by the Holy Spirit; expressing the fact that the prayers, the sympathies, and the authority of the church were communicated to them. The church thus accepted them as their missionaries, and pledged themselves to sustain them by their sympathy, their prayers, and whatever aid they might need. This was especially necessary because there were still many Jews who did not favor the evangelization of the Gentiles as Gentiles, and looked upon

¹ Knowing.

² Condensed from a paragraph in Prof. Curtis's *Lecture on Abraham Lincoln*.

³ See Bushnell's *Sermons*, "Every Man's Life a Plan of God," and *The Loom of Life*, United Soc. Christian Endeavor.

4 So they, being sent forth ° by the Holy Ghost, ^{departed unto} ^{went down to} Sē-leu'cī-ā; and from thence they sailed to Cŷprūs.

5 And when they were at Sāl'ā-mīs, they ^{preached} ^{proclaimed} the word of God ° in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also ° John ^{to their minister.} ^{as their attendant.}

6 And when they had gone through the ^{isle} ^{whole island} unto Pāphōs, they found a certain ° sorcerer, ° a false prophet, a Jew, whose name ^{was Bar-je'sus;} ^{was Bar-Je'sus;}

o ver. 2. Cp. ch. 16. 6, 7. p ver. 14. ch. 9. 20 & 14. 1 & 17. 1, 2, 10, 17 & 18. 4, 19 & 19. 8. Cp. ver. 46. See Mark 6. 2. q See ch. 12. 12. r Cp. ch. 19. 22. s ch. 8. 9, 11. t See Matt. 7. 15.

Peter's vision and the reception of Cornelius as a personal and extraordinary case. But now this great mission was authorized by the church, acting under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit.¹

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. One of the first privileges and duties of a strong church is to be a centre of missionary influence. We are told to

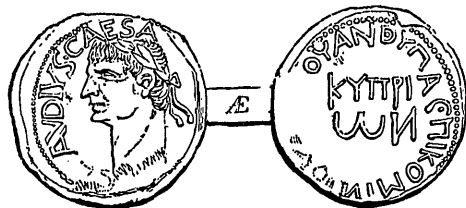
"Measure our writings by Heald's staff,
Which teaches that all has less value than half."

The churches should learn this lesson by heart. The church that sends many of its best men and women to evangelize others, and supports them, becomes stronger and more useful by the gift. All other things together which the Antioch church did accomplished less for the Lord's work than did the sending of their choicest men on this mission.

2. The Holy Spirit guides the church now as truly as it did then. Many of the present developments of Christian activity have been as really inspired by the Holy Spirit as was the sending of Paul and Barnabas on their mission.

THEIR WORK IN CYPRUS; ELYMAS THE SORCERER; SERGIUS PAULUS THE GOVERNOR, vers. 4-12.

4. Sent forth by the Holy Ghost, as related above. Luke keeps before our minds the fact



COIN OF CYPRUS.

From Akerman (Lewin). Obverse: Head of Claudius, with laurel wreath. Ti(tus) Claudius Cæsar Aug(ustus). Reverse: κυπριων (of the Cyprians), επι (under) Κομινου (Cominius) Προκλου (Proculus), Ανθυπατου (Proconsul).

that the origin of the missionary work was the Holy Spirit. The disciples before had been urged

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PAUL AND MARK.

tain sorcerer, *μᾶγος*, magician, wizard (wise-ard), sage, the name given to the wise men from the East (Matt. 2: 1, 7, 16). "The Magian represented in his single personality both the modern fortune-teller and the modern man of science." "It is certain that the priests of some Eastern religions possessed very considerable knowledge of the powers and processes of nature; and that they were able to do things that either were, or

¹ Prof. Ramsay, *St. Paul*.

² Hackett.

³ Knowling.

4 So they, being sent forth ^a by the Holy Ghost, ^{departed unto} ^{went down to} Sē-leu'cī-ă; and from thence they sailed to Cŷprūs.

5 And when they were at Sāl'ā-mis, they ^{preached} ^{proclaimed} the word of God ^{in the} ^{to their minister.} ^{as their attendant.} synagogues of the Jews: and they had also ^a John

6 And when they had gone through the ^{whole isle} unto Pā-phōs, they found a certain ^s sorcerer, ^a false prophet, a Jew, whose name ^{was} Bar-jē'sus;

^a ver. 2. Cp. ch. 16. 6, 7. ^p ver. 14. ch. 9. 20 & 14. 1 & 17. 1, 2, 10, 17 & 18. 4, 19 & 19. 8. Cp. ver. 46. See Mark 6. 2. ^g See ch. 12. 12. ^r Cp. ch. 19. 22. ^s ch. 8. 9, 11. ^t See Matt. 7. 15.

Peter's vision and the reception of Cornelius as a personal and extraordinary case. But now this great mission was authorized by the church, acting under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit.¹

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. One of the first privileges and duties of a strong church is to be a centre of missionary influence. We are told to

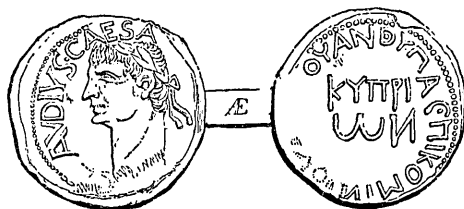
"Measure our writings by Hesiod's staff,
Which teaches that all has less value than half."

The churches should learn this lesson by heart. The church that sends many of its best men and women to evangelize others, and supports them, becomes stronger and more useful by the gift. All other things together which the Antioch church did accomplished less for the Lord's work than did the sending of their choicest men on this mission.

2. The Holy Spirit guides the church now as truly as it did then. Many of the present developments of Christian activity have been as really inspired by the Holy Spirit as was the sending of Paul and Barnabas on their mission.

THEIR WORK IN CYPRUS; ELYMAS THE SORCERER; SERGIUS PAULUS THE GOVERNOR, vers. 4-12.

4. Sent forth by the Holy Ghost, as related above. Luke keeps before our minds the fact



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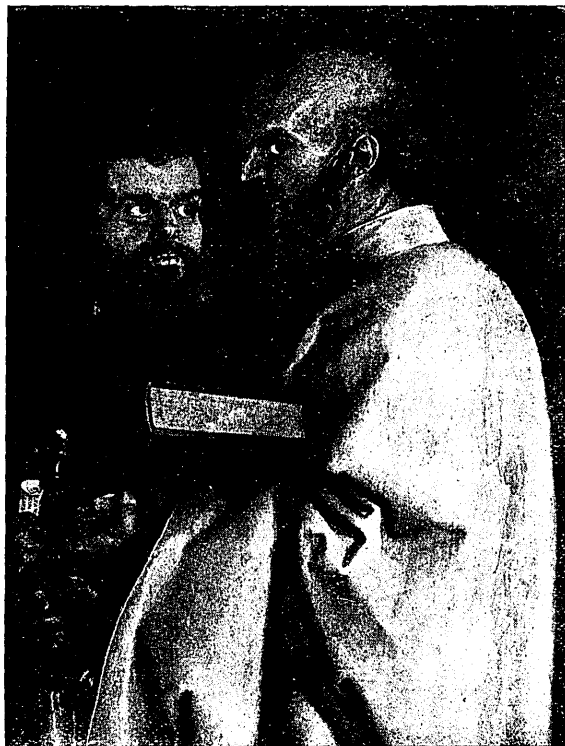
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¹ Prof. Ramsay, *St. Paul*.

² Hackett.

³ Knowing.

8 But Ἐλ'γ-mās the ^ssorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) ^vwithstood them, seeking to turn ^{away} ^{aside} ^wthe ^{deputy} ^{proconsul} from the faith.

9 ^{Then} But Saul, ^(who also is called Paul.) ^{who is also called Paul,} ^zfilled with the Holy Ghost, ^{set}fastened his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all ^{subtlety} ^{guile} and all ^{mischief,} ^{v/hou child} ^{villany,} ^{thou = son} of the devil, ^{thou} ^{thou} enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to ^apervert ^bthe right ways of the Lord?

^s ch. 8. 9, 11. ^v Cp. Ex. 7. 11 & 2 Tim. 3. 8. ^w vers. 7, 12. ^z ch. 4. 8. ^y Cp. ch. 18. 14. ^z See Matt. 13. 38.
^a Mic. 3. 9. ^b Hos. 14. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 15. Cp. ch. 18. 25, 26.

religion, for rest and peace of soul. Even the wisest men without Christ were but

"Infants crying in the night;
Infants crying for the light;
And with no language but a cry."

In the darkness of that age of general unbelief as to the future, when even "Cato and Cæsar confessed to the senate that the belief in a future existence was fabulous," a thoughtful mind would catch at everything that gave hope of eternal life, at least so far as to investigate.

"That, stung by straitness of our life, made strait
On purpose to make prized the life at large, —
Freed by the throbbing impulse we call death,
We burst there as the worm into the fly,
Who, while a worm still, wants his wings." 1

Deputy. Greek, "proconsul," that is, the governor of a province under the senate at Rome. This was formerly regarded as a mistake, because Strabo, the historian, says that Cyprus was an imperial province, under the emperor, and therefore the governor would be called a "proprætor," not a proconsul. But it was discovered that Augustus (B. C. 22) transferred Cyprus to the senate, and Luke uses the right word — proconsul. This is confirmed by a Greek inscription at Soloi in the north of Cyprus, found by General Cesnola, and dated "in the proconsulship of Paulus." **A prudent man.** R. V., "a man of understanding," of practical ability, of good common sense and judgment. There must have been something in Elymas, or such a man would not have made him a companion.

Even now "The Society for Psychical Research," including some of the most learned professors in English and American universities, is investigating similar phenomena. Called for Barnabas and Saul. This shows his sound mind. He would search wherever there was hope of more light. "Hearing that there were just now two travelling teachers in Cyprus, and taking them to be of the class that went about giving demonstrations in rhetoric and moral philosophy, and some-

times ended by settling down as professors in the great universities, he invited or 'commanded' their presence at his court."² Professor Wilkin-son, in his *Epic of Saul*, regards Sergius Paulus as one of the companions of Saul on his way to Damascus discussing religious questions, in which case the two met here in Cyprus as old acquaintances.

8. But Elymas. Not necessarily a proper name. It is simply Aramaic for Magian, magician, sorcerer. **Withstood them.** Opposed them, because he saw that his influence and power and the emoluments of his place were gone if Sergius Paulus accepted the gospel. "In the East it is always believed that the governor's friend may influence his judgment; and every suppliant, every litigant, every criminal, tries to propitiate or to bribe the friend."³ So that such a man could gain great wealth and power from his relations to the governor. **Turn . . . from the faith,** from believing the gospel. The action of Elymas shows that Paul had made no little impression on the governor.

9. Saul (who also is called Paul). This connects the two names with the same man. In the story of his life among the Jews he is called by his Jewish name Saul. Now that he is beginning his labors among the Roman Gentiles, his Roman name is used from this time on.⁴ "The dropping of the Jewish, and the adoption of a Roman name was in harmony with the great truth he was promulgating, that henceforward the partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down."⁵ It marked the great crisis in his Christian life and work. **Set his eyes,** ἀτενίσας, from τενίω, to stretch, and ἀ, intensive, to fix the eyes intently upon. Our word "attention" is a close ally.

10. Full of all subtlety. Deceit, guile, underhandedness. **And all mischief,** βᾶδιον, from βᾶδιος, easy, with facility, and ἐργω, to work; hence, ease in doing, facility, and in a bad sense spoken of a man who does evil easily, adroitly, naturally; hence, unscrupulousness, recklessness. "This word denotes the recklessness with which Elymas pur-

¹ Browning.

² Prof. John Massie in Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

³ Ramsay, *St. Paul*. See the whole of chapter 4.

⁴ See *St. Paul*, p. 83, and *Was Christ born in Bethlehem?* p. 54.

⁵ Lewin.

11 And now, behold, ^cthe hand of the Lord ^{is} upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun ^dfor a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking ^esome to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the ^{deputy,} ^{proconsul,} when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at ^{the doctrine} ^{teaching} of the Lord.

^c ch. 11. 21. ^{Ex.} 9. 3. ^{1 Sam.} 5. 6, 7, 11. ^{Ps.} 32. 4. ^{Cp.} Heb. 10. 31 & 1 Pet. 5. 6. ^d Luke 4. 13 (& mg. for mg.).
^e Cp. ch. 9. 8 & 22. 11. ^f Cp. ver. 49 & ch. 15. 35.

sued his selfish objects, regardless of the mischief which he wrought thereby,"¹ another example of *Facilis descensus Avern*. Child of the devil. And like his father. He had been adopted by Satan by his own choice; an immense fall from his child name *Bar-jesus*, son of Jesus. "Paul was not flinging bitter words at random, or yielding to passion, but was laying the black heart bare to the man's own eyes, that seeing himself as God saw him might startle him into penitence."²

Devil, *διαβόλου*, slanderer, false accuser, and therefore the enemy of all righteousness, and therefore opposed to Jesus, who is the sun of righteousness, whose kingdom is one of righteousness and pledged against every form of evil, while every form of evil could flourish under the false religion Elymas represented. Pervert the right ways, *εὐθείας*, straight, level, so plain and direct that men cannot miss the way. These Elymas would pervert, *διαστρέφων*, distort, turn aside, from their purpose into the crooked and perverted ways of his own errors. Of the Lord. Referring not to perverting men, but God's ways with men to save them, — his truths. Thus he slandered God and true religion by misrepresenting them, and putting them to a bad use. Perverted truths are the most dangerous of errors. "The corruption of the best is the worst."

11. The hand of the Lord, not of Paul. Paul announced the fact, but did not produce it. Hand is the instrument by which a work is performed. And thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun. This phrase indicates total blindness. "In the case of partial blindness, the eye cannot discern objects, but is able to recognize the light; when the sun cannot be discerned, the blindness is absolute."³

For a season, *ἄχρι καιροῦ*, until the time, "until the duly appointed season should arrive at which God would see fit to restore his sight."¹ So in Luke 4:13. God punishes only so much as is necessary. The blindness was doubtless like that of St. Paul himself, to give him an opportunity to come into spiritual light. He could think, but he could do no harm while he was blind. It was a mercy to Elymas as it had been to Paul. An

other object was to produce an effect upon others. "The blindness of Elymas opened the eyes of the proconsul."⁴ This was the most natural and appropriate punishment, that he who blinded men's souls should himself become blind in body, as he was becoming blind in mind and heart.

A mist, dimness of vision, increasing till it became a darkness, total blindness. Expressing the gradual progress of the loss of sight in a way characteristic of the physician.

"The first miracle which Paul performed was the infliction of a judgment; and that judgment the same which befell himself when arrested on his way to Damascus,"⁵ and for the same purpose. Whether it produced a similar result we do not know.

12. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed. The miracle was not his only reason for believing. The apostles had been teaching and preaching, and this miracle completed the evidence and turned the scale. Believed. Became a disciple of Christ. His reason and his conscience were convinced, his fears aroused, his hopes excited, and now he yields his will. He finds that all good, all argument, power, righteousness, truth, high motives, salvation, his conscience, his reason, his welfare, — all are on the side of Christ. He therefore trusts himself wholly to Jesus and becomes a disciple. The victory was won. Being astonished, *ἐκπλησσομένης*, from *ἐκ*, out of, and *πλησσω*, to strike; hence, struck out of their senses, as by a sudden shock; astounded, at the doctrine (the teaching) of the Lord, both at the manner of teaching, thus confirmed by miracle, and at what was taught about the Lord. The new truths from heaven, the new views of the love of God, the promises and blessings of the gospel, forgiveness of sin, new life, the presence of the Holy Spirit, were a new and marvellous revelation to the governor, and far more astonishing than the miracle.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. The missionary, and every one who attempts to do good, must expect opposition, false charges, and every hindrance which the Bad interposes when the Good interferes with its gains. "Like a ship which

¹ Rendall.² Maclaren.³ Lyman Abbott.⁴ Felt.⁵ Gloag.

13 Now ^{when} Paul and his company ^{loosed set sail} from Pā'phōs, ^{they} and came to Pēr'gā in Pām-phyl'ī-ā: and ^{departing departed} John from them and returned ^h to Jerusalem.

g ver. 5.

h ch. 12. 12.

plunges into the storm as soon as it clears the pier-head, the missionaries felt the first dash of the spray and blast of the wind as soon as they began their work." ¹

2. Elymas was "like a candle lighted from the pit. A nature furnished richly to the very brim, a man of knowledge, of art, of skill, of thought, with the very graces of the body perfect, and yet profane, impure, worldly, scattering scepticism of all good and truth about him wherever he may go, — his is no unlighted candle, but lighted at the yellow flames that burn out of the dreadful brimstone of the pit." ²

3. LEADING OTHERS ASTRAY.

"For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost, or seaman's woe,
Or battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or preybird's shriek, or ocean shroud,
The shipwreck of a soul."

But there is one thing sadder than this, — the shipwrecking of the souls of others, the climbing to our own gains over the ruined souls and bodies of our fellow men.

4. "We are apt to say, What a pity that Elymas was on the spot to interfere with the good work. As Christ said, when Lazarus died, 'I am glad for your sakes that I was not there,' so he might say in the case of Sergius Paulus, 'I am glad for his sake that Elymas was there with his sorceries.' For the efforts of the sorcerer to turn him away were overruled as the means of bringing him near. *If there had not been a fierce wind blowing against this kite, it would not have been able to rise.*" ³

5. The punishment of sin is often of the nature of the sin; blindness comes to the spiritually blind. The punishment is mingled with mercy; it is to lead them to repentance, to make them realize their blindness, and seek some one to guide them to the Light of the world.

6. God makes of us the best that is possible; if we will not help others to be good, by our example, he will compel us to help them by being a warning.

FROM CYPRUS, THROUGH PERGA, TO ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA, vers. 13, 14.

13. Now when Paul. Paul now takes the lead, as by nature he was fitted to do. Henceforward in the history, with two significant exceptions

(14 : 12; 15 : 12, 25), his name is placed before that of Barnabas. ⁴

And his company, including Barnabas, John Mark, and perhaps others. *Loosed*, ἀπαχθέρεις. The verb literally means to *lead up*, as to the open sea. It is the classical and technical term for *setting sail, putting out to sea*. Ramsay, Conybeare, and Plumptre agree, for different reasons, that the season of the year was summer, probably in July. Conybeare places it in May.

Came to Perga, the seaport of Pamphylia. Some things are noticeable and interesting about this brief visit to Perga, for apparently the company did not remain long. No preaching there is recorded. It was the unhealthy season in the lowlands, and the missionaries left soon, either because most of the inhabitants had gone for health to the highlands (Conybeare), or Paul was taken sick and was compelled to leave (Ramsay).

THE SICKLY SEASON. PAUL'S INFIRMITY AND THE THORN IN THE FLESH. Malarial fever is endemic on the low-lying plains, and the natural sanitarium is the mountainous region beyond. Professor Ramsay proves that at this time the Roman province of Galatia included Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, and that, therefore, the Epistle to the Galatians was written to these cities among others, and that his statement that "through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at first" (Gal. 4 : 13, 14) belongs to this period; and he thinks that "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him" (2 Cor. 12 : 7), was a severe attack of malarial fever, a return of his old malady. "In some constitutions malarial fever tends to recur in very distressing and prostrating paroxysms, whenever one's energies are taxed for a great effort." A strong corroboration is found in the phrase, "A stake in the flesh," which Paul uses of his malady. That is the peculiar headache which accompanies the paroxysms. "Within my experience several persons, innocent of Pauline theorizing, have described it as 'like a red-hot bar thrust through the forehead.'" "Every one who has travelled in Pamphylia knows how relaxing and enervating the climate is. In these low-lying plains the land is so moist as to be extraordinarily fertile and most dangerous to strangers. Confined (on the north) by the vast ridges of Taurus, 5000 to 9000 feet high, the atmosphere is like the steam of a kettle, hot, moist,

¹ Maclaren.

² Phillips Brooks, *Sermons*, "The Candle of the Lord."

³ Arnot. COMPARE "The Fable of the Kite" in Whately's *Annotations*, 207.

⁴ See Ramsay's *St. Paul*, 84.

14 But ^{when they, departed} ^{passing through} from Pēr'gā, ^{they} came to Antioch ^{of} Pī-sīd'ī-ā; and they ⁱ went into the synagogue on ^j the sabbath day, and sat down.

ⁱ See ver. 5. ^j vers. 42, 44. ch. 16. 13 & 17. 2 & 18. 4.

and swept by no strong winds." We suppose, then, that Paul caught fever on reaching Perga. "It was precisely after fatigue and hardship, travelling on foot through Cyprus, amid great excitement and mental strain, that one was peculiarly liable to be affected by the sudden plunge into the enervating atmosphere of Pamphylia."¹ "The treatment for such an illness would be prescribed by universal consent as either the sea or the high lands of the interior."²

And John (Mark) departing from them, returned to Jerusalem, his home. No reason is assigned; but it was plainly one not satisfactory to Paul (Acts 15: 37, 38). It is a slander on a good young man to merely say that he was homesick, "and wanted to go and see his mother" in Jerusalem. There have been a number of reasons suggested, as that he was dissatisfied with the fact that Paul superseded his cousin Barnabas as leader; that he dreaded the perils that lay before them in the wild and dangerous country infested with bandits, through which they must pass; that Paul's preaching and action in eating with the Gentiles troubled the conscience of one who had been strictly brought up in Jerusalem; that he was anxious about his mother. All these had doubtless more or less influence, but the most natural reason, on Professor Ramsay's theory of Paul's sickness, I have not seen mentioned,—that John Mark, too, was attacked with the depressing malarial fever, and felt unable to go through the rough experiences that lay before them, while at the same time this sickness emphasized all the other reasons. Paul went on with his work in spite of his sickness, and he thought that the more delicate young man should do the same.

The effects of his return were more than Mark anticipated. He was the occasion of a separation between Paul and Barnabas. It took long years for him to regain what he lost. But he was restored. "A soldier who has wavered in one battle may live to obtain a glorious victory." And Mark *did* gain the victory. He was ready to go on the second missionary journey. He did go with Barnabas to Cyprus. He regained, by

his noble and courageous conduct, the good opinion of Paul, to whom he became a comfort and a profit (Col. 4: 10; 2 Tim. 4: 11). There is comfort and hope for us in this for ourselves and for others. Some one has said, "He that makes no mistakes seldom makes anything else." But a wiser still has said, "It is not the making of mistakes that makes a man, but it is the wise use of mistakes that enables a man to be made." The diamond is polished with its own dust.

Put "failures" in place of "vices" in Longfellow's *Ladder of St. Augustine*.

"St. Augustine! well hast thou said
That of our failures we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame."

14. From Perga they came to Antioch in Pisidia, a journey of about 100 miles. Antioch is situated in the central table-lands 3600 feet above the sea. To this journey, without doubt, belong many of the perils and dangers described by Paul in 2 Cor. 11: 23-27. "Pisidia was a barbarian country, almost destitute of Greek culture, and barely subjugated by Roman arms." The roads were bad and overrun with bandits. "The roads all over the Roman Empire were apt to be unsafe, for the arrangements for insuring public safety were exceedingly defective." Conybeare and Howson describe the dangers of the region, and Ramsay adds several inscriptions found in this region which refer to these dangers.³

Antioch was the chief city of Pisidia in southern Galatia.⁴ Greek was understood by many, but among the common people each tribe had also its own language. It was "on the great imperial highroad which traversed Asia Minor from east to west, north of Mount Taurus, at this time, and connected Syria and the East by way of Ephesus with Greece and Rome."⁵

Went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. This was their custom for religious worship, and as the means of reaching the Jews to whom they always preached first. Here, as distinguished strangers from the more cultivated regions, they were asked by the leaders to speak

¹ Charles Reade in *Never too Late to Mend* describes a clergyman engaged in warfare against the barbarity of prison discipline, upon whom every scene of cruelty produced a distressing physical effect, sickness, trembling, hysterical tears, and prostration of spirit, yet all this did not prevent him from facing his duty. See *St. Paul*, 95.

² *St. Paul*, chap. 5, sec. 1, 2.

³ *Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. 2. See, also, Conybeare and Howson, 1: 162-168. "There is an interest-

ing story of St. John and the bandits in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, III. 23. The incidents there told took place in Asia Minor."

⁴ Professor Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, pp. 8-13, 44, 64, 91, 111, shows that Antioch and the places named in the next chapter belonged to Galatia, and to the churches in these places and others the Epistle to the Galatians was written.

⁵ Rendall.

15 And after ^kthe reading of the ^llaw and the prophets ^mthe rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, ⁿYe men and brethren, if ye have any ^oword of exhortation for the people, say on.

16 ^pThen And Paul stood up, and ^qbeckoning with ^rhis the hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, ^sgive audience. ^thearken.

17 The ^uGod of this people ^vof Israel ^wchose our fathers, and ^xexalted the people ^ywhen they ^zdwelt as strangers ^{aa}sojourned in the land of Egypt, and ^{ab}with a high arm ^{ac}brought ^{ad}led he them forth out of it.

^k ch. 15. 21. ^l See Luke 16. 16. ^m See Mark 5. 22. ⁿ Heb. 13. 22. ^o See ch. 12. 17. ^p ver. 26. ^q ch. 10. 2, 22. ^r See Matt. 15. 31. ^s Deut. 7. 6-8. ^t Num. 24. 7. ^u ch. 7. 17. ^v Ex. 1. 1, 7, 12. ^w Ps. 105. 23, 24. ^x Ex. 6. 6 & 13. 14, 16.

to the people, as was the custom, after the Scripture lessons of the day had been read.¹

And sat down, with the audience. It is not said that what now took place was on the first



COIN OF ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA.

From Calmet. The figure is that of the god Mēn, Mensis, Month. The crescent of the moon appears behind his shoulders. This deity was worshipped at Antioch, and to his temple were attached great multitudes of priests and valuable possessions. The legend on the coin is:

Mensis	Col.	Caes.	Antioch.
Mensis	of the Colony	Cæsarea	Antiochia.

Sabbath of their appearance at Antioch. It was an event that took place on a Sabbath, probably after Paul and Barnabas had been there some time. The rumors about the new and remarkable doctrine of these teachers must have spread through the community and attracted a large audience.

PAUL'S ADDRESS IN THE SYNAGOGUE, vers. 15-41.

15. After the reading of the law and the prophets. Selections from which were used for the first and second lessons.

The rulers of the synagogue, whose business it was to arrange the services, sent unto them while they were sitting with the congregation.

16. Then Paul stood up. "Paul instantly ac-

cepted the invitation. Usually a Jewish preacher sat down during the delivery of his sermon, as is freely done by Roman Catholics abroad; but Paul, instead of going to the pulpit, seems merely to have risen in his place, and with uplifted arm and beckoning finger, he spoke to the expectant throng."² And beckoning with his hand, *καταείλας, made a gesture with his hand*, as in 12: 17, the common oratorical gesture inviting silence.

Said. Compare Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 14-36); Stephen's sermon before the Sanhedrim (Acts 7); Paul's address on the castle stairs at Jerusalem (Acts 21: 40-22: 21), and before Agrippa (Acts 26: 1-29). The address given is doubtless a condensation of Paul's full address.³

SUBJECT: JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH OF THE JEWS.

ARGUMENT: 1. In your past history see the plans of God unfolding for his kingdom. Vers. 17-21.

2. The kingdom was established in the house of David. Ver. 22.

3. The promise of the everlasting kingdom was to the house of David. Ver. 23.

4. Jesus, a descendant of David, is the promised Saviour and Messiah. Vers. 23-26.

OBJECTION ANSWERED: But Jesus died, slain by the rulers at Jerusalem. Vers. 27-29.

Yes, but God raised him from the dead, and he is a living Saviour. Vers. 30-37.

APPLICATION: Here is the forgiveness of sins, the way of salvation. Vers. 38-40.

Believe on him or you must perish. Ver. 41.

Men of Israel, his brother Jews, and ye that fear God, the technical term for proselytes.

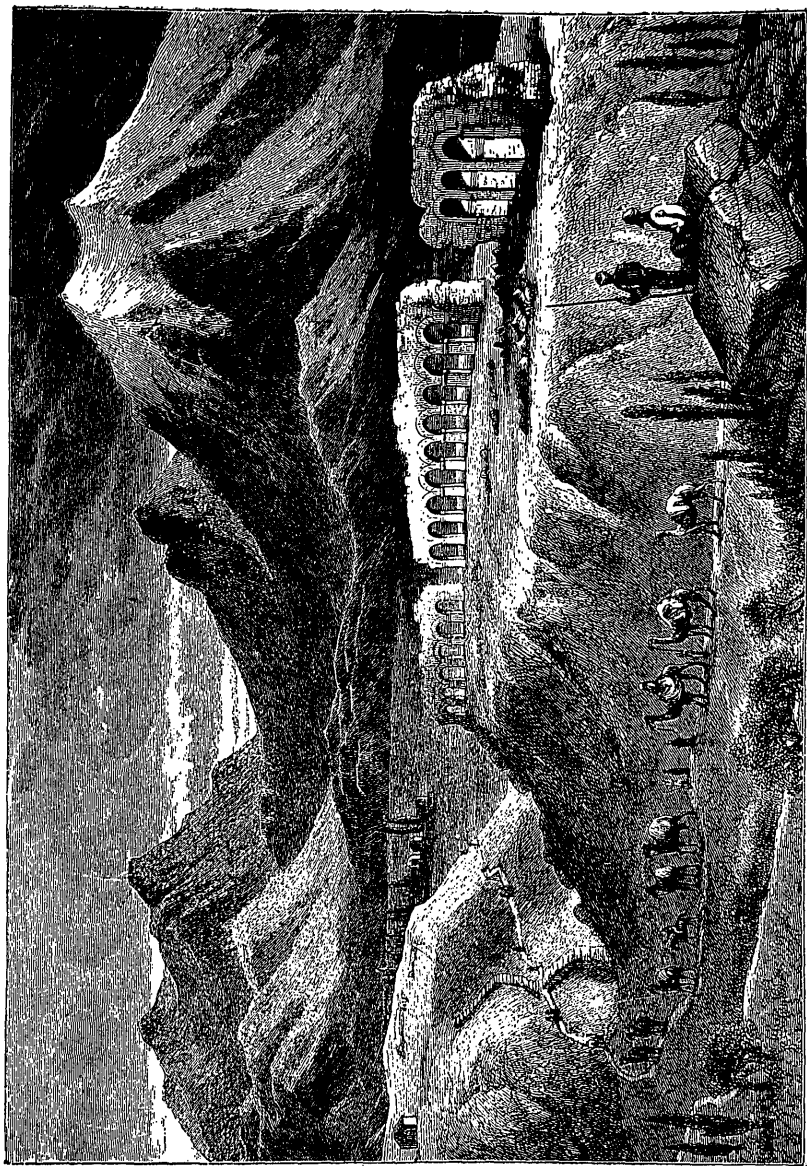
17-21. (1) Israel became a nation because God chose them.

(2) And exalted, *ὑψωσεν, he lifted on high*, by

¹ See Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, and his *Jesus the Messiah*, i. 434; Schürer's *Jewish People*, div. ii., vol. ii. p. 79, etc.

² Farrar.

³ Compare "the remarkable list of parallels drawn out recently by Ramsay between the speech at Pisidian Antioch and the thoughts and phrases of the Epistle to the Galatians, *Expositor*, December, 1898."



SITZ OF ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA. From Levin.

The spectator is looking southwest. The main part of the city was on the hill to the spectator's left. The hill where the aqueduct is seen was a suburb only. In the plain, to the left, is the modern city of Yalabaz.

18 And ^{for} about the time of "forty years" suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And ^a when he had destroyed "seven nations in the land of ^{Cha'na-an, z} he ^{divided} ^{gave them} their land ^{to them by lot.} ^{for an inheritance,}

20 And after that ^a he gave ^{unto them} judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, ^{for about four hundred and fifty years: and after these things he gave them judges} until ^b Sām'ū-ēl the prophet.

21 And afterward they ^c ^{desired} ^{asked for} a king: and ^d God gave unto them Saul the ^e son of ^{Cis, Kish,} a man of the tribe of Bēn'jā-mīn, ^{by} ^{for} the space of forty years.

22 And ^f when he had removed him, ^g he raised up ^{unto them} David to be their king; to whom also he ^{gave testimony,} ^{bare witness,} and said, ^h I have found David the ^{son} ^{son} of Jēs'sē, ⁱ a man after ^{mine own} ^{my} heart, ^j ^{which} ^{do} shall ^{fulfil} all my will.

23 Of ^k this man's seed hath God, ^l according to ^{his} promise, ^{raised} ^{brought} unto Israel ^m a Saviour, Jesus;

^v See ch. 7. 36. ^w Cp. Deut. 9. 5-24. ^x See ch. 7. 45. ^y Deut. 7. 1. ^z Josh. 14. 1, 2 & 19. 51. Ps. 78. 55 & 136. 21, 22. ^a Judg. 2. 16 & 3. 9. ^b See ch. 3. 24. ^c 1 Sam. 8. 5. ^d 1 Sam. 10. 1. ^e 1 Sam. 9. 1, 2. ^f 1 Sam. 15. 23, 26, 28 & 16. 1. Cp. Hos. 13. 11. ^g 1 Sam. 16. 13. ^h 2 Sam. 2. 4 & 5. 3. ⁱ Cited from Ps. 89. 20. ^j ch. 7. 46. Cited from 1 Sam. 13. 14. ^k ver. 36. ^l See Matt. 1. 1. ^m Ps. 132. 11. Cp. vers. 32, 33. ⁿ See Luke 2. 11.

increasing their numbers, by delivering them from the Egyptians through wonderful miracles of intervention in their behalf, by lifting them from a miserable state of bondage, into a nation of free people.

(3) He suffered their manners (ver. 18), *ἐτροποφόρησεν*, from *τρόπος*, *manner*, *way* of doing things, *manner of life*, and *φορέω* (a frequentative of *φέρω*, *to bear*) denoting not the simple and transient act of bearing, but a *continuous or habitual bearing*; hence, the Greek word for the four English words, means, *He endured, he bore with continually, the character and actions of the Israelites for forty years, as a father bears with a wayward son, using every loving means to reclaim him and fit him for a noble life.*

Another reading, *ἐτροφοφόρησεν*, from *τροφός*, *a nurse*, expresses a slightly different meaning, *to bear like a nurse or mother with tender care*; corresponding with Deut. 1:31, "The Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son."

(4) He gave them the Promised Land. 19. Destroyed seven nations. Deut. 7:1; Josh. 3:10; 24:11, give their names. He destroyed on account of their sins, and in order that a better people might have the land best adapted to train them into the kingdom of God. Divided . . . to them by lot, *κατεκληρονόμησεν*. "The A. V. gives the literal rendering. The R. V. gave them their land for an inheritance, is correct, so far as the meaning *inheritance* is concerned (see on 1 Pet. 1:4), but does not give the sense of *distribution* which is contained in the word."¹

(5) He gave them a free government.

20. About the space of four hundred and

fifty years. The best attested reading connects these words with the preceding verse. "He divided their land to them by lot" "for an inheritance," within 450 years. "The dative of time, *ἔτεσι*, *years*, signifying the period within which an event is accomplished." The inheritance "was already assured to the fathers as God's chosen (7:5) and the four hundred years of the people's sojourn in a strange land (Acts 7:6; Gen. 15:13), forty years in the wilderness, and some ten years for the actual conquest of the land made up the four hundred and fifty years (so Weiss, Felten; see Wendt, *in loco*)."² If the reading of the A. V. is retained, it is probable that Paul followed the popular chronology adopted by Josephus (*Antiq.*, 8:3, 1; 10:8, 5), which simply adds up the sum of the years of the Judges without allowing that any of them were contemporary. But this makes a difficulty with the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1, unless we give a wide latitude to the "about."

(6) He changed the government at their desire to a kingdom.

NOTE. How all this history shows God's care for his people, his desire for their good, his forbearing love, his various ways of training them to be his people. The past was an assurance to Paul's audience that God was still acting toward Israel on the same principles.

22. The kingdom was established in the house of David.

23. The Messiah, the Deliverer, was to come from the descendants and heirs of David, according to his promise. "The Messianic promises generally, or more specifically 2 Sam. 7:

¹ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

² Knowling.

24 When "John had first preached before his "coming" the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John ^{fulfilled} ^{was fulfilling} his course, "he said, ^{Whom think ye that I am? I am not he.} But behold, there cometh one after me, ^{whose shoes of his whose feet I am} not worthy to ^{loose.} ^{unloose.}

26 ^{Men and brethren,} ^{Brethren,} children of the stock of Abraham, and ^{whosoever those} among you ^{fear} ^{that fear} God, to ^{you} ^{us} is "the word of 'this salvation sent' forth.

27 For they that dwell ^{at} in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they "knew him not, nor ^{yet} the "voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath, ^{day,} ^{they have} ^w fulfilled ^{them} ⁱⁿ by condemning ^{him}.

28 And "though they found no cause of death ^{in him,} "yet ^{desired} ^{asked} they of Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when "they had fulfilled all things that ^{was} ^{were} written of him, "they took ^{him} ^{him} down from ^b the tree, and laid ^{him} ^{him} in a ^{sepulchre.} ^{tomb.}

30 But "God raised him from the dead:

31 And "he was seen for many days of them "which ^{that} came up with him "from Gal'i-lee to Jerusalem, "who are now ^h his witnesses unto the people.

32 And we ^{declare unto} ^{bring} you ^{glad} ^{good} tidings, ^{how that} of the "promise ^{which was} made unto the fathers,

33 ^{How that} "God hath fulfilled the same unto ^{us their} ^{our} children, in that he ^{hath} raised up Jesus, ^{again;} ^{as} ^{it is also} ^{also it is} written in the second psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

ⁿ ch. 1. 22. ^{Matt.} 3. 1. ^o 1 Thess. 1. 9 & 2. 1 (for mg.). ^p ch. 19. 4. ^{Mark} 1. 4. ^{Luke} 3. 3. ^{Cp.} ch. 2. 38 & ^{Matt.} 3. 11. ^q John 1. 20, 27. ^{Cp.} ^{Matt.} 3. 11 & ^{Mark} 1. 7 & ^{Luke} 3. 16. ^r ver. 16. ^s ch. 10. 36. ^{Cp.} ^{Eph.} 1. 13. ^t Cp. ch. 5. 20. ^{See} ch. 4. 12. ^u Cp. 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15. ^{See} ch. 3. 17. ^v ver. 15. ^{Cp.} ch. 15. 21. ^w See ^{Luke} 24. 20, 26, 27, 44. ^x Cp. ^{Mark} 14. 55 & ^{Luke} 23. 22. ^y ch. 2. 23 & 3. 14, 15. ^{Luke} 23. 23. ^z ^{Luke} 18. 31 & 24. 44. ^{John} 19. 28, 30, 36, 37. ^a ^{Matt.} 27. 59, 60. ^{Mark} 15. 46. ^{Luke} 23. 53. ^{John} 19. 38, 41, 42. ^b See ch. 5. 30. ^c See ch. 2. 24. ^d See ch. 1. 3. ^e ^{Mark} 15. 41. ^f ch. 1. 11 & 2. 7. ^g See ^{Luke} 24. 48. ^h See ch. 1. 8. ⁱ ch. 26. 6. ^{Rom.} 4. 13 & 15. 8. ^{Gal.} 3. 16. ^{Cp.} ^{Rom.} 9. 4. ^j Cp. ver. 23 & ^{Luke} 1. 69-73. ^k ^{Heb.} 1. 5 & 5. 5. Cited from Ps. 2. 7.

12; Ps. 132: 11; Isa. 11: 1, 10; Jer. 23: 5, 6; Zech. 3: 8." A Saviour, Jesus. Jesus was the direct descendant of David in two lines, as given in the genealogies of Matthew and Luke.

24, 25. Paul here shows that the promised forerunner had come and prepared the way for Jesus as the Messiah, and borne witness to him.

26, 27. To you is the word of this salvation sent, in sharp contrast with the Jews of Jerusalem, who crucified Jesus (Rendall). "The gospel is sent to you because the Jews in Jerusalem have rejected it" (Gloag). But Knowing is nearer right when he regards the For of ver. 27 as confirming the statement that salvation had been sent to the people of Antioch because the Jews at Jerusalem had unconsciously fulfilled the Scriptures in condemning Jesus, and presented another proof that he was the Messiah.

29. When they had fulfilled all that was

written of him, as in Isaiah 53. The crucifixion of Jesus, so far from showing that Jesus was not the Messiah, was an essential part of the proof that he was the Messiah, and an essential element of his mission of salvation.

30. But God raised him from the dead. An answer to the objection that a crucified man could not be the Messiah and Saviour. For he is alive. He triumphed over death. He is the ever-living Saviour.¹

31. And he was seen. The proofs of the resurrection of Jesus were complete and sure. Who are now his witnesses, are still bearing the same witness, "a living message in the same city in which Jesus had been crucified."

32. We declare unto you glad tidings that the promised Messiah you have so long been hoping and waiting for has come.

33. God hath fulfilled, *ἐκπλήρωκε*, hath ful-

¹ See the anonymous poem "Edwin and Paulinus," concerning the conversion of Northumbria, in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, p. 286.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, ^{now} ^{now} no more to return to corruption, he ^{said} ⁱⁿ on this wise, I will give you the ^{mercies} ^{of David.} ^{sure} ^{holy} and sure

35 ^{Wherefore} ^{because} he saith also in another *psalm*, ° Thou ^{shalt} ^{wilt} not ^{suffer} ^{thine} ^{give} ^{thy} Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, after he had ^{served} ⁱⁿ his own generation ^{by the will} ^{served} the counsel of God, ^{fell} on sleep, and ^{was} laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he^s whom ^{God} raised ^{again} ^{up} saw no corruption.

38 Be it known unto you therefore, ^{men} ^{and} brethren, that ^{through} this man ^{is} ^{preached} ^{proclaimed} unto you ^{the forgiveness} ^{remission} of sins:

l Rom. 6. 9. Cp. Heb. 9. 25-28. *m* vers. 35-37. *n* Cited from, Isai. 55. 3. *o* ch. 2. 27. Cited from Ps. 16. 10. *p* ver. 22. ch. 20. 27. *q* 2 Sam. 7. 12. 1 Kin. 2. 10. Cp. ch. 2. 29. *r* Judg. 2. 10. *s* ver. 30. *t* Luke 24. 47. 1 John 2. 12. *u* ch. 5. 31.

filled to the utmost (ἐκ) entirely, out and out. Hath raised up Jesus, omit again. Raised up Jesus as the Messiah (compare 3: 22; 7: 37; Deut. 18: 15) in the sense in which we say that God raised up a leader in some emergency. Thus is fulfilled the prophecy in the second psalm. Or if we refer the phrase to the resurrection of Jesus, as many do, it denotes that the resurrection of Jesus was the divine attestation that he was the Son of God.

34. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead. Since this was the essential element in the proof that Jesus was the Messiah, Paul reinforces his argument by further Scripture proof. This was important because (1) The Scriptures would have failed if Jesus had not risen. (2) A dead person could not be the everlasting Saviour and King of men. (3) The victory over death, the greatest of enemies, was the proof and first-fruits of his power. (4) Living in heaven, and yet ever with his disciples, he could carry on his work of subduing the world, and reigning as King.

No more to return to corruption, διαφθοράν, destruction, death. "The A. V. renders this corruption, implying thereby the gradual decay of the flesh in the grave, consequent upon death; but the Greek equivalent to this is φθοράν, not διαφθοράν, which expresses the actual crisis of destruction by death, and not a gradual process of subsequent corruption. The expression return to corruption is obviously inapplicable in the case of Christ, for it would imply that his flesh had been already subject to corruption, which was not true."¹

He said (Isa. 55: 3), the sure mercies of David. This is the translation of the Hebrew. But the Septuagint reads τὰ δῶτα . . . τὰ πιστά, the holy things, blessings, mercies, promised to David, which are sure, reliable, certain to come. One of

these was a promise that God would raise up a successor of his house, the throne of whose kingdom God would establish forever (2 Sam. 7: 13, 16). This promise was fulfilled in Jesus of the house of David by his being raised from the dead, whereby he lives and reigns forever as the Messiah king.

35. In another psalm. Ps. 16: 10. See on 2: 27-32.

36. For David . . . saw corruption. Therefore the Holy One referred to in ver. 35 could not mean him, but his descendant and heir, Jesus, whom (ver. 37) God raised again, so that he saw no corruption.

38. Paul now applies to his audience the great truth he has proved by the scriptures, and by the testimony of reliable witnesses. Through this man, Jesus, the Messiah. Is preached, heralded, proclaimed, the forgiveness, ἀφεσις, the putting or sending away, of sins, as if they had not been committed, the remission of penalty, forgiveness.

Forgiveness is (1) the removal of the penalty, the punishment of sins, though not immediately all the consequences of sin. (2) Forgiveness is the washing away of sin, the blotting out of the debt; it is the acquittal of the charge. The sin will be remembered no more. The past life will be seen in the radiance of God's love, which will make us forget the sin in admiration of God's goodness, and mercy, and love, in the salvation of such as we are. (3) Forgiveness, remission, is the cleansing of the heart from its sinful nature, from the love of sin, the tendency to sin. (4) Forgiveness is restoration to the family of God, to his favor, to the enjoyment of his love, to being children and heirs of God.

The first great need of each human being is the forgiveness of sins. A religion that cannot assure us of God's forgiveness is a vain religion. This is so because unforgiven sin shuts us away from

¹ Rendall.

39 And by him ^v ^{all} ^{every} one that ^{believe are} ^{believe} ^{is} justified from all things, from ^w which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon ^{you} ^{you}, which is spoken ^{of} in the prophets;

41 Behold, ^{ye} despisers, and wonder, and ^v perish;

For I work a work in your days,

A work which ye shall in no wise believe, ^{through a man} ^{if one}
declare it unto you.

^v Rom. 3. 28. See ch. 10. 43. ^w Rom. 2. 13 & 3. 20 & 8. 3. Gal. 2. 16 & 3. 11. Eph. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 3. 5. Cp. Heb. 7. 19. ^z Cited from Hab. 1. 5. Cp. Isai. 29. 14. ^y James 4. 14 (for mg.).

God and heaven. We could not look in God's face, or endure his presence, or the presence of the holy, with our sins unforgiven, and the sinful nature unremoved.

39. All that believe, the forgiveness offered to all is effective only to those who accept of it by faith, for faith is the act of receiving forgiveness, it is the means of implanting a new and holy life, and thus makes it safe for God to forgive, because otherwise forgiveness would increase the sin instead of taking it away.

Are justified, δικαιῶνται, (1) rendered *righteous* or *such as he ought to be*, (2) declared or pronounced to be righteous, acquitted, absolved.

From which ye could not be justified by the law. We cannot doubt that here Paul is speaking from his own experience.¹ With all his efforts to gain righteousness and forgiveness by a most punctilious keeping of the law, he failed till he found what he needed in Christ.

There is nothing in the law alone that can make men holy. From the very beginning there was something of another redemptive force joined with it. Herbert Spencer, in his *Social Statics*, says, without any thought of confirming Paul's opinion, "Education alone never makes a man better. Creeds pasted on the memory, good principles learned by rote, lessons in right and wrong, will not eradicate vicious propensities. . . . All history, both of the race and the individual, goes to prove that in a majority of cases precepts do not act at all. . . . But if in place of making a child *understand* that this thing is right and the other wrong, you make it *feel* that they are so, if you make virtue *loved* and vice *loathed*, if you produce a state of mind to which proper behavior is *natural, spontaneous, instinctive*, you do some good." Now this is exactly what the gospel does when it gives the new heart and fills the soul with the love of God. Law and penalty are not reformatory. They are necessary as the preparation for and condition of reformation, as ploughing

the ground will not produce a crop, but yet is necessary if we would reap a harvest.

McGiffert thinks that Paul's address is not accurately reproduced here, especially in vers. 38 and 39, which seem to him un-Pauline, and not in agreement with Galatians 3, from which we can learn what Paul actually preached.² But "St. Paul's teaching is essentially the same in the synagogue at Antioch as when he is writing to his Galatian converts." "There is no contradiction between the teaching given us in St. Luke's account of the address in Pisidian Antioch and St. Paul's account of his teaching to his converts in his letter;"³ "the coincidences between the two are so striking as to make each the best commentary on the other."⁴

40. Beware therefore. It would seem as if Paul saw signs of impatience and restlessness in his audience at his new teachings. The hostility must have manifested itself in some form. "The 'beware's' of the Bible are most important; for they are divine 'red lights,' hung out to warn men of dangers ahead."⁵ Spoken of in the prophets, the Book of the Prophets. The words are found in Hab. 1: 5, Septuagint translation.

41. Ye despisers of God's warnings through his prophets. The individuals made the nations.

"When nations are to perish for their sins,
In human hearts the leprosy begins."⁶

For I work. The present tense, because the causes were already at work which brought their destruction; and because the result was as certain as if it were actually taking place.

The Jews could look back upon their own history and realize the full force of the warning. Moses had warned the people of the evils that would come upon them if they turned away from God (Deut. 28). Josiah found the book of the law, and realized that these evils were fast coming. All the last years of the kingdom of Judah were a rapid hastening on the downward path to

¹ See Briggs' *Messiah of the Apostles*, p. 76.

² *Apostolic Age*, pp. 186, 187.

³ Knowing.

⁴ Ramsay. See *Expositor*, Dec., 1898; and Lightfoot on *Galatians*.

⁵ A. F. Schaffner, D. D.

⁶ W. W. Hayes.

42 And ^{when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles as they went out, they} besought that these words might be ^{preached} ^{spoken} to them the next sabbath.

43 Now when the ^{congregation was broken} ^{synagogue broke} up, many of the Jews and ^{religious} ^{of the devout} ^{persuaded} ^{urged} proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, them ^b to continue in ^c the grace of God.

44 And the next sabbath ^{day came} almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God.

45 But ^d when ^e the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with ^f ^{envy,} ^{jealousy,} and ^{spoke against those} ^{contradicted the} things which were spoken by Paul, ^{contradicting} and ^{blaspheming,} ^{blasphemed.}

^z ver. 50. ^{ch.} 17. 4, 17. ^{Cp.} ch. 16. 14. ^a ch. 2. 10 & 6. 5. ^{Matt.} 23. 15. ^b Cp. Jude 21. ^c Jude 4. ^{See} ch. 11. 23. ^d Cp. ch. 19. 9. ^e Cp. 1 Thess. 2. 16. ^f See ch. 5. 17. ^g ch. 18. 6 & 26. 11. ¹ Tim. 1. 20. ² Pet. 2. 12 (for mg.). ^{Cp.} James 2. 7 & Jude 10 (for mg.).

destruction. Prophet after prophet stood in their way, and urged and entreated and warned. But at last the desolation of Jerusalem, and captivity after captivity, came with unspeakable horrors, too terrible for belief. They would not believe, but it came. To the Jews in Paul's day it came again, and for the same reasons and in spite of all warnings, in the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, a quarter of a century later, as well as in their own personal loss in everlasting punishment.

Though a man declare it unto you, ἐκδιηγῆται, from ἐκ, out and out, entirely, unfolding, as a roll, διὰ, throughout, and ἡγεῖσθαι, to lead or carry out, as a story or narration. Hence, to recount in full, in every part, to show it entirely.

TURNING TO THE GENTILES, vers. 42-49.

42. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue. The better reading is that of the R. V. and oldest MSS.,—while the apostles were going out, before the congregation was dismissed (ver. 43), they, some Jews and the Gentile proselytes, besought them. They were so interested in the gospel, especially the Gentile portion of them, for it gave them unexpected blessings and privileges, that they wished to hear more. Paul and Barnabas "went out before the meeting was ended, perhaps because they were strangers."¹

The next sabbath, μετὰ. The Sabbath between. Hence some regard the phrase as meaning during the intervening week, between the Sabbaths. But the translation, "the next Sabbath," is adopted by most critics, since the actual meeting was on the next Sabbath, and the phrase has that meaning sometimes in later Greek.

43. Now when the congregation was broken up. Dismissed, after Paul and Barnabas had left. Many of the Jews and religious (devout, worshipping) proselytes, προσήλυτων. "Originally one who arrives at a place, a stranger; thence, one who comes over to another faith."² Followed. Came to the apostles, not waiting till the

following Sabbath. Who, referring to the apostles. (But Rendall makes it refer to those who received the word, persuading the apostles to continue to preach the same gracious truths.) Persuaded. Induced them by persuasion. To continue in. Implying that they had received the gospel, and come already into the grace of God, χάριτι, from the same root as χαίρω, to rejoice, and hence, primarily, that which gives joy and delight, then the loving, kindly favor of God which is expressed toward men and which produces in them the graces, which are the source of true joy, which are delightful to the possessor and pleasing to the beholder. This grace shone around the new converts, and was noticed by the heathen around. It brought to them a new vision of God's grace. It was no longer confined to the Jews and those who were willing to become Jews, but the gates to the city of God were seen to be on every side, and flung wide open with a welcome to every race, every nation, every condition of men, to all who would receive it by repentance and faith. It was the dawn of a new day to them.

44. During the week the knowledge of the gospel would be spread everywhere. The apostles would be engaged in conversation with all who came to them, so that on the next sabbath day came almost the whole city, not merely Jews and proselytes, but the heathen, to hear the word of God. "It is clear that the Jewish synagogue could not have held such a crowd, and we are led, accordingly, to the conclusion, either that they thronged round portals and windows, while the apostles spoke within, or that the crowd gathered in some open space or piazza in which the synagogue was situated, and were addressed from its entrance."³

Crowds are not success, nor a proof of success, but they may be a means of success. You must have people to hear you if you would reach their souls. And each individual is stronger and more deeply influenced because of the people around

¹ Meyer.

² M. R. Vincent.

³ Plumptre.

46 ^{Then} And Paul and Bär'nă-bās ^{waxed bold,} ^{spake out boldly,} and said, It was necessary that the word of God should ^{have been} ^{be} first spoken to you: ^{but seeing} ^{ye} ^{put} it from you, and judge yourselves ^{unworthy of} ^{everlasting} ^{eternal} life, lo, we ^{turn} to the Gentiles.

^h vers. 5, 14. See ch. 3. 26.

ⁱ See Matt. 21. 43.

^j See Matt. 22. 8.

^k ch. 18. 6 & 22. 21 & 26. 17, 18, 20 & 28. 28. See ch. 9. 15.

him. By the spiritual influence of thousands of eager, earnest listeners, "he is surcharged with a new and abiding energy."

45. When the Jews saw the multitudes. They wanted the Gentiles to be saved by becoming Jews, and they labored for this end, hoping thus to bring in the kingdom of God. But the popularity of the new teaching of these strangers was shown by the multitudes who came to hear. And they were filled with envy, ζήλου, from ζέω, to boil with heat. Our word "zeal" is almost a transliteration of the Greek. It means *boiling over with excitement, intense fervor (boiling) of spirit*. Here it is used in the bad sense, boiling over with fierceness of indignation, with rivalry, jealousy. The jealousy was bad, but it was not wholly base and selfish. It was mistaken, but connected with their religion and their high-est hopes.

THE REASON FOR THE JEALOUSY. It arose (1) from the popularity of the two strangers, seeming interlopers, throwing the Jews into the background. (2) From the teaching which seemed to overthrow their own teaching and make their work and their office useless and obsolete. "Whoso breaketh a hedge (*i. e.*, the hedge of the law) a serpent shall bite him" (Ecclus. 10: 8). (3) From the difference between their own interpretation of the Scriptures and that of the apostles. They felt that the very foundations of religion were giving way under them, because their interpretations were giving way. Because the little moss island they had built was settling down they thought the whole continent of truth was sinking. They thought the ceiling was falling, because the cobwebs were swept away. Like the disciples, in the storm, on the Sea of Galilee, they were afraid at the approach of Jesus who could save them. (4) From the fact that the Gentiles were to be admitted to the same high privileges as themselves. See the parable of the laborers, Matt. 20: 11-15.

Spake against . . . contradicting, implying not argument, which would have been proper, but assertion and denunciation. And blaspheming. They used abusive language, calling hard names, and saying false things about the apostles. They doubtless spoke of them as heretics, as renegade Jews, as destroyers of true religion, as keepers of evil company, "or they spoke blasphemously of Jesus, whom they preached."¹

NOTE. (1) It is very noticeable that a large part of the sarcasms and epigrams against other people find their point in a perversion of the truth, and their venom is the poison of a liar. (2) No weapon acts in the end more like a boomerang, injuring the one that throws it, than this of slander and abuse. (3) This is doubly true on the part of any who use this weapon to defend the church or Christianity, for it is so utterly contrary to the spirit of Christ. It is holding the blade in the hand, and smiting the enemy with the handle. The very use of it is an unanswerable argument against the user. Even Michael, the archangel, would not use such language against Satan himself (Jude 1: 9).

46. Paul and Barnabas waxed (grew) bold, παρρησιασάμενοι, from πᾶρ, all, and ῥῆσις, speech, hence, *speaking with cheerful courage, with the boldness of perfect confidence*. The opposition had just the contrary effect from that which the Jews expected. It made the apostles take a more decided stand in favor of receiving the Gentiles. It was a costly step, and required great courage. (1) "Few acts are more courageous than the unflinching announcement of a most distasteful intention to an infuriated audience."² (2) It made bitter enemies of those who could persecute them, and do them all manner of evil. (3) It separated them from their friends and co-religionists, and joined them to Gentiles just out of their heathenism. (4) It shut them out from a part of their work, from the synagogues, and those who should aid them. It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you. Because: (1) It was God's purpose and command (Rom. 1: 16; Luke 24: 47; Acts 3: 26); it was God's command, because (2) the Jews were most prepared to receive the truth, by their long training under God; (3) the proof of the Messiah and the understanding of his work would grow best upon the Jewish Scriptures; (4) they were the easiest channel by which the Gentiles could be reached; (5) this order to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles, did not depend upon the rejection of Christ by the Jews, but would have been the more efficacious through the believing of the Jews (Rom. 11: 12).

But seeing ye put, rather "thrust," implying violent rejection, it from you. We have done our duty to you, but we cannot stop preaching the gospel because you judge yourselves,

¹ Pres. Timothy Dwight.

² Farrar.

47 For ¹so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*,
 I ^m have set thee ⁿ ^{to be} ^{for} a light of the Gentiles,
 That thou shouldst be for ^o salvation unto the ^{ends} ^{utmost part}
 of the earth.

48 And ^{when} ^{as} the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and ^p glorified the word
 of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was ^{published} ^{spread abroad} throughout all the region.

¹ Cp. ch. 11. 18. ^m Cited from Isai. 49. 6. Cp. Isai. 45. 22. ⁿ Isai. 42. 6. Luke 2. 32. ^o Cp. ver. 26 & ch. 1. 8. ^p Cp. 2 Thess. 1. 12.

pronounce a verdict against yourselves by your actions, that you are **unworthy of everlasting life**. You can lose the blessings of the gospel, but you cannot stop its progress and its reception by others. God opens the door to eternal life, and you shut it against yourselves, showing that you have not the heavenly spirit. So if a parent offers his child an education, and he refuses it, or one has an opportunity to do good, and he rejects it, in each case the one who refuses pronounces sentence against himself. But he does not prevent others from being educated, nor shut up colleges and schools.

Lo, we turn to the Gentiles, and they shall enter the kingdom which the Jews refused. So Christ himself said, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out" (Matt. 8: 11, 12).

47. For so hath the Lord commanded us. By showing them that Isa. 49: 6 and similar promises were to be so applied. I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles. See Acts 1: 8; Luke 2: 32. This was the mission of the Jews, "the servant of Jehovah," to be carried out through Jesus their Messiah, as the representative "servant of Jehovah." The religion of the Jews was never intended for themselves alone, but for all the world. By refusing to give it to the world, they lost it themselves. So it is still both with individuals and with churches. Salvation unto the ends of the earth. The gospel is not narrow, but world-wide. And this is one of the great proofs that it is divine. Other religions are for a race or nation or state of civilization. This is for all. And if our missionaries had done nothing more than prove that the gospel is adapted to all nations and stages of civilization, by what it has actually done among them, the expense of men and means would have been repaid a thousand fold.

48. The Gentiles . . . were glad. The good news to them was very great. Glorified by word

and by deed. As many as were ordained, *τεταγμένοι*, arranged, assigned a place, as in an army, either by God (but even then not necessarily meaning an arbitrary act, but expressing the divine side of our life plan), or by themselves. The passive, as frequently in Josephus, has the force of the middle voice, so that the meaning is "as many as arrayed themselves or marshalled themselves on the side of eternal life," believed in Jesus, accepting him as their Messiah, Saviour, and King. "Τάσσειν denotes the assignment of a definite post and specific duties, particularly military duties; and could only be applied figuratively to the sphere of God's providence which embraces our outward station, rank, and duties. ²Ἦσαν *τεταγμένοι* really has the reflexive force of the middle voice in this passage, as is frequently found the case with the so-called perfect passive: like *ἔταξαν* *αυτοὺς* in 1 Cor. 16: 15, it describes a portion of the congregation as setting themselves unto life eternal; for the context exhibits the worshippers as marshalling themselves into two opposing parties, one accepting, the other repudiating, the gift of eternal life through the grace of God in Christ."¹ God's plans were not defeated because the Jews rejected the gospel.

49. The word . . . was published. The opposition, as well as the joyous converts, made the gospel known far and wide. Compare the parable of the leaven. The opposition stirred the mass in which the active leaven was placed, and made it spread the faster.

All the region. Professor Ramsay regards this as indicating a distinct and recognized circle of territories, called a Region, of which Antioch was the administrative centre, and that the evangelization of the region was aided by the coming there of officials and traders and attendants at the games from the outlying cities.² This statement implies that the apostles remained a considerable time in Antioch, probably several months (Rendall) before the Jewish hostility culminated in the expulsion of the missionaries from the city.

¹ Rendall.

² St. Paul, 102-105.

50 But ^{stirred up} the Jews ^{urged on} the devout ^{and} and honourable ^{women,} women, ^{and the chief} men of the city, and ^{raised} ^{stirred up a} persecution against Paul and Bār'nā-bās, and ^{expelled} ^{cast} them out of their ^{coasts,} borders.

51 But they "shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto ī-cō'nī-ūm.

52 And the disciples were filled ^v with joy, and ^w with the Holy Ghost.

^g Cp. ch. 14. 2, 19 & 17. 5, 13 & 18. 12 & 20. 3, 19 & 21. 27. ^r ch. 17. 12. ^s 2 Tim. 3. 11. ^t 1 Thess. 2. 15.
^u Matt. 10. 14. Mark 6. 11. Luke 9. 5. Cp. ch. 18. 6. ^v Cp. 1 Thess. 1. 6. See Matt. 5. 12 & John 16. 22.
^w See ch. 2. 4.

PAUL AND BARNABAS EXPELLED FROM ANTIOCH, vers. 50-52.

50. The Jews stirred up (urged on) the devout (the earnestly religious) and honourable women, *εὐσχήμονας*, from *εἰδ*, well, good, and *σχήμα*, form, shape, figure; hence, first, of elegant figure, graceful, then of good standing, honorable, influential, wealthy. They were of good social position and rank, perhaps wives of the chief men. The women were more intensely religious than the men, and were used as a means of urging on the men who might otherwise be indifferent. Josephus says that nearly all the married women in Damascus were attached to the Jewish religion.¹

"The honors and influence which belonged to women in the cities of Asia Minor form one of the most remarkable features in the history of the country. . . . The best authenticated cases of Mutterrecht (Mother-rule) belong to Asia Minor. Under the Roman Empire we find women magistrates, presidents at games, and loaded with honors." "The influence attributed to women in Antioch would have been impossible in Athens."²

Good persons, on account of their very love for the good, may, if mistaken, do a great deal of harm. All their devotion and zeal become a power to do wrong. Thus many good men have persecuted those better than themselves. How difficult it is to attain to "that finest and most Christlike flower of the spirit of toleration, namely, the tolerance of intolerance." Expelled them out of their coasts, "borders." "The persecution was probably a tumultuous outbreak, and the apostles, for the sake of peace, retired

from the place." The *Codex Bezae* adds that they roused "great affliction," as well as persecution.

51. Shook off the dust of their feet. So Christ had commanded them to do as a testimony (Matt. 10: 14), not in anger, but to show them that they did not leave them willingly to go to ruin, but the blame must rest upon themselves. Came unto Iconium. A large city in Lycaonia, sixty miles to the southeast of Antioch in Pisidia.

52. And the disciples. Both the apostles who went and the Christians in Antioch who remained. Were filled with joy. "The tense is that which expresses the continuance of the state."³ "It might have been expected that they would leave gloom and despondency among their discouraged converts; but it was not so. They left behind them the joy of a new hope, the inspiration of a new faith, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who had learned of the heavenly promise."⁴ And with the Holy Ghost. And this was the source of their joy, their strength, and their firmness. "Great is the power of Christian joy. A religion of gloom, of asceticism, of self-accusation, may be sincere and solid, but it wants the abounding strength, the rich consolation, the glorious attractiveness of a religion of joy, especially if it be the joy of those filled with the Holy Ghost."⁵ "To burn always with this gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life."⁶ The opposite state of mind was in the persecutors. Persecution, jealousy, slander, awaken no joy, no peace, no courage. They proceed from a bad spirit, and kindle painful feelings.

¹ *Bella Judaica*, 2: 20, 2.

² Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, 67, 68; *St. Paul*, 102, 252. Conybeare and Howson, 144.

³ Plumptre.

⁵ Whedon.

⁴ Farrar.

⁶ Walter Pater.

CHAPTER 14.

THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

ICONIUM, LYSTRA, DERBE, AND RETURN.

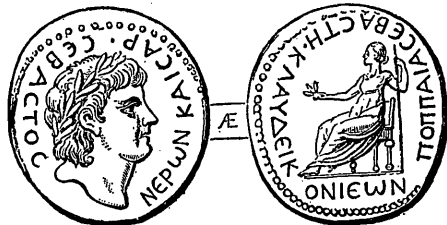
ICONIUM, vers. 1-5.	{ Many converts. { Opposition. { A divided community. { Persecution.	
LYSTRA, vers. 6-20.	{ A lame man restored. { Apostles treated as gods. { Attempt to offer sacrifices to them. { Paul's speech. { Paul stoned almost to death.	A. D. 48.
DERBE, vers. 20, 21.	{ Paul and Barnabas at Derbe. { Teaching and preaching.	
THE RETURN, vers. 21-28.	{ Revisiting the Galatian churches. { Return to Antioch of Syria. { Report of the missionaries to the home church.	A. D. 49.

1 AND it came to pass in Ἰ-κοῖ-νι-ῦ-μ, that ^α they ^{went both entered} together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that ^α a great multitude both of ^{the} Jews and also of ^{the} Greeks believed.

^α See ch. 13. 5.

PAUL AND BARNABAS AT ICONIUM,
vers. 1-5.

1. And it came to pass in Iconium to which Paul and Barnabas came from Antioch, a journey



COIN OF ICONIUM.

From Pellerin. Obverse: Head of Nero, with the legend: —

Νερον Καϊσαρ Σεβαστος
Nero Caesar Augustus

Reverse: Poppæa, Nero's queen, with the legend: —

Ποππαια Σεβαστη Κλαύδευκου νεων
Poppæa Augusta of the Claud-iconians

of about 75 miles to the southeast. Most of the way they travelled along the Royal Road, the great Roman military road that connected Anti-

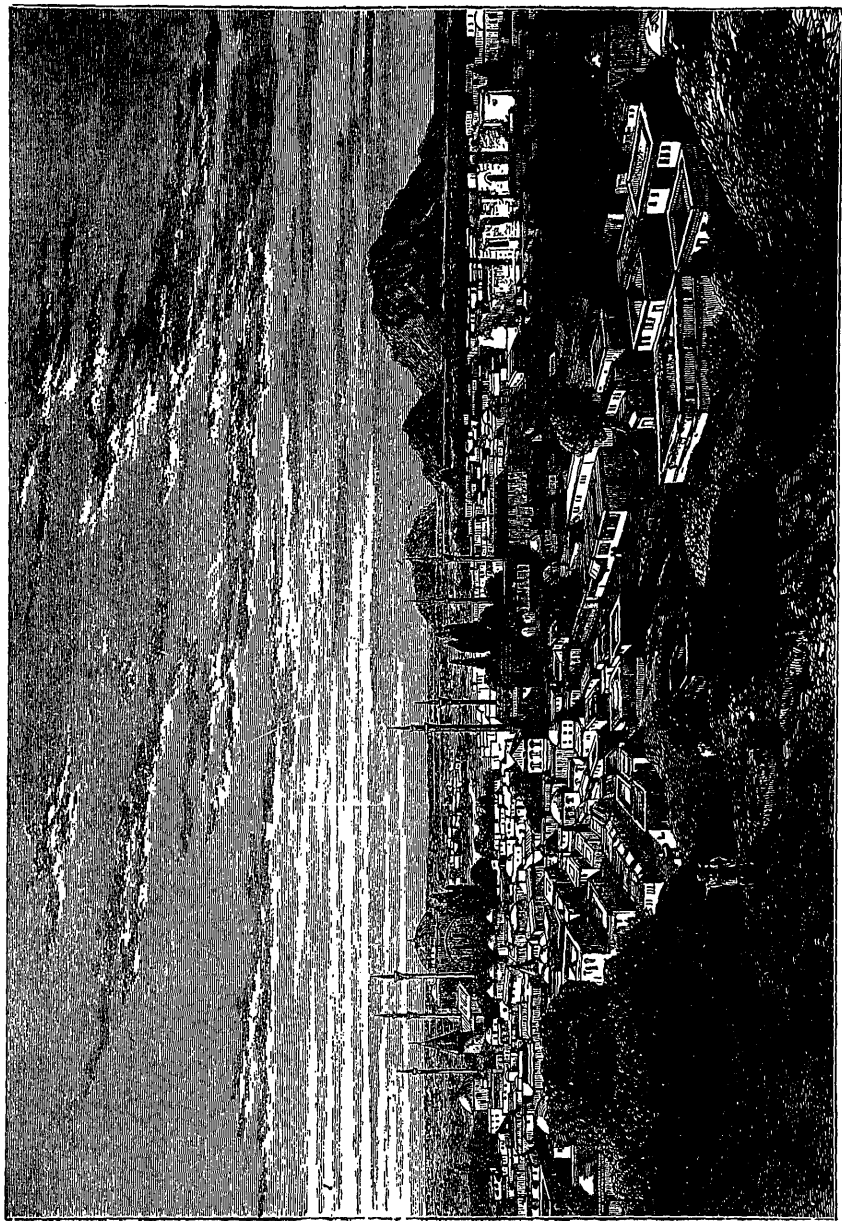
och, the military centre, with the garrison city, Lystra, but before they came to Lystra they turned off to the left.¹

Iconium (modern Konia) liked to connect itself with Greek legend, and "derived its name from the image, *εικών* (ikon), of Medusa, brought there by Perseus, or from the clay images of men made by Prometheus there after the Flood to replace the drowned people." It was a commercial city situated among luxuriant orchards at the western edge of the vast plains of Asia Minor. It is now connected with the Bosphorus by a railroad.² Iconium was an outlying district of the Region of Antioch. It belonged to Lycaonia for administrative purposes (so Cicero, Strabo, Pliny), but the Iconians still counted themselves as Phrygians. (See on ver. 6.)¹

THE LEGEND OF PAUL AND THEKLA. In connection with St. Paul's residence at Iconium, there exists a story of the conversion of a maiden named Thekla. The apocryphal "Acts of Paul and Thekla" represents the form into which the legend had grown in the fourth century. The story may at first have had some basis of truth, and, though most of it is mere legend, it gives us a vivid picture of the times. Thekla belonged

¹ See Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 27, etc.

² Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*



Iconium. From Laborde, in Lewin.

The spectator is looking over the plain in the direction of Lystra at the foot of the group of mountains.

2 But ^{the} ^{unbelieving Jews} ^{Jews that were disobedient} ^{stirred up the} ^{souls of the} ^{Gentiles, and made} ^{their} ^{minds} ^{evil affected} ^{against} ^{the} ^{brethren.}

3 Long time ^{therefore} ^{abode they} ^{they tarried there} ^{speaking} ^{boldly in} ^{the} ^{Lord, which} ^{gave} ^{bare} ^{testimony} ^{witness} ^{unto} ^{the} ^{word of his} ^{grace,} ^{and granted} ^{granting} ^{signs and wonders to be done} ^{by their hands.}

^y See ch. 13. 50. ^z ch. 19. 9. John 3. 36. Rom. 15. 31. ^a See John 21. 23. ^b ch. 15. 8. Heb. 2. 4. Cp. Mark 16. 20. ^c ch. 20. 32. ^d ch. 4. 29, 30.

to one of the noblest families in Iconium. While sitting at a window in her mother's house, she overheard Paul preaching in a neighboring house where he was staying. She was deeply affected and became a Christian. Her betrothed lover Thamyris accused Paul of being a magician, and using his power to persuade women from marriage. Paul was thrust into prison, scourged, and then expelled from Iconium. Thekla bribed the jailer, visited Paul in prison, and was instructed by him in the Christian faith. She was found there by her mother and lover, and was condemned to be burned to death in the theatre. She was put upon the pyre, but the flames refused to burn her, like the three men in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace. Then a storm came on and quenched the fire and killed many of the spectators. Later she was condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts, but a lioness crouched at her feet, and defended her from a lion and a bear, dying in Thekla's defence. "After many troubles she joined St. Paul in his missionary travels, and ultimately made her home in the neighborhood of Selencia, where she led the life of a nun till her death, which took place when she was 90 years old."¹

They went both together, *κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ*. Here Blass, Ramsay, Rendall, render this phrase in the same way or manner. They went into the synagogue at Iconium, just as they had done at Antioch. Others take it as meaning that at Iconium they worked together in the same synagogue, perhaps because there was only one, while at other times they spoke and taught in different places.

So spake, that a great multitude . . . believed. "They so spake, so plainly, so convincingly, with such an evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, and with such power; so warmly, so affectionately, and with such a manifest concern for the souls of men; they spake so from the heart, so earnestly and seriously, so boldly and courageously, that they who heard them could not but say God was with them of a truth. Yet the success was not to be attributed to the

manner of their preaching, but to the Spirit of God, who made use of these means."²

Both . . . Jews and . . . Greeks. The Greeks were the devout persons, worshippers of the true God who had been attracted to the religion of the Jews.

2. But the unbelieving Jews, *ἀπειθήσαντες*, those who would not allow themselves to be persuaded, who refused belief and obedience. They would not believe because they would not obey; and they would not obey because they refused to believe. "The word is stronger than 'unbelieving': it expresses unbelief breaking forth into rebellion, and so exactly describes the character of these Jews who were persecuting Paul and Barnabas."³ "The word denotes disobedience to the Spirit who spake in the apostles."⁴

Made their minds evil affected, *ἐκκλῶσαν*, from *kakos*, evil, injurious, harmful; hence, they treated badly, did injury to; usually of bodily maltreatment, but here it refers to "abusing their minds, ill treating them by deceiving," exasperating them, embittering their feelings against the brethren. This is worse than bodily injury.

3. Long time, probably several months, therefore. Wendt and others think that this verse should be placed before verse 2, which makes the whole narrative read more easily. At the same time this change takes away the statement of a deep principle of Christian progress expressed by the "therefore." Because there were great numbers of disciples, and because their neighbors the Gentiles were embittered and exasperated against these young converts, therefore the apostles continued a long time, probably longer than they otherwise would have done, in order that they might aid them by speaking boldly in, *ἐν*, upon or for, the Lord, denoting the subject matter of their discourses. They spoke upon the subject of Jesus.⁵ "The Lord was the ground and support of their preaching. Calvin notes that the words may mean that they spoke boldly in the cause of the Lord, or that relying on his grace they took courage, but that both meanings

¹ On Iconium and the legend of Paul and Thekla connected therewith, see Conybeare and Howson, chap. G, and Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, ii. 556. It is given in full in the *Acts of Paul and Thekla* in *Ante-*

Nicene Fathers, vol. viii. pp. 487-492; and a critical estimate in Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*.

² Matthew Henry.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Cambridge Bible.

⁵ So Rendall.

4 But the multitude of the city ^o was divided ; and ^s part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was ^{an assault made} ^{made an onset} both of the Gentiles' and ^{also} of the Jews with their rulers, ^{use them despitely,} ^{use them despitely,} and to ^h stone them,

6 They ^{were ware of it,} ^{they were ware of it,} and ⁱ fled unto ^{Lys'tra and Der'be, cities of Lys'a-o'-ni-a,} ^{the cities of Lys'a-o'-ni-a, j Lys'tra and Der'be,} and ^{unto} the region ^{that lieth} round about :

7 And there they preached the gospel.

8 And ^{there sat a certain inan at Lys'tra,} ^{there sat a certain inan,} impotent in his feet, ^{being} ^a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked :

^e Cp. ch. 23. 7. ^f Cp. ch. 17. 4, 5 & 19. 9 & 28. 24. ^g 1 Thess. 2. 2. ^h Cp. ver. 19. ⁱ See Matt. 10. 23. ^j 2 Tim. 3. 11. ^k ch. 3. 2.

really run into each other." ¹ "The Atlantic mariner, any day, would rather have a storm than a fog." ² For the same reason the Lord gave testimony unto, bore witness to, the word of his grace, the word that had its origin in his grace, his loving favor, by means of signs and wonders, an unusual number of which were done here through the apostles.

4. But the multitude, the mass of the Gentile population, was divided. "The very things which produced strong conviction in some awakened bitter antagonism in others. The earnest man always stimulates others to earnestness, either of agreement or of enmity." ¹ The apostles, "not in its technical sense, but only as missionaries."

5. And when, *ὡς δὲ*, but when, marking a contrast. In verse 2 the Jews were instilling bitter feelings of hostility in the minds of the Gentiles ; now these feelings had resulted in a combination of the Jews and Gentiles working in concert to mob the apostles.

There was an assault made, *δρμη*, from a root meaning to flow rapidly ; hence, a rush of emotion, a violent impulse, an eager desire, to use them despitely, with outrage and insults. No assault was actually made, but one was planned, and they were eager to carry it out.

Their rulers, that is, the rulers of the Jews. "The magistrates of the city could not have participated in an act of mob-violence, and the plot to stone the apostles seems to point to Jewish instigation for enforcing the punishment of blasphemy." ¹

To stone them. "Do they cast us out of the city ? They cannot cast us out of that city which is in the heavens. Till they can do this, they are pelting us with drops of water, or striking us with the wind." ³

PAUL AND BARNABAS AT LYSTRA, vers. 6-20.

6. They were ware, aware, of it, *συνιδόντες* taking in the whole, *σὺν*, situation (see on 12 : 12).

They . . . fled, in obedience to the Lord's command (Matt. 10 : 23) ; for thus the gospel leaven would be working in secret, while they themselves, instead of striving against unfavorable circumstances, or being cut off from work altogether, would carry the gospel light farther into the darkness.

Unto Lystra, 18 miles south-southwest of Iconium, and after some time to Derbe, 20 miles further on ; and unto the region that lieth round about. A region, according to Ramsay, consisted of the two cities, and a stretch of cityless territory organized on the native pre-Greek village system. ⁴ Lystra was the chief city of another region, that of Lycaonia, interpreted traditionally as *Wolf-land* (the local legend derived it from Lycaon, who had been transformed into a wolf), representing but too faithfully the character of the inhabitants. It was about eighteen miles south-southwest of Iconium, a Roman colony, and used the Latin language officially. ⁵ It was in a wilder and less civilized region than even that of Iconium and Antioch. The range of the Taurus cut it off from the more cultivated country of Cilicia and Pisidia. It is described as a dreary plain, bare of trees, destitute of fresh water, and with several salt lakes. So Ovid (*Met.* VIII. 621) speaks of it, as the result of personal observation : —

"Where men once dwelt a marshy lake is seen,
And coots and bitterns haunt the waters green."

There were few Jews here, as no mention is made of a synagogue. Here the missionaries preached the gospel, and Timothy was one of the converts.

8. And there sat a certain man in some company Paul was addressing. "We must suppose that Paul gathered groups of the Lystrans about him, and addressed them in places of public resort, as a modern missionary might address the natives of a Hindu village." On one of these

¹ Knowling. ² William M. Taylor, D. D. ³ Gregory Nazianzen. ⁴ *St. Paul*, 110. ⁵ *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

9 The same heard Paul ^{speaking:} ^{steadfastly beholding} who, ^{fastening his eyes upon} him, and ^{perceiving} ^{seeing} that he had faith to ^{be} ^{healed,} ^{made whole,}

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he ^{leaped up} and walked.

11 And when the ^{people} ^{multitudes} saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their ^{voices,} ^{voice,} saying in the speech of *Λῦκ-ᾧ-ὁ-νῆ-ᾧ*, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

^l See Matt. 9. 2.

^m See Mark 10. 52 (& mg. for mg.).

ⁿ ch. 3. 8.

Isai. 35. 6.

^o ch. 8. 10 & 28. 6.

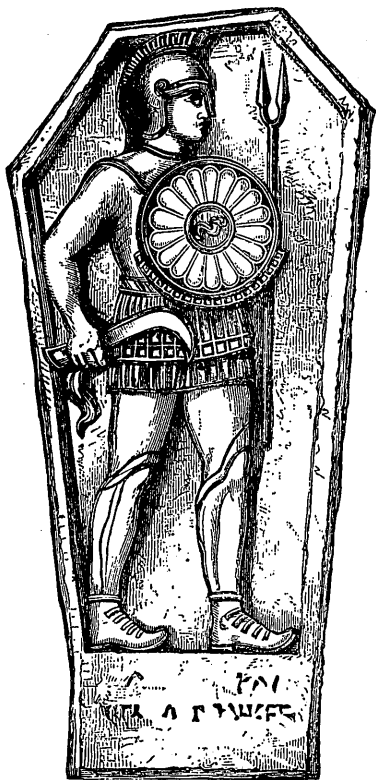
occasions St. Paul observed a cripple (from Old English "creepie," *one who creeps*), who was ear-

history from infancy was well known," says Ramsay, who, from the Bezan Text, thinks he was a pagan who had previously been attracted to Judaism.

9. The same heard Paul, was listening to, was an habitual hearer. *Stedfastly beholding him, ἀρενλας, fastening his eyes upon him.* *Perceiving that he had faith to be healed.* The lame man had faith in Christ as a Saviour, and as one able and willing to do for him everything that was wise and best, though he may not have expected to be healed. He had such faith that it would do his soul good to have his body healed. His whole nature would be brought nearer to Jesus. The cure would endorse Paul's message as from God, express the healing and helpful nature of Christianity, and call attention to the gospel.

10. Said with a loud voice, to attract the lame man's attention as well as that of the audience; and by the voice, expressing in its tones "heart, blood, fire, music, life," he inspired courage and faith in the man. *Stand upright on thy feet.* To say this publicly required great faith in Paul. To do it required strong faith in the lame man. *And he leaped and walked.* A public proof that the cure was instantaneous and complete. "He sprang up with a bound (aorist), and then continued to walk (imperfect) with restored vigor."¹

11. The people, *ἄλλοι*, the crowd, the common city mob. In moments of excitement their native tongue would rise more naturally to their lips, and they would give expression to their old superstitious beliefs.² *Lifted up their voices* (shouted, with a sudden outburst) *saying in the speech of Lycaonia.* What that language was is unknown.³ The apostles probably preached in Greek, though Paul of Tarsus may not have been wholly ignorant of the Lycaonian dialect.¹ Canon Tristram says, "They had partly understood Paul when he addressed them in Greek, as a gathering of Welshmen might understand English, but they expressed their own excitement in their native dialect." This fact is mentioned to explain why Paul and Barnabas made no protest. *The gods are come down to us in the likeness*



LYCAONIAN SOLDIER. From the bas-relief of an ancient tomb in Lycaonia (Lewin). The lettering is probably in the Lycaonian language.

nestly listening to his discourse. He was seated on the ground, for he had an infirmity in his feet, and had never walked from the hour of his birth. He was "no mendicant pretender, but one whose

¹ Rendall.

² See *Church in Roman Empire*, 58.

³ On the Lycaonian language, see Conder in *Palestine Exploration Fund*, Oct., 1888.

12 And they called Bär-nă-bās, ^{Mer-cu'ri-us,} Jū'pī-tēr; and Paul, ^{Mercury,} because he was the chief speaker.

13 ^{Then} And the priest of Jū'pī-tēr ^{whose temple} was before ^{their} the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, ^{and} would have done sacrifice with the ^{people,} multitudes.

p Cp. ch. 19. 35 & 28. 11 (Gk.).

q Cp. Dan. 2. 46.

of men. "The knowledge of the story of Baucis and Philemon, according to which Jupiter and Mercury visited in human form the neighboring district, would render such words quite natural."¹

The statue of Jupiter stood before the gate of Lystra, and Ewald suggests that the legend of the appearance of the gods, somewhat as related below, was recited year by year at the great festival in this temple; "and thus the credulous people readily supposed the gods they worshipped, and who they fancied loved their land with a peculiar love, had visited once more the scenes of their former wandering." The idea of the gods coming down and appearing in the form of men was made familiar by the frequent stories in their mythology. "They spake, acted, loved, cheated, like men." Homer, for example, is full of such incidents. Thus, when Ulysses lands upon his native shore, Pallas meets him

"in the shape

Of a young shepherd delicately formed,
As are the sons of kings. A mantle lay
Upon her shoulder in rich folds; her feet
Shone in their sandals; in her hands she bore
A javelin."²

"Madman! what if he

Came down from heaven and were a god! The gods
Put on the form of strangers from afar,
And walk our towns in many different shapes,
To mark the good and evil deeds of men."³

THE STORY OF THE VISIT OF JUPITER AND MERCURY TO LYCAONIA. These two divinities were walking through this wild region, for Lycaonia was a part of the ancient Phrygia. Nearly all the people refused to entertain the strangers, but ill-treated and ridiculed them. Finally, they came to the hut of the peasants, Baucis and Philemon, who gave them the best reception and welcome in their power.

"Here Jove with Hermes came; but in disguise
Of mortal men concealed their deities;
One laid aside his thunder, one his rod;
And many toilsome steps together trod;
For harbor at a thousand doors they knocked,
Not one of all the thousand but was locked;
At last a hospitable house they found,
A homely shed; the roof, not far from ground,

Was thatched, with reeds and straw together bound;
There Baucis and Philemon lived.
From lofty roofs the gods repulsed before,
Now stooping, entered through the little door,
The man (their hearty welcome first expressed)
A common settle drew for either guest."

The churlish neighbors were subsequently punished by a terrible flood which overwhelmed the surrounding country, while the hospitable, kindly couple were amazed to see their little hut transformed into a glorious temple, where they were appointed to be the chief ministers of worship.

"Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems from the ground increased, in height and bulk to grow.

A stately temple shoots within the skies;
The crotchets of their cot in columns rise;
The pavement polished marble they behold,
The gates with sculpture graced, the spires and tiles of gold."⁴

NOTE. The thought of God coming down to man expresses a longing and a hope of human nature. "Like distorted and obscure reflections in muddy water, they give a blurred image of the great truth," says Maclaren. We need a God who is an ever-present help in time of need, and can sympathize with our human feelings. This has been realized and expressed to us in Jesus Christ, the son of God, who has come, not like Jupiter in the legends to act like sinful men, but to raise up men into the character and love of God.

12. They called Barnabas, Jupiter. Probably because he was the older, more dignified and imposing man. And Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. "Mercury" (Greek, *Hermes*) was the messenger and spokesman of the gods, and the god of eloquence. "The comparison could not have been because of the apostle's insignificant appearance (although the fact that he was the younger of the two men may be taken into account), since Hermes is always represented as of a graceful, well-formed figure."⁵ Perhaps a hint as to Paul's appearance. Paul writes to the Galatians (4: 14), (which name probably included this region), "Ye received me as an angel of God."

13. Jupiter. That is, the statue, or the temple

¹ Knowing.

² *Odyssey*, XIII. 221-225.

³ *Odyssey*, XVII. 485, etc.

⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Bk. VIII., Dryden's Translation. The story is charmingly related by Hawthorne in his *Tanglewood Tales*.

⁵ Knowing. "On the traditional accounts of Paul's personal appearances, see Wendt (1888), *in loco*, Blass, Reuani, and Plumptre, *Acts* (Excursus, pp. 191, 192)."

14 ^{Which} But when the apostles, Bär'nă-bās and Paul, heard ^{of it,} they rent their clothes, and ^{ran in} sprang forth among the ^{people,} multitude, crying out:

15 And saying, Sirs, ^s why do ye these things? 'We also are men of like passions with you, and ^{preach unto} bring you good tidings, that "ye should turn from "these ^{vanities} vain things ^v unto the living God, ^z ^{which} who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all things that ^{are therein:} in them is:

^r See Gen. 37. 29. ^s See ch. 10. 26. ^t James 5. 17. ^u ch. 15. 19 & 26. 18, 20. Luke 1. 16. 1 Thess. 1. 9. Cp. ch. 15. 3 & James 5. 19, 20. See ch. 9. 35. ^v Deut. 32. 21. 1 Sam. 12. 21. Jer. 14. 22. Cp. 1 Cor. 8. 4. ^w See Matt. 16. 16. ^z ch. 17. 24. Gen. 1. 1. Ex. 20. 11. Ps. 146. 6. Rev. 4. 11 & 10. 6 & 14. 7.

containing the statue, which, whose temple, was before, outside of the city gates. "The statue of Zeus (Jupiter) stood beside the approach to the city without the walls. Close adjoining it there-



JUPITER AND MERCURY. From an ancient altar.
From Millin's *Galerie Mythologique*. (Lewin.)

Jupiter holds in one hand a sceptre, and in the other a thunderbolt, while the globe or world is beneath him. Mercury holds his winged staff in one hand, and in the other a purse, the symbol of commerce.

fore were the double gates leading into the city: it was to these apparently that the priest brought the oxen for sacrifice, the people pouring out through the gates. Paul and Barnabas had withdrawn to their lodging probably after their address to the people, while the restored cripple, going about the city, had evoked popular enthu-

siasm. They were evidently absent when the sacrifice began: the cry of the people, which was really *the gods came down*, not *the gods are come down*, seems to imply the disappearance of the heavenly visitors. Had they been present, they must have discovered beforehand the nature of the proceedings even from gestures, etc. Nor can we assume that the Lycaonian language alone was used throughout, seeing that the apostles address the people in Greek; or that Saul of Tarsus was wholly ignorant of that dialect."¹

Brought oxen (for sacrifice) and garlands, with which animals led to sacrifice were adorned. They were "in exultant haste" to honor the gods. **Unto the gates.** Probably of the city; but some think, of the temple (Ramsay); others, of the house where the apostles were lodging (Cambridge Bible). **Would have done sacrifice.** To honor the apostles, "and to turn the religious revival to their own ends."²

14. The apostles . . . heard. They were in the house, or more probably about their missionary work in the city. **Rent their clothes.** As a visible expression of their sorrow and disapprobation. **Ran in,** *εἰσπήδησαν*, to the crowd. But the better reading is, "sprang forth," *ἐξερήδησαν*, hastened away from their house, or the place where they were speaking, and going out of the city to the place of sacrifice, mingled with the crowd gathered there.

15. Sirs, *ἄνδρες*, men, addressing the priest of Jupiter (ver. 13), and the leaders with him. It is not certain what their motives were. "The accepted text implies that the apostles had been evangelizing for some time previously, and the text of *Codex Bezae* asserts that they had already produced much effect on the people. The priests, however, showed no jealousy. They were

¹ Rendall.

² Knowing. "On the traditional accounts of Paul's

personal appearances, see Wendt (1888), *in loco*, Blass, Renan, and Plumptre, *Acts* (Excursus, pp. 191, 192)."

16 Who in the ^{times past} generations gone by ^{the} suffered all the nations to ^{the} walk in their own ways.
 17 Nevertheless ^{And yet} he ^a left not himself without witness, in that he ^b did good, and
^c gave ^{us rain} from heaven' rains and ^d fruitful seasons, filling ^{our} hearts with
^e food and ^f gladness.

y Cp. ch. 17. 30 & 1 Pet. 4. 3. z Cp. Ps. 81. 13 & Mic. 4. 5. a Cp. ch. 17. 27 & Rom. 1. 19, 20. b Num. 10. 32. c Lev. 26. 4. Deut. 11. 14 & 28. 12. Job 5. 10. Ps. 65. 10 & 147. 8, 13. Ezek. 34. 26. Joel 2. 23. Matt. 5. 45, a/. d Ps. 67. 6 & 85. 12. Ezek. 34. 27. Joel 2. 24. Zech. 8. 12. e Ps. 104. 27. f Ps. 104. 15.

willing and ready to patronize the apostles, to give them place and honor, and to use the revival of religious feeling for their own purposes."¹

Men of like passions with you. Of the same nature, with human body, subject to death, on your level, not in the rank of gods. But we preach unto you (*ευαγγελιζόμενοι*), proclaim good tidings, the gospel, while we are preaching Jesus who brought the good news of the living God, the God who is the source of all life, both natural and spiritual. He is no Jupiter, no idol, but the maker of heaven, and earth, and the

stepping-stones to higher things."² (See notes on ch. 17.) Therefore, turn from these vanities, which cannot help or save you; which are not worthy of your worship.

16. Who in times past suffered, permitted.



MEDAL REPRESENTING THE CEREMONY OF SACRIFICE.

From the Pembroke Collection. (Lewin.)

The legend is Vota (sol)uta P(ro) (Sal)ute (P)opuli (R)o-mani (vows discharged for the welfare of the people of Rome).

For wise reasons he permitted men to see what they could and would do, and to become prepared to receive newer light. This is apparently in answer to the objection, Why did not God send the gospel before?

17. Nevertheless. The true God was not like Jupiter, tolerating with indifference the moral condition of men, but during all this time attracted men by his graciousness toward them. The beautiful situation of the town, while near was a waterless and treeless plain, intensified the appreciation of God's goodness. That goodness was still attracting them to see his larger goodness in the gospel of Jesus, which was but the culmination of the goodness he had shown to them all their lives.

Gave us rain from heaven, which in the East was regarded as a special mark of divine favor. "God's goodness and power in this gift are asserted as against the impotence of the gods of the heathen, see especially Jer. 14: 22, and compare 1 Kings 18: 1 and 1 Sam. 12: 17, where this same phrase is used of God."²

Filling our hearts with food. Compare Luke 21: 34, where the heart is spoken of as filled with



ALTAR WITH STATUE OF APOLLO. From the Arch of Constantine.

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

sea. Paul "never forgets that the God of Nature and the God of Redemption are one."

Note "the tact of St. Paul at Lystra and at Athens, laying the foundation of his teaching as a wise master-builder in the truths of natural religion, and leading his audience from them as

¹ Ramsay, *Church of the Roman Empire*, 143, 144.

² Knowling.

18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the ^{people, that they had not done} sacrifice unto them. ^{multitudes from doing} sac-

19 ^{And} there came ^{thither certain Jews} from Antioch and Ī-cō'nī-ūm: ^{who} and having per-
suaded the ^{people, and, having} ^{Jews thither} ^{multitudes, they} ^{stoned} Paul, ^{and dragged him} out of the city, supposing
that he ^{had been} ^{was} dead.

20 ^{Howbeit,} ^{But} as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and ^{came} ^{entered} into
the city: and on the ^{next day} ^{morrow} he ^{departed} ^{went forth} with Bār'nā-bās to Dēr'bē.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and ^{had} ^{taught} ^{made} many
disciples, they returned ^{again} to Lŷs'trā, and ^{to} Ī-cō'nī-ūm, and ^{to} Antioch,

^g See ch. 13. 45, 50.

^h 2 Cor. 11. 25.

^{Cp.} ver. 5 & 2 Tim. 3. 11.

^{See} ch. 7. 58.

ⁱ Matt. 28. 19.

surfeiting, with the dulness and baseness that come from habitual over-indulgence in food. So here the heart is said to be filled with food, because of the strength, vitality, courage, and good cheer, which sufficient proper food imparts. And gladness, thankfulness and joy, not merely material good cheer.

Some have thought from their rhythmical flow that the words, "And gave," etc., are a fragment of a familiar song from a Greek poet, and others, with less reason (for Paul was not there to hear it), that they were part of a hymn sung in the sacrificial procession and which Paul quoted with the assurance that the blessing came from the one living God.¹

18. Scarce restrained they. It was contrary to their gospel to preach themselves. Their business was to lead men to Christ and to God. They put away from themselves the temptation to honor which belonged to their Master.

19. There came thither certain Jews from Antioch. More than one hundred miles by road. This shows how intense was the opposition to the gospel as preached by Paul. The opposition aroused against a man is sometimes a proof of his power. Men do not stone dead trees for their fruit, or arm themselves against weak cowards, or grow excited over rose-water opponents.

Who persuaded the people, with help from the unbelieving Jews in Lystra. "Or possibly, as McGiffert suggests, it may have been easy to incite the populace against Paul and Barnabas, because of the Apostles' rejection of the divine honors offered to them. But probably the persuasion implies that they influenced the multitudes to regard the miracle, the reality of which they could not dispute, as the work not of beneficent gods but of evil demons."²

Having stoned Paul. This was by a mob. What a crowd of memories this must have brought to Paul when he remembered Stephen ten or eleven years before. Compare 2 Cor. 11: 25; Gal. 6: 17. Supposing he had been dead. The oppo-

nents of truth often think it dead, when it is only stunned, and will be restored and live longer than its opponents.

COMPARE the change in the feelings of the people of Malta toward Paul some years later. So it was with Christ; one day, "Hallelujahs," and within a week, "Crucify him." So in Brown-ing's poem, *The Patriot*, with whom at first

"It was roses, roses all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:
The house roofs seemed to heave and away,
The church spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago this very day."

But in one year all was changed for neglect, and chains and stoning, and a possible scaffold.

20. As the disciples stood round about him, to give what aid human help could bestow, and to care for his body if he were really dead. Among them doubtless was the youthful Timothy who belonged to this region.

PAUL AND BARNABAS IN DERBE, vers. 20, 21.

The next day he departed with Barnabas, who escaped the stoning probably because he was not with Paul at the time the mob attacked him.

To Derbe. The site is not certainly known. Till lately many have placed it about 20 miles southeast of Lystra; but Professor Sterrett has made it probable that it was in the neighborhood of Zosta or Losta, which Professor Ramsay's map makes 35 miles from Lystra. It was the frontier city of the Roman province, and the limit of Paul's first missionary journey.

21. Preached the gospel. The participle denotes continuous preaching. How long they remained is uncertain, but they pursued their missionary work there with considerable success. Had taught many, *μαθητεύσαντες*, made many disciples.

¹ See Farrar's *St. Paul*, 12, 134. Felten on *Acts*.

² Knowing.

22^j Confirming the souls of the disciples, ^{and} exhorting them ^k to continue ⁱ in the faith, and that ^m we must through much tribulation ⁿ enter into the kingdom of God.

^j ch. 15. 32, 41. Cp. ch. 18. 23 & 1 Thess. 3. 2, 13. ^k ch. 13. 43. Col. 1. 23. ⁱ See ch. 6. 7. ^m John 15. 20 & 16. 33. 1 Thess. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Cp. ch. 9. 16 & Mark 10. 30 & Luke 22. 28, 29 & Rom. 8. 17 & Phil. 1. 29 & 2 Thess. 1. 5 & 2 Tim. 2. 12 & 1 Pet. 5. 10 & Rev. 1. 9.

THE RETURN JOURNEY TO ANTIOCH OF SYRIA, vers. 21-26.

Having reached the limits of the Roman Empire, it may not have been safe to go further, and it is probable that they could not do effective missionary work beyond Derbe, because "it is highly improbable that the apostles could speak to the rustic population, who were, it is practically certain, ignorant of Greek till a far later date."¹

They returned again, retracing their steps, and visiting all the places where they had made disciples, except in the island of Cyprus. It has been questioned how they were able to do this after having been so recently expelled. (1) The magistrates under Roman law could turn men out of the city, but they could not permanently exile them. (2) In Lystra they had been the victims of illegal conduct, so extreme that the apostles had a strong case against the magistrates. "A Roman citizen, violently assaulted by the populace, had a very strong case." (3) It is probable "that new magistrates had been appointed in all three towns."¹ (4) The excitement had subsided in the places where he had been persecuted, for weeks and months had passed since then. (5) Paul seems to have devoted himself to the churches rather than to evangelizing the heathen. "Precautions of secrecy they doubtless took, and cheerfully faced the degrading necessity of guarded movements, and of entering cities, perhaps in disguise, perhaps only at late nightfall and early dawn. The Christians had early to learn those secret trysts and midnight gatherings and private watchwords by which alone they could elude the fury of their enemies. But the apostles accomplished their purpose. They made their way back in safety."² (6) Another reason for their returning this way is that if their work in Derbe had kept them till toward the end of November, as Ramsay thinks, there was no other way open for them to return to the home church, for after that time the passes over Taurus are apt to be blocked by snow.³ (7) The work that needed to be done in the places from which they had been driven was so great and important that it was worth running great risks to accomplish it.

22. Confirming the souls, ἐπιστηρίζοντες, to

establish more, to render more firm, as a tender shoot is confirmed into hard wood which can endure frosts and hard usage. Exhorting them, παρακαλοῦντες, strengthened, comforted them by his words. That we must. The use of the first person plural may be interpreted in two ways. (1) It may be a rhetorical device often employed by Greek and other writers to give life to the narrative, as if in the very words of the speaker. Or (2) it may "suggest the presence of the author himself on the scene," though "not with the same certainty as in the later chapters." "There is further ground for the presumption that he was converted during this mission-journey, for he reappears on the occasion of Paul's next visit to these parts as a Christian of some standing. Some vivid touches in the previous narrative suggest that the author had a share in the conflict of opinions at the Pisidian Antioch."⁴ Through much tribulation, πολλῶν θλίψεων, many tribulations. The dominant idea of θλίψις, tribulation, is that of pressure, hence, straits, distress. There was a provision of the old English law by which those who wilfully refused to plead in the courts had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and so were pressed to death unless they yielded.⁵ One case only of the infliction of the *peine forte et dure* occurred in this country in its early history, in the case of Giles Corey. "He would be thrown upon his back and weights of stone or iron would be piled upon him. There he would be kept sometimes for days, the weights gradually increasing, until the sufferer had consented to plead or had been pressed to death."⁶ This is a vivid picture of the pressure which persecution placed upon the souls of the disciples to compel them to deny Christ. Tribulation, both the English and the Latin equivalent of the Greek (except that θλίψις does not convey the idea of separation, as *tribulatio* does), is derived from the Latin *tribulum*, which was the threshing instrument or roller whereby the Roman husbandman separated the corn from the husks; and *tribulatio* in its primary significance was the act of this separation. But sorrow, distress, and adversity, being the appointed means for the separating in men of their chaff from their wheat, of whatever in them was light, and trivial, and

¹ Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, 69, 70. See, also, McGiffert's *Apostolic Age*, 190, 191.

² Farrar.

³ *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 69.

⁴ Rendall, *in loco*. See his Introduction, p. 10.

⁵ See Trench on the *Synonyms of the New Testament*.

⁶ Allen's *New English Tragedies in Prose*, p. 147.

23 And when they had ⁿ ^{ordained} appointed for them ^o elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, ^r they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed.

24 And ^{after} they had ^{passed} ^{throughout} through ^{Pr-síd/i-ă,} ^{they} and came to Păm-phyl'i-ă.

25 And when they had ^{preached} ^{spoken} the word in Për'gă, they went down ^{into} to Āt-tā'li-ă;

26 And thence they sailed to Ān'ti-ôch, ^a from whence they had been ^r ^{recommended} ^{committed} to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled.

ⁿ Cp. Tit. 1. 5.

^o See ch. 11. 30.

^p ch. 20. 32.

^q ch. 13. 3.

^r ch. 15. 40.

poor, from the solid and the true, were therefore called *tribulations*, threshings, i. e., of the inner spiritual man, without which there could be no fitting him for the heavenly garner. Often numberless small annoyances are greater tribulations than heavy sorrows. A whole army has been defeated by wasps.¹

The apostles warned the disciples not to be surprised or disappointed when tribulations came (as Pliaible was when he set out with Christian for the heavenly city, and fell into the Slough of Despond), but to recognize them as a part of God's means by which they should enter more fully into the spirit of the kingdom of heaven, and bring many others into the fold. This very difficulty in the way was a motive to earnest souls. Men do not enlist in the army of patriotism for the pleasures of dress parade, but because there is hard work to be done and dangers to be encountered for a noble purpose. This very fact is an inducement to all heroic souls. No true Christian asks for the place of greatest ease, and most leisure, and least work, but for the largest and best work possible for him, no matter what it costs.

23. And when they had ordained for them, *χειροτονήσαντες*. Originally the verb means to vote by stretching out the hand, to elect by a popular vote; then to appoint by vote, and later, with the loss of the notion of extending the hand, to elect, appoint. Ramsay thinks that "the votes and voice of the congregation were considered; and the term is obviously used in that way by Paul in 2 Cor. 8: 1."² We have in modern times frequent examples, both in ecclesiastical and political affairs, of this appointing by the authorities, in connection with popular voting. "It may be fully admitted that the church was not without some share in the election of the elders, and it must not be forgotten that, in the case of the Seven, the church had elected and the apostles had ordained (Acts 6: 3). In Clem. Rom., Cor. xlii., whilst the apostles took care to secure that after their death distinguished men should appoint presbyters and deacons, yet the latter were

elected with the consent of the whole church, and they were exposed, as it were, to the judgment of the church (see on this voice of the church, Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 89, and Gore, *Church and the Ministry*, p. 100 ff.)."³

Elders, *πρεσβύτερος*, originally, men of age and dignity; here, leaders usually selected from elderly men, men who presided over the assemblies, and managed the affairs of the church. The name and duties were borrowed from Jewish institutions. "Those who are called *elders*, in speaking of Jewish communities, are called *bishops*, in speaking of Gentile communities. Hence the latter term prevails in Paul's epistles."⁴

Prayed with fasting. See on 13: 2, 3.

They commended them, *παρέθεντο*, to set beside, hence, to put into another's charge and keeping. In classical Greek it is used of entrusting money or property into another's keeping and care.

24. **Passed throughout**, *διελθόντες*, went through thoroughly (*did*), visiting the different places for their missionary work, not merely travelling from one end to the other.

25. **Preached the word in Perga.** This was the first city of Asia Minor to which they came. But for reasons given under 13: 13, they did not stop there to preach the gospel, but hastened to the uplands. Now, at a different season of the year, they remained awhile and preached to them, with what success is unrecorded. **Went down into Attalia.** About 16 miles southwest of Perga, on the coast of Pamphylia, at the mouth of the river Catarrhactes. They went to this Mediterranean port most likely to find a sailing vessel to take them to Antioch. Attalia was famous in the story of the Crusades, under the name of Satalaia, as the port whence King Louis of France, after his disastrous march through Anatolia, embarked with his knights and nobles for Antioch, leaving the plebeian crowd of infantry to perish at the foot of the Pamphylian hills, A. D. 1148. It is now called Adalia, and is a harbor much frequented.⁵

26. **To Antioch in Syria, whence they had**

¹ On the use of "we" in this verse, see Rendall, *in loco*; and his Introduction, p. 10.

² St. Paul, 122.

³ Knowling.

⁴ Vincent, *Word Studies*. See Rendall on *Acts*, Appendix, p. 355.

⁵ Schaff.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, * they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and ' how that he had " opened the ^v door of faith unto the Gentiles.

28 And there they ^{abode long} ^{tarry'd no little} time with the disciples.

s ch. 15. 4. Cp. ch. 15. 3, 12 & 21. 19.

t Cp. ch. 11. 18.

u 1 Cor. 16. 9. 2 Cor. 2. 12. Col. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 8.

v Cp. Hos. 2. 15.

been recommended, *παράδομένοι*, given into the hands of another, committed to the care and keeping. They had probably been absent two or three years.

REPORT OF THE MISSIONARIES TO THE HOME CHURCH, vers. 27, 28.

27. Had gathered the church together, for all had some part and interest in the work, and probably had heard nothing from the missionaries, at least since they entered Asia Minor.

Rehearsed, *ἀνήγγειλαν*, carried back the tidings, "used here as in Æschylus, Xen., Polyb., of messengers reporting what they had seen or heard (Grimm)." All that God had done. They took no honor to themselves. The work was God's. None but God could do such a work. The progress of the gospel is a proof that it is divine. That a few men, without rank, wealth, learning, armies, or any of the worldly powers, should conquer the Roman Empire, should revolutionize the world, should not destroy the evil alone, but build up the greatest nations, the highest civilization, the purest morals, the noblest culture the world has ever seen, is the marvel of marvels, and is a proof that it is the Lord's doings.

With them, *μετ' αὐτῶν*, on their behalf, on their side as an ally. Opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles, i. e., had made faith the ground of admission to his kingdom. It was now no longer through circumcision that men should enter in and be known as God's people, but the gospel privileges were offered to every one that believed.

28. They abode long time. It is uncertain how long, but at least a year (Ramsay) and probably longer. There was abundant work to be done in Antioch, both in the church and among the heathen, and Paul and Barnabas would be better able to do it than ever before, on account of their experiences in Asia Minor. Moreover they themselves would gain strength by contact with the growing home church.

NOTE I. One of the best things in a long missionary life is the not infrequent return to the churches that sent out the missionaries, both for their own sake and that of the churches.

NOTE II. The missionary work broadened the horizon of the whole church. Max Müller says that only missionary religions are living religions. All others are dying.

NOTE III. The progress of the church was rapidly increasing. A little more than half a century later Pliny in Asia Minor wrote his famous letter to the Emperor Trajan, declaring that Christianity was professed by many of all ages and ranks and of both sexes; that the heathen temples were almost deserted, and the victims for sacrifices could find very few purchasers, and that this had been going on for a long time.¹

In 2 Cor. 2 : 14, 15, "Paul says, 'Thanks be unto God, which always leadeth us in triumph in Christ . . . for we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God in them that are being saved, and in them that are perishing.' The metaphor was gathered from the scene of a Roman triumph, one of the most notable events in the old world, where some great general, a Cæsar or Marius, returning from distant scenes of triumph, ascended the Capitoline Hill, amid the plaudits of the assembled citizens and the fragrance of sweet odors. Before his chariot were paraded captive kings and princes; after it came long lines of prisoners, laden with the spoils of war."²

Farrar compares the triumphant progress of Christianity, in the midst of deadly opposition, to the magnificent description in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, of the fire-signals by which the Greek hero made known to his queen at Argos the capture of Troy. "The poet tells us how the courier flame flashed from mountain to mountain, leaping over the plains and seas" till it reached his home at Mycenæ. So the beacon-lights of Christianity flashed from Antioch to Cyprus, to Antioch of Pisidia, to Iconium, to Lystra, to Derbe, and later to Philippi, to Corinth, Athens, and imperial Rome.³

"While timid sailors reef and tack,
And hug the sheltering lee,
The boats that bring a wide world back,
Put bravely out to sea."⁴

NOTE IV. One reason for this rapid progress, as given by Knwohing, lay in the decline of the

¹ Orr, *Some Neglected Factors in the Study of the Early Progress of Christianity*, pp. 48, 49, etc. (1899). On the rapid spread of Christianity in Asia Minor see, also, Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, i. pp. 87, 94, 95,

135-137, and *Church in the Roman Empire*, pp. 161, 307.

² F. B. Meyer, in *St. Paul*.

³ *Messages of the Books*. ⁴ Robert Gilbert Welsh.

old nature religion under the influence of the growth of Roman organization and educational influences; and the consequent preparation of mind for receiving new ideas. "St. Paul came

preaching a gospel of home life, of Christian purity; and wherever higher social ideas had already penetrated he found converts disposed to follow his teachings as 'a more excellent way.'"¹

¹ *Acts of the Apostles*, additional note, p. 315.

CHAPTER 15.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM CONCERNING THE RECEPTION OF THE GENTILES.

THE DISSENSION AT ANTIOCH, vers. 1, 2.	<div> <div>Two sources of knowledge of the facts.</div> <div>Critics come from Jerusalem.</div> <div>The question at issue.</div> <div>The discussion.</div> <div>The question referred to the church at Jerusalem.</div> </div>	A. D. 50.
THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM, vers. 2-21.	<div> <div>The delegation from Antioch.</div> <div>Reception at Jerusalem.</div> <div>The question stated by both parties.</div> <div>The discussion <div>by Peter.</div> <div>by Paul and Barnabas.</div> <div>by James the brother of our Lord.</div> </div> </div>	
THE DECISION, vers. 22-29.	<div> <div>The decision.</div> <div>Appointment of delegates to Antioch.</div> <div>The letter.</div> </div>	
RECEPTION AT ANTIOCH, vers. 30-35.	<div> <div>The meeting of the church.</div> <div>The letter read.</div> <div>Meetings of fellowship.</div> <div>Return of most of the delegates.</div> </div>	
PLANNING A NEW CAMPAIGN.	<div> <div>Proposal to revisit the Galatian churches.</div> <div>Disagreement between Paul and Barnabas.</div> <div>Mission of Barnabas and Mark.</div> <div>Mission of Paul and Silas.</div> </div>	

1 AND ^w certain men ^{which} came down from Judæa and taught ^{as} the brethren, ^{and said, saying,} Except ye be ^vcircumcised ^{as} after the ^{manner} custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

^w ver. 24. ^z vers. 3, 22, 23, 36, 40. See John 21. 23. ^y ver. 5. Gal. 5. 2. Cp. 1 Cor. 7. 18 & Gal. 2. 11, 14. ^z ch. 6. 14. Lev. 12. 3.

THE THREATENED DIVISION IN THE ANTIOCH CHURCH, vers. 1, 2.

THE TWO SOURCES OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THIS EVENT. We have two accounts of the conference described in this chapter: one by Luke (Acts 15 : 1-35), and the other by Paul himself in his Epistle to the Galatian churches (Gal. 2 : 1-10). Some critics find a difficulty in reconciling the two accounts, but the opinion is almost

unanimous among conservative and radical critics alike, that the two accounts describe the same event. "The discrepancy is only apparent, and disappears on careful scrutiny of the Greek text." "I recognize in the language of Paul a lively picture from the *interior* of the same council whose *external* history is recorded in Acts 15."¹

There are some conflicting views. Professor Ramsay identifies Gal. 2 : 1-10 with Acts 11 : 30 ;

¹ Rendall. "On the whole question see Wendt's 1899 edition, p. 255 ff., and *Expositor*, 1896 (February, March, April, July) for its full discussion by Dr. Sanday and

Professor Ramsay." Also Knowling, additional note to ch. 15, and appendix to Rendall on *Acts*.

2 ^{When therefore} ^{And when} Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and ^a ^{disputation} ^{questioning} with them, ^b ^{they determined} ^{the brethren} appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto ^c the apostles and elders about this question.

a ver. 7.

b Cp. Gal. 2. 1, 2.

c vers. 4, 6, 22, 23. ch. 16. 4. See ch. 5. 12 & 11. 30.

12 : 25 ; Paul's second visit to Jerusalem, instead of Acts 15. See his *St. Paul*, ch. vii. This view is not generally received with favor. McGiffert thinks that the record in Acts 11 : 30 ; 12 : 25, and that in Acts 15, are two independent accounts of the same visit of Paul to Jerusalem, namely, the one described in Gal. 2 : 1-10 ; and that Luke by some misunderstanding supposed them to refer to two separate events. See his *Apostolic Age*, 171, for a presentation of his views.¹

1. And certain men which came down from Judæa. Perhaps those sent by James (Gal. 2 : 12). "The Jews of Jerusalem were far more rigid and narrow (than the Christians at Antioch) ; and when some of them came down on a mission to Antioch . . . they were shocked by the state of things they found there."² Paul calls them in Gal. 2 : 4, "false brethren unawares brought in ; who came in privately to spy out our liberty."

Taught. Imp. *were teaching*, with continuous efforts. Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses. It was admitted by all parties that Gentiles could be saved, but these Jews taught that the Gentiles must enter the kingdom of salvation not only through Jesus, but also through the gate of the Mosaic Law. Paul and the Gentiles denied this, and contended that the gate of faith led directly into the kingdom.

2. Had no small dissension, *σδισσεις*, lit., *a standing* ; then *a standing against* established order or opinions ; and hence *an insurrection, a strife*, one party holding to the established customs, and the other opposing them.

And disputation, *συζητήσεις*, *a seeking or examining together, a mutual questioning and discussion*.

THE QUESTION REFERRED TO THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM, vers. 2-5.

They, the brethren, determined, *ἐτάξαν, arranged, appointed*. In Gal. 2 : 2, it is said that Paul went up to Jerusalem on this occasion, "by revelation." But the two statements are in perfect harmony, as in the case described in 13 : 3, 4, where in one verse it is said that the church sent forth Paul and Barnabas on their mission, and in the next verse that they were sent forth by the Holy Spirit. Such twofold moving influences are common in daily life and in history. It is

easy to see how the Holy Spirit influenced the brethren to settle their differences by referring the question to the Jerusalem church, and to appoint Paul and Barnabas to represent their side of the question, while certain other of them included some who would represent the other side. Among these leading men was Titus (Gal. 2 : 1), a Gentile Christian, who would be a specimen of the converts among the Gentiles. He was of Greek origin, perhaps a native of Antioch, was afterwards a companion of Paul in his missionary journeys, and to him was written one of Paul's epistles. He must have been a man of considerable power.

Should go up to Jerusalem. Not being able to settle the question among themselves, they wisely determined to send a strong delegation to the mother church, three hundred miles away. This was both wise and generous. The church in Jerusalem was the most conservative body, under the strongest Jewish influences, honored and respected by all ; and its decision would carry great weight with the Jews all over the empire. At the same time they were older Christians ; the apostles centred there who had personally known Jesus and heard his teachings ; and they had lived under the power of the Holy Spirit. Wise advice could therefore be expected there. Confidence in the righteousness of their cause was shown by the willingness of Paul and the Gentile Christians to go there for a decision of the vexed question.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Honest differences of opinion on important questions are sure to arise among good men, and in the best churches, when each party feels sure that it is right, and that its view is of vital importance to the kingdom of God. Seldom in the churches has there arisen a more important and more surpassingly difficult question than that which arose in the early church and which we are now studying. This fact, and the fact that it was settled, and the way in which it was settled, are full of encouragement and instruction for us.³

2. Notice the gradual preparation through a series of years for the final settlement. It was not a lightning flash from a clear sky, nor a sudden earthquake shock. Almost all changes of opinion come about in this gradual way, and not

¹ See Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, Bk. II. chap. 3, "Paul and the Primitive Church," for views which make Acts and Galatians give contradictory accounts of this event.

² Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 156.

³ Compare the Fable of the Knights and the Shield, golden on one side and silver on the other. Also in Bulwer's *Pilgrims of the Rhine*, the apologue called "The Tour of the Virtues."

3 ^{And} They therefore, ^d being brought on their way by the church, ^{they} passed through ^{Phē-nī'ce} both Phœ-nī'cia and Să-mā'ri-ă, ^e declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and ^f they caused great joy unto all ^g the brethren.

4 And ^h when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and ⁱ the apostles and ^{the} elders, and ^{they} ^{declared} ^{rehearsed} all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the ^j sect of the Phă'r'i-sees ^{which} ^{who} believed, saying, ^k ^{That it was} ^{It is} needful ^l to circumcise them, and to ^{command them} ^{charge them} to keep the law of Moses.

^d ch. 21. 5. Rom. 15. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 6, 11. 2 Cor. 1. 16. Tit. 3. 13. 3 John 6. Cp. ch. 17. 15. ^e See ch. 14. 27.
^f ch. 11. 18. ^g ver. 1. ^h Cp. ch. 21. 17. ⁱ ver. 2. ^j See ch. 24. 5. ^k ver. 1. ^l Gal. 5. 3.

by sudden revolutions which would bring disaster. The slow settling or rising of continents, still going on almost imperceptibly, produces far greater effects than the most destructive earthquakes.

3. Free discussion in a loving, Christian spirit, and examination of the facts, a tracing of divine providence, an enlightened study of the Bible, with minds open to the Holy Spirit of truth, will lead to peace, to clearer views of truth, to broader vision, to sweeter and more perfect harmony. Christian discussion is a sign of life.

To refuse discussion is like sitting on the safety valve of a steam boiler. It will result in explosion and destruction. Powder burned loose on the rock in the open air makes a great blaze and smoke, but does little harm. That powder confined in a rock produces an earthquake. Whatever church or nation attempts to prevent free thought and free discussion is living on a volcano.

4. Heresies and false doctrines occasion the true doctrine to be more carefully discussed, to cast off imperfections, and to stand out clearer and brighter than ever. This has been the result of the great doctrinal conflicts in the church.

"Old religious factions are volcanoes burned out. On the lava and ashes and squalid scoræ of old eruptions grow the peaceful olive, the cheering vine, and the sustaining corn."¹

"So far, indeed, as they retain the bitterness, the fire and brimstone of personal rancor and malignity, they are, and they will be to the end of time, the most barren and profitless of all the works of man. But if this can be eliminated or corrected, it is undeniable, not only that truths of various kinds take root and spring up in the soil thus formed, but that there is a fruitful and useful result produced by the contemplation of the transitory character of the volcanic eruptions which once seemed to shake the world."²

5. Note the kindly spirit in which the discus-

sion was carried on. Distinguishing between peace-makers and compromisers.

3. **Being brought on their way by the church.** That is, attended by some of the members of the Antioch congregation, as a mark of respect. **Through Phenice and Samaria.** It was a journey of about three hundred miles southward along the coast of the Mediterranean, through Tyre and Sidon, cities of Phœnicia, where, as well as in Samaria, it is probable that Philip had preached the gospel.

Declaring, ἐκδιηγούμενοι, from ἡγέομαι, to lead, διδ, thoroughly, through the story, "weighing and comparing facts," and ἐκ out of, "unfolding them, as something tied together or rolled up."³ They told the whole story with all its details. **They caused great joy.** At the news of the extensive spread of the gospel; at the new liberty accorded to them; at the new impulse in every direction brought by such men.

4. **They were received,** ἀπεδέχθησαν, received "with a cordial welcome, which they were not altogether sure of receiving."⁴

Of the church. "The whole church is regarded as concerned in the matter; as present at the public discussion in ver. 12, and as concurring in the decision, ver. 22 (comp. ver. 30); the decree is issued by the apostles and elders, ver. 23."⁵

They declared, ἀγγέλλειν, rehearsed. The verb means to report, to bring back tidings, "used of messengers reporting what they had seen or heard." This was apparently in an informal popular meeting.

All things. They gave an account of their missionary work, and the wonderful ingatherings of Gentiles into the church, and the marvellous change made in the character and lives of these converted heathen. **That God had done with them.** They gave all the glory to God, where it belonged.

5. **But there rose up,** in the assembly, to protest against what Paul had done and said. They

¹ Edmund Burke.

² Dean Arthur P. Stanley.

³ See Thayer's *Greek-English Lex. of N. T.*

⁴ M. R. Vincent.

⁵ Knowing.

were impelled to correct the errors of the missionaries. Apparently they demanded that Titus should be circumcised and become a Jewish proselyte (Gal. 2 : 3).

Of the sect, αἰρέσεις. Our word "heresy" is a transcript of the Greek, from αἰρέσθαι, *to choose*. Hence, a *chosen opinion*, one different from the common opinion, a *sect* or *school*.

Saying, bringing forward their views, as others of the same sect had done in Antioch; and perhaps through some of the delegates from that city.

In the interval between the first reception of the deputation and the public conference described in ver. 6, and onward, without doubt occurred the private interview described in Gal. 2 : 2, 9, between Paul and Barnabas, and "the more influential members of the Christian community, and especially with James, Peter, and John, the great apostles and 'pillars' of the church."

"And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately," or (as the words may equally well mean) especially "to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." It was both natural and wise that a few of the leaders should talk over the question freely and quietly by themselves. They would thus be more likely to come to an agreement, and could best guide the church as a whole, when the more intense Jews took the floor.

THE CONDITION OF AFFAIRS. The church had been in existence for about twenty years.

It had extended over Palestine, Phœnicia, Damascus, Antioch, Cyprus, and South Galatia in Asia Minor.

Its numbers had become quite large, and their influence was a positive force.

It included Jews, proselytes, Grecianized Jews, and Gentiles.

THE THREATENED DIVISION. The disciples naturally and gradually tended to form into two classes.

1. The Christian Jews of all kinds, and the Gentile proselytes who had become Jews, accepting their ritual and laws and hopes.

2. The Gentile Christians, who accepted Jesus as their Saviour, but refused to submit to the peculiar rites of Jewish life.

These two classes were separated by a great social and religious barrier built up from the Jewish training and expectations and promises, and from their law and ritual, intensified by their own interpretations, which prevented them from intimate association with the Gentiles. There was real danger of a permanent separation into two great parties, with a constant warfare between them.

"Communion with those whom every Jew had long regarded as unclean must have given serious offence to many pious Christians from the beginning. The truth is, the momentous consequences of the new departure were slow in manifesting themselves. For some years the mass of the church still belonged to the circumcision; and the Gentile Christians formed too insignificant a minority to excite religious jealousy, or threaten the exclusive ascendancy of their Jewish brethren. The success of Paul's preaching first opened men's eyes to the magnificent future of the Gentile church. Then for the first time devout Gentiles pressed into the church in numbers that threatened to swamp the Jewish section; and the alarming prospect of a Gentile church, raised by baptism to the same privileges in the sight of God, but free from the obligations of the law, roused Jewish Christians to urge the value, if not the necessity, of circumcision, as the seal of the baptismal covenant. The church was on the brink of a formidable schism; for the mother church of Antioch under the leadership of Paul and Barnabas adopted the cause of Gentile liberty, while the enormous preponderance of the circumcision in the church of Jerusalem made it a stronghold of the Judaizing party."¹

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE. The burning question was WHETHER THE GENTILES MUST BECOME JEWISH PROSELYTES, AND SUBMIT TO THE JEWISH CEREMONIAL LAW IN ORDER TO BE SAVED.

1. This did not involve that the Jews should give up their peculiar ceremonies, and cease to be Jews in order to be Christians.

2. It did involve the relation of the Gentile to the Jewish Christians, in their social life, and unity in partaking of the Lord's Supper.

3. It involved the relation of the Gentile Christians to the heathen people around them, and what they could present to them as the conditions of salvation.

4. It involved the true doctrine of salvation; what it is to be saved, and how to be saved.

5. It involved the unity of the church, and whether Christianity should be merely a Jewish sect, or a world-wide religion.

6. It involved the true interpretation of the promises of God to the Jews, of the prophecies of the Messiah, and the triumph of the kingdom of heaven.

THE JEWISH ANSWER AND ARGUMENT. The Jewish Christians insisted that the Gentile Christians must become Jewish proselytes in order to be saved and belong to the kingdom of God.

1. Because the Jews were the chosen people of God, their religion was given them by God himself, and they were the divinely instituted kingdom of God.

2. Jesus himself, the Son of God, the latest

¹ Rendall.

6 And ^m the 'apostles and the elders ^{were ^{came} gathered together ^{for}} to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much ⁿ ^{disputing, questioning,} Peter rose up, and said unto them, ^{Men and brethren, Brethren,} ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among ^{us,} ^o that ^{the Gentiles by my mouth} ^{by my mouth the Gentiles} should hear ^p the word of the ^q gospel, and believe.

^m Cp. vers. 12, 25. ⁱ ver. 2. ⁿ ver. 2. ^o ch. 10. 20. ^p Cp. Eph. 1. 13 & Col. 1. 5 & 1 Thess. 1. 5. ^q ch. 20. 24.

revelation from God, was a Jew, who kept the Jewish law, preached to the Jews, declared that not a jot or tittle of the law should fail till all was fulfilled.

3. All the promises of the Messiah, of the redemption of the world, of the enlargement of the kingdom of God, were made to the Jews. The forces of the Gentiles were to come to them; "The sons of the strangers shall build up thy walls;" "The nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish" (Isa. 60).

4. Again, there was a great social and religious barrier between Jews and Gentiles, which made it exceedingly difficult for them to live and work together as brethren in the same churches. The Gentiles must become Jews, or the Jews must break the divine commands. "The nearest parallel we can find to this barrier between the Jews and Gentiles is the institution of *caste* among the ancient populations of India."

5. Thus while the Gentiles could easily become Jews, and the Jewish Christians desired the Gentiles to be saved, yet the Antioch plan seemed to take away the foundations of their religion, of the Bible, of the kingdom of God, of the hope of the world. It was laxness, apostasy, unpatriotism, irreligion, an insult to their past history and to God.

THE GENTILE ANSWER AND ARGUMENT. Paul and the Gentile church stood on the negative; the Gentiles do not need to become Jews in order to be saved and belong to the kingdom of God.

1. The one condition the gospel laid down was faith in Jesus, producing a new heart and a new life.

2. Ceremonies and ritual may be helpful, and any one is at liberty to use them, but to make them essential to salvation, and require them of all disciples, was to subvert the central principle and power of the gospel.

3. It was to take away "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The Jews had perfect liberty of action, and could, like Paul and the other apostles, keep the whole Jewish law. But the Gentiles, too, had liberty, and no one had a right to force any form or rite as essential to salvation.

4. The unnecessary burden of the Jewish ritual

was a hindrance to the conversion of the Gentiles.

THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM,

vers. 6-21.

6. The apostles and elders came together, after the private conference referred to in Paul's account in Gal. 2: 2, of whom he says: "They who seemed to be somewhat added nothing to me" (Gal. 2: 6), that is, they were unable to bring to him any new suggestions or reasons, which he had not thought of before. "The conference consisted not only of these, but as the language of ver. 12, '*all the multitude*,' implies, the laity of the church generally were present; and the language of ver. 22, '*then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church*,' implies that they participated in the final action; while the language of ver. 19 seems to imply that James, as president of the council, formally announced the decision."¹ "The council was probably of a much more representative character than has been usually supposed. The church of Antioch, in the persons of Paul and Barnabas, represented the thoughts and feelings of far distant Gentile churches. The church of Jerusalem, again, represented the thoughts and feelings, not merely of the Palestine Jews, but of the Jews scattered over the whole known world. The Hebrew Christians of Jerusalem and of the Holy Land were only a portion of that community of believers which made up the Jerusalem church. . . . Such an assembly only could have put out authoritatively decrees at once so practical and conciliatory, and at the same time acceptable to all except those bigoted and fanatical Jews who wished to exclude every Gentile soul from all religious privileges in this life, and from all share of blessedness in the life to come."²

PETER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION.

7. And when there had been much disputing, συζητῶντας, the same word as disputation in verse 2, which see. Discussion, debating, better express the idea. There was a general, earnest, vigorous discussion, the case of Titus being a concrete example of the underlying principle. This was the wise way. Then when every one had

¹ Abbott.

² Schaff.

8 And God, ^{hearts,} which knoweth the ^{heart,} bare them witness, ^{he did} giving them the Holy Ghost, even as ^{he did} unto us;

9 And ^{put} ^{he made} "no ^{difference} ^{distinction} between us and them, ^{purifying} cleansing their hearts ^{by} faith.

10 Now therefore why ^{to} tempt ye God, ^{that ye should} put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which ^{neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?}

11 But "we believe that ^{through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner} as they.

12 ^{Then} ^{And} all the multitude kept silence; and ^{gave audience to} ^{they hearkened unto} Barnabas and Paul ^{d declaring} ^{rehearsing} what ^{miracles} ^{signs} and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

r ch. 1. 24. s ch. 14. 3. t ch. 10. 44, 47 & 11. 15, 17. Cp. ver. 28 & Gal. 3. 2. u ch. 11. 12. Rom. 3. 22-24. Eph. 3. 6. Cp. ch. 10. 28, 34. v Ps. 51. 10. Cp. ch. 26. 18 & 2 Cor. 7. 1 & 1 Pet. 1. 22. w See ch. 10. 43. x Ps. 10. 14. Isai. 7. 12. Cp. ch. 5. 9 & 1 Cor. 10. 9 & Heb. 3. 9, *al.* y Gal. 5. 1. Cp. ver. 28. z Cp. Matt. 11. 28 & 23. 4 & Luke 11. 46. a Cp. ch. 16. 31. b Eph. 2. 5, 8. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 2. 11 & 3. 7. Cp. Rom. 3. 24 & 1 Thess. 5. 9. c Rom. 5. 15. d ver. 4. See ch. 14. 27.

expressed his mind, the leaders summed up the arguments, and their speeches alone are reported. **Peter rose up.** He naturally took the lead. He had personal preëminence and influence, as one of those most intimately acquainted with Jesus.

And said unto them. Peter's argument was founded on facts and experience, and was unanswerable.

FIRST. He was directed by God himself through voice and vision and symbol to receive the Gentiles, as in the case of Cornelius.

A good while ago. About ten years.

SECOND. God endorsed the reception of the Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit.

8. God, which knoweth the hearts, *δ καρδιωγνώστης*, *The Heart-Knower*; and therefore there can be no mistake in his witnessing that the Gentiles had new hearts as really as the Jews.

Giving them the Holy Ghost. The highest and most distinctive gift he ever bestowed upon the disciples of Jesus; showing no difference between believing Gentiles and believing Jews.

THIRD. Faith produced precisely the same moral effects in both, fitting both alike for the kingdom of heaven. If the Gentiles actually were in the kingdom, who had a right to drive them out from the church, its earthly form?

9. No difference. No distinction.

Purifying their hearts by faith in Jesus. This was the object and aim of faith.

FOURTH. The Jews have no right to put on the Gentiles a yoke which God has not put on them, and from which they themselves wish to be relieved.

10. Why tempt ye God. That is, "distrust God or test his power presumptuously." A case

is described in Ex. 17: 1-7. It is to demand that God should fulfil his promises to those to whom they are not made, and in circumstances in which they do not apply, or else appear to have dishonored his Word. In the present case it was putting God to the proof whether he had not admitted persons to the church who ought not to be in the fold.

To put a yoke. Not tempting God to put, but by yourselves putting.¹

Neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. The yoke was the keeping of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, with all the additions and interpretations and rules with which the Pharisees had encumbered them, and all this as a means of salvation. The burdens were unbearable in themselves, but still more when the keeping of them perfectly was the essential condition of being saved.

THE CONCLUSION is that Gentiles and Jews are saved in the same way through Jesus Christ.

11. Through the grace, διὰ τῆς χάριτος, the free grace of God expressed by his sending Jesus, and the free grace of Jesus in coming, teaching, dying to save us. **We, Jews, even as they,** the Gentiles. Salvation for all is the gift of God's love, and comes to none through ceremonial observances. This verse gives the last recorded words of Peter in the Acts.

PAUL AND BARNABAS CONTRIBUTE AN ARGUMENT FROM THEIR MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE. 12. Then all the multitude kept silence. The address of Peter had quieted the prevailing discussions and the buzz of conversation, and a silence fell on all the assembly; so that they gave perfect attention to Barnabas and Paul while declaring, *ἐξηγουμένων*, *relating in full, unfolding the com-*

¹ On this use of the infinitive, see Burton's *New Test. Moods and Tenses*, p. 151.

13 And after they had held their peace, ^e James answered, saying, ^{Men and brethren, Brethren,} hearken unto me:

14 ^f Simeon hath ^{declared} ^{rehearsed} how ^{God at the first} ^{first God} did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them ^g a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 ^h After ^{this} ^{these things} I will return,

And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; ^{down;}

And I will build again the ruins thereof,

And I will set it up:

^e See ch. 12. 17. ^f 2 Pet. 1. 1 (mg.). Cp. ver. 7.
^g Cited from Amos 9. 11, 12. Cp. Jer. 12. 15.

^g Cp. ch. 18. 10 & Deut. 7. 6 & Isai. 43. 21 & Rom. 9. 24-26.

plete narrative. **Miracles, σημεῖα, signs, and wonders, τέρατα, marvels, something so strange as to cause it to be observed, and attended to carefully, from τηρέω, to attend to, to keep, to watch.**

Among the Gentiles, just as Jesus had wrought among the Jews, and also the Gentiles. The argument here, as in Peter's address, was that God himself, the God who had given the law to the Jews, had endorsed their position with the greatest emphasis. To oppose it was to fight against God. Barnabas and Paul made no application, as they were practically on trial, but simply testified to the facts.

JAMES, THE LORD'S BROTHER, MAKES THE CONCLUDING ARGUMENT. 13. After they, Paul and Barnabas, had held their peace, ceased speaking.

James, the brother of our Lord (Gal. 1: 19).¹ He is called in ecclesiastical history the Bishop of Jerusalem.²

Answered, saying.³ James' speech is divided into two parts.

FIRST. The Jewish prophets endorsed the position of Peter and Paul.

14. Simeon. The old Hêbrew form of Simon, used here naturally by James, who was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. The same form is found in 2 Pet. 1: 1, in the original. This was Peter's original name, while Peter was the name given him by Christ.

God . . . did visit. James plainly sees the hand of God in Peter's course. **Visit, ἐπισκέψατο,**

looked upon or after, looked upon in order to help.

A people for his name, a people who should be called by his name, and therefore should belong to him as his own people. Or for his name may be an expression for "for himself." But the meaning is the same.

15. And to this fact rehearsed by Peter, agree the words of the prophets, one of whom is cited as an example.

As it is written in Amos 9: 11, 12. Taken with some variations from the Greek Septuagint version.

"What an unspent vitality there was in the seed-thought of God, buried in Amos centuries before, that it should spring up in the Spirit-warmed mind of James at this crisis."⁴

16. After this, μετὰ ταῦτα, after these things, after the predicted chastisement of Israel, by the destruction of the temple, and captivity of the nation. In Amos the expression both in Hebrew and Greek is "in that day," the day of return from captivity which was completed in Messianic times.⁵

And will build again the tabernacle of David, the kingdom and nation which had been destroyed like a hut or temporary structure of boughs (such as were used at the feast of tabernacles), scattered by a whirlwind.

I will build again. Begun in the Return, and to be completed in Christ.⁶

Set it up as a new and perfect building, like

¹ See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "James" (3), and "Brethren of our Lord."

² See Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, 2: 23.

³ Compare Homer's description of Patroclus:—

"And straight Patroclus rose,
The genial comrade, who amid the strife
Of kings, and war of angry utterance,
Held even balance to his outraged friends
Heart true, yet ever strove with kindly words
To hush the jarring discord, urging peace."

⁴ Bishop H. W. Warren.

⁵ See Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*, 163; and Eder-
sheim's *Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 734.

⁶ When Assyria was destroyed, it was cut down like a fir tree, from the stump of which no new shoot arises. When Judah was destroyed it was like an oak tree, of which only the stump was left, but from the oak, as from the chestnut trees in the lawn by my study windows, there come new shoots which may grow larger than the original trees. This new shoot was Israel after the exile, which was again cut down; but from it grew the Kingdom of Christ far larger, more powerful, more glorious than the original Kingdom, from which it was an offshoot, by a new graft through Jesus Christ.

17 That the residue of men ⁱ ^{night} ^{may} seek after the Lord,
And all the Gentiles, ^j upon whom my name is called,
Saith the Lord, who ^{doeth all} ^{maketh} these things:

18 Known unto God are all his works ^{known} from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore ⁱ my ^{sentence} ^{judgement} is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles ^m are ^{turned} ^{turn} to God;

20 But that we write unto them, ⁿ that they abstain from ^{the} ^o pollutions of idols, and ^{from} ^p fornication, and ^{from things} ^{from what is} ^q strangled, and ^{from} ^q blood.

ⁱ Cp. ch. 17. 27. ^j Isai. 43. 7. Jer. 14. 9. Dan. 9. 19. James 2. 7 (mg.). ^k Cp. Isai. 45. 21. ^l Cp. ver. 28.
^m See ch. 14. 15. ⁿ ch. 21. 25. ^o Cp. ver. 29 & Ezek. 4. 13, 14 & Dan. 1. 8 & Mal. 1. 7, 12 & Tobit 1. 10, 11.
^p Wisd. 14. 26, 27. ¹ Cor. 10. 7, 8. Rev. 2. 14, 20. See 1 Cor. 6. 18. ^q See Lev. 3. 17.

the rude fisherman's hut in Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, transformed into a silver temple of exquisite workmanship.¹ "St. James saw the fulfilment of this prophecy in the Kingdom of Christ erected on the day of Pentecost."

17. One great object of the restoration was that the residue of men, all those outside of the Jewish nation, might seek after the Lord.

And all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, as, for instance, in baptism. The heathen who remain heathen are not part of the restored kingdom, but all who believe in Him, worship Him, belong to Him, are welcomed into its membership and privileges. The Dispersion among the Gentiles was a preparation for this ingathering.

Saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. He not only foretold them, but is actually bringing them to pass.

18. Known unto God, etc. "This clause is not adopted from Amos, but added by the speaker. The prophet had declared these things to be the Lord's doing, the apostle adds that they were also known unto him from the beginning, i. e., foreknown and preordained, intimating thereby that it was God's eternal purpose thus to bring the Gentiles eventually into his kingdom through the agency of his chosen people."² The R. V. connects this verse with the previous one,—"Saith the Lord who maketh all these things known from the beginning of the world," by the prophecies foretelling them. The R. V. margin reads, "Who doeth these things which were known," with essentially the meaning given by Rendall above.

SECOND. St. James shows what he regards as the best practical settlement of the question.

19. Wherefore my sentence is, ἐγὼ κρίνω, *I decide, I am of opinion*, in view of all that has been said. He, as president of the Council, sums up the discussion, proposing a practical solution of the difficulty.

That we trouble not them by trying to compel

them to become Jews as well as Christians. "It may be possible to press the *παρά*, 'not to trouble farther,' i. e., by anything more than he is about to mention, or in their conversion to God."³

20. But that we write unto them, ἐπιστεῖλαι, *to send to*, as a letter. The corresponding noun is ἐπιστολή, of which our "Epistle" is a transliteration.

That they abstain from. The four prohibitions which follow naturally fall into two groups.

FIRST GROUP. 1. From pollutions of idols.

2. From fornication.

These are sins in themselves, and those to which Christians in contact with the Gentiles would be especially exposed. In the decree actually sent (ver. 29) instead of pollutions, ἀλισγημάτων, *contaminations, pollutions* (akin to ἀλνῆαι, *to besmear*), the word used is εἰδωλοθύτων, *things sacrificed to idols*, the flesh of animals offered to idols, and then eaten at feasts in honor of the idols, or sold in the market for others to eat. It would appear as if this expression was put into the decree instead of the word James used, in deference to the feelings of the stricter Jews that there was great danger in eating things offered to idols from the great temptation it would bring of becoming polluted thereby, even though it might not be a sin in itself.

The two prohibitions in this group "directly attacked the idolatrous feasts and licentious pleasures by which votaries were attracted to many heathen temples. They differed from the Christian law of uncleanness which Paul developed a few years later out of his Master's teaching; for while he condemned fornication as essentially unclean, he pronounced meats to be utterly indifferent, save so far as any conscience was affected by the act of eating. But for the present he accepted these rules as a proper sacrifice to the conscience of Jewish brethren and the peace of the church."² But the pollution of idols was forbidden by an eternal principle, to Jews and Gentiles alike.

The eating of meats offered to idols meant far

¹ See Carlyle's *Essays* for the best interpretation.

² Rendall.

³ Knowling.

21 For Moses ^{of old time} ^{from generations of old} hath in every city them that preach him, ^{being} read in the synagogues every sabbath. ^{day.}

22 Then ^{it pleased it} ^{seemed good to} the ^s apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to ^{send chosen} ^{choose} men out of their ^{own} company, ^{and send them} to Antioch with Paul and Bār'nā-bās; *namely*, Jū'dās ^{sur-named} ^{called} Bar'sa-bas, ^{Bar'sab-bas,} and "Sī'lās, chief men among ^v the brethren :

^r ch. 13. 15. ² Cor. 3. 14, 15. ^{Cp.} ch. 13. 27. ^s ver. 2. ^t Cp. ch. 1. 23. ^u See 1 Pet. 5. 12. ^v ver. 1.

more than merely eating at home meat sold in the markets that had been a part of the sacrifices to idols. "The inspired framers of these primitive decrees well knew that 'an idol was nothing in the world, and that there was none other God but one;' but they knew, too, that the idol-worship of the first century of our era, the age in which they lived, poisoned the whole life of society in Greece, in Italy, in the East." Licentiousness "was associated with much of the current idol-worship of the day," which "glorified sexual vice with the halo of a sacred sanction."¹ Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, says that courtesans were the priestesses of the temple of Venus, and that many leading cities were made famous for the schools of vice which grew up under the shadow of the temples.² "St. Paul (in 1 Cor. 6: 15 and 1 Thess. 4: 3) shows us the terrible risks to which Christian morality was exposed, risks enhanced by the fact that the heathen view of impurity was so lax throughout the Roman Empire."³ "Not even Socrates, the best of all heathen teachers, forbade it." "The heart of the Roman Empire under the Cæsars was a pen of stagnant waters." "It was Rome at the epoch of her most gorgeous gluttonies and her most gilded rottenness."⁴ On the other hand, the Levitical law was very strict.

THE SECOND GROUP. 1. From things strangled.

2. From blood.

Blood was forbidden to the Jews by the Levitical law (Lev. 3: 17; 17: 10-14), because blood was the life, the sacred symbol of sacrifice, and of purification from sin. "Without the shedding of blood there was no remission" (Heb. 9: 22). The blood of the sacrificed animal was the symbol pointing to the blood of Jesus shed on the cross for the remission of sin. But among the Gentiles it was, in various forms, a delicacy; they were "accustomed to drink blood mingled with wine at their sacrifices."⁵ Therefore, in churches composed of both Jews and Gentiles, social and brotherly intercourse would be impossible unless the latter abstained from it also.

Things strangled. "The flesh of such animals as were killed in snares, and whose blood was not poured forth, was forbidden to the Israelites,"⁶ for the same reasons that blood was forbidden.

NOTE 1. This conference teaches that salvation is not dependent on forms of any kind, but on a living faith in Jesus that produces a new life.

2. The Jewish Christians yield everything possible for the sake of the unity of the church, and take away every possible barrier between Jewish and Gentile Christians as to mutual intercourse.

3. The Gentiles are also to deny themselves, and in courtesy to give up something in view of the position and legal customs of the Jews. The restrictions in the second group, and some of those that in practical life were connected with meat offered to idols, were temporary, and intended to meet the necessities of Christian intercourse at the time, in avoiding temptation, and in making social and Christian life possible between Jews and Gentiles.

4. But the principle of courtesy, of denying self for the good of others, of yielding the unessential to the weakness or even prejudices of others, — this is eternal.

5. Finally, the Gentiles were requested to remember the poor at Jerusalem (Gal. 2: 10), as they had already done. Thus they would prove their kindly feeling and the unity of love.

21. For Moses of old time, *ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων*, from ancient generations, referring back to the days of the Dispersion of the Jews by captivity.

Hath in every city them that preach him. The bearing of this fact upon the decision of the question seems to be that the things forbidden were constantly brought before the Jews from sabbath to sabbath as divine commands, so that they could not conscientiously have the needful social and church fellowship with the Gentiles, unless these would be willing to yield to the request of the decree. Or "the Gentile proselytes could long ago in the synagogues have been acquainted week by week with the spirit and enactments of the Mosaic law, and they would thus be

¹ Schaff.

² Conybeare and Howson, chap. 4. Horace's *Satires*, 1: 2, 31; Terence's *Adelphi*, 1: 2, 21; Cicero's *Pro Cælio*, 20.

³ Knowling.

⁴ Farrar.

⁵ Compare Homer's *Odyssey*, XVIII. 44, etc.

⁶ Glong.

23 And they wrote ^{letters thus} by them, ^{after this manner; s} The apostles and ^{elders and the elder} brethren ^{sent greeting} unto ^w the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Ἀν'τι-όχ and Σύρ'ι-ᾶ and Ἰ-λ'ι'ᾶ; ^{w greeting:}

24 Forasmuch as we have heard^t that ^x certain which went out from us ^y have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; ^{saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the} ^{law:} to whom we gave no ^{such} commandment;

25 It seemed good unto us, ^{being assembled with having come to} one ^z accord, to ^{send chosen choose out} men and send ^{them} unto you with our ^a beloved Βάρ'νά-βᾶς and Paul,

26 ^b Men that have ^c hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore ^a Ἰού'δᾶς and Σί'λᾶς, who ^{shall also themselves also shall} tell ^{you} the same things by word of mouth.

28 For it seemed good ^e to the Holy Ghost, and ^f to us, ^g to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

^s ver. 2. ^w ch. 23. 26. James 1. 1. Cp. 2 John 10, 11. ^x ver. 1. Cp. Gal. 2. 4 & 5. 12 & Tit. 1. 10. ^y Gal. 1. 7 & 5. 10. ^z See ch. 1. 14. ^a Cp. 2 Pet. 3. 15. ^b ch. 9. 23-25 & 14. 19. Cp. 2 Macc. 14. 38. ^c Cp. ch. 20. 24 & 21. 13 & 2 Cor. 4. 11 & 1 John 3. 16. ^d vers. 22, 32. ^e Cp. ver. 8 & ch. 5. 32 & John 16. 13 & 1 Cor. 7. 40. ^f Cp. ver. 19. ^g Cp. ver. 10 & Rev. 2. 24.

more easily inclined to take upon themselves the few elementary precepts laid down in the decree of the Jerusalem church, so as to avoid any serious cause of offence to their Jewish-Christian brethren."¹

THE DECISION, AND LETTER TO ANTIOCH, vers. 22-29.

22. The decision was unanimous in accordance with the recommendation of James. With the whole church, not merely the leaders,

To send chosen men, to choose and then send men of their own company.

They sent a delegation and a letter. The letter stated clearly their decision; the delegation gave dignity and force to the letter, and confirmed the reports of Paul and Barnabas, so that there could be no possible feeling that the report was colored by their previous opinions. Judas surnamed (or called) Barsabas, son of Sabas or Sabbas. In Acts 1 : 23 a Joseph Barsabas is named as the alternate with Matthias as a candidate for the apostleship in place of Judas. This Judas Barsabas may have been his brother, and hence one who had personally known Jesus. Silas, probably a shortened form of Silvanus. He became Paul's companion in his next missionary journey (ver. 40). He is referred to in Acts 16 : 19, 25, 29; 17 : 4, 10, 14; 18 : 5; 2 Cor. 1 : 19; 1 Thess. 1 : 1; 2 Thess. 1 : 1; 1 Pet. 5 : 12.

23. Send greeting, χαίρειν, rejoice, hail, welcome, the usual Greek salutation. Joy be with you. Compare our good-by (good = God, by = be with you) and farewell. Of all the epistles that of James alone begins with this word χαίρειν;

suggesting that James himself made the draft of this letter.

24. Certain which went out from us, and therefore for whom we seem to be in a measure responsible, and whose teachings we would now correct. Subverting, ἀνασκευάζοντες, from ἀνδ, up, and σκεῦος, a utensil; to pack up utensils or baggage in order to move to another place; hence, a general overturning, dismantling, as a house, or plundering a town or field. A very expressive metaphor for the general upsetting and unsettling of the disciples' minds and consciences.

To whom we gave no such commandment. They went on their own responsibility, and did not represent the church.

25. Being assembled with one accord, γενομένοις ὁμοθυμαδόν, having become of one mind, having come to one accord.

Our beloved Barnabas and Paul. Thus showing to the Antioch church in what high esteem the Jerusalem church held these men. There may have been need of this commendation on account of a Judaizing element in that church who would naturally disparage Paul and Barnabas.

26. Men that have hazarded their lives. They recognized the courage and heroism of the two missionaries, and perhaps all the more on account of John Mark's report of the dangers on account of which he had returned. This fact in their lives proved their sincerity and worthiness.

27. We have sent, etc. Judas and Silas would tell the whole story of the conference, and would speak with the authority of the church they represented.

28. It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, who,

¹ Knowing.

29 ^h That ye abstain ⁱ from ^{ments offered} things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ^{ye} shall ^{do} be well with you. ^j Fare ye well.

30 So they, when they were dismissed, ^{they} came down to Antioch; and ^{when they} ^{had} gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle:

31 ^{Which} And when they had read ^{it}, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Jū'dās and Sī'lās, ^k being ^{prophets also themselves,} themselves also prophets, ^l exhorted the brethren with many words, and ^m confirmed ^{them.} them.

33 And after they had ^{tarried there a space,} spent some time ^{there,} they were ^{let go} dismissed ⁿ in peace from the brethren unto ^{the apostles,} those that had sent them forth.

34 Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

^h See ver. 20. ⁱ ch. 21. 25. 1 Cor. 8. 1, 4, 7, 10 & 10. 19. Rev. 2. 14, 20. ^j ch. 23. 30 (mg.). 2 Macc. 11. 21.
^k See ch. 13. 1. ^l ver. 1. ^m See ch. 14. 22. ⁿ Gen. 26. 29. Heb. 11. 31. Cp. 1 Cor. 16. 11.

by what he had done for the Gentiles by apostles who were filled with the Holy Spirit, showed as plainly as actions could speak what the divine will was. The decision was not merely man's opinion, but was inspired by God. And to us who accepted the result thus inspired, and were heartily convinced that it was right. What could convince them ought to convince and satisfy the church everywhere. These necessary things, not necessarily as conditions of salvation, but necessary for right conduct toward the heathen, and necessary for the unity and mutual intercourse of Jews and Gentiles.

29. That ye abstain from. Here follow the four restrictions named in the speech of James.¹

Ye shall do well, it will be well for you and for the whole church.

Fare ye well, *ἐββάσθε*. Be strong, Prosper, Farewell, the usual formula in closing a letter.²

RECEPTION OF THE DELEGATES AND THE DECREE AT ANTIOCH, vers. 30-35.

30. When they were dismissed. "Probably there was a formal and solemn dismissal on the part of the church, as when Paul and Barnabas were sent forth on their missionary journey (Acts 13: 3)."³

They delivered the epistle, *ἐπέδωκαν*. The word denotes to give over into the hands of another, to surrender a trust.

31. Which, better And, *δέ*, corresponding with "so," *μὲν οὖν*, of ver. 30.⁴

They rejoiced for the consolation, *παράκλησει*, the abstract noun corresponding to *παράκλητος*, the Comforter of John 14; from *παρά*, to the side of, and *καλέω*, to call, or summon, for comfort or help, as an advocate, counsellor, comforter, like the influential friends at Rome who stood beside one accused before the courts, and used their rank, wealth, character, and power in aiding, strengthening, and encouraging the prisoner. It is not the taking away altogether of sorrow, but transforming and transfiguring it, and compelling it to bestow blessings otherwise impossible. It is not so much soothing as strengthening, inspiring, invigorating. It is the imparting of courage and fresh life.

"A shivering man may be wrapped in blankets, brought to the fire, and so warmed for a time. That is our conception of 'comforting.' His vital forces may be stimulated and increased till they drive away the chill and conquer the cold. That is the New Testament idea of 'comforting.'"⁵

32. Exhorted, *παρεκάλεσαν*, the verb corresponding to *παράκλησει*, consolation. They brought the consolation by means of their words.

33. They were let go, dismissed; the same verb as is used in ver. 30 to express their departure from Jerusalem.

In peace; satisfied that they had brought peace and harmony to the church at Antioch.

34. This verse is omitted from the best MSS. as marginal comment by some one to explain how

¹ "In necessariis unitas;
In dubiis libertas;
In omnibus caritas."

"In essentials unity;
In non-essentials liberty;
In all things charity."

² "Weizsäcker and McGiffert maintain that the decree was formulated after Paul's departure, when James had reconsidered the matter, and had determined that some

restriction should be put upon the complete Gentile liberty which had been previously granted. But this view can only be maintained by the sacrifice of 16 : 4, where Paul is distinctly said to have given the decrees to the churches to keep." — Knowing.

³ Glogau.

⁴ See Rendall's note on *μὲν οὖν*, Appendix, p. 160.

⁵ See Aldis Wright's *Bible Word Book*, pp. 146, 147, for examples of this use; also Wm. Burnet Wright's *Master and Man*, on "Comfort."

35 But Paul ^{also} and Barnabas ^{continued tarried} in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And ^{some days after} Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us ^{go again} ^{return now} and visit ^{our} ^{the} brethren ⁱⁿ every city ^{where} ^{wherein} we ^{have preached} ^{proclaimed} the word of the Lord, *and see how they fare.*

37 And Barnabas ^{determined was minded} to take with them ^a John ^{whose surname was also, who was called} Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take ^{him} with them ^{him} ^{who} ^{departed withdrew} from them from Pām-phŷl'f-ā, and went not with them to the work.

o ch. 13. 1.

l ver. 1.

p ch. 13. 4, 13, 14, 51 & 14. 6, 24, 25.

q See ch. 12. 12.

r ch. 13. 13.

Paul could take Silas with him on his next missionary journey.

Or it may be, as Ramsay suggests, that the officials of the church at Antioch simply informed Judas and Silas that their duties were concluded and they were free to return home, but Silas did not avail himself of the permission. The fact that the Bezan reviser found ver. 34 in the text, and added to it the comment "and Judas went alone," constitutes a distinct proof of its genuineness.¹ On the other hand, from the fact that at first in Paul's second missionary journey the singular "he" is used, and the plural "they" not till 16: 4, after Paul had reached Asia Minor, it is argued that Silas went back to Jerusalem, and then went by sea to Asia Minor and met Paul there, just as Barnabas probably had to send to Jerusalem for Mark, who had gone there some time before, 13: 13.²

35. Paul . . . continued in Antioch. The phrase is very indefinite, and may have included days (ver. 36), weeks, or months. We would naturally expect that Paul would have hastened to continue his missionary work. "The Epistle to the Galatians fully explains this delay. The centre of interest was transferred from Jerusalem to Antioch, which Peter visited after the return of Paul and Barnabas. Here some Christians from Jerusalem, who still retained prejudices against full communion with Gentile Christians, attempted indirectly to undermine the recent settlement, and succeeded in gaining some countenance from Peter and Barnabas, against which Paul found it necessary to protest openly."³

NOTE. "The struggle for Gentile freedom waged by St. Paul is typical of the battle for freedom of conscience, for freedom of knowledge,

for human rights, and of every other battle against tyranny and wrong which the world has ever seen."⁴ Few errors do as much harm as tyranny. Liberty is as rigidly to be demanded for conservatism as for newer and more radical views. Some temporary evils arise from it, but a thousand worse ones from attempting to suppress it.⁵

PLANNING FOR A NEW MISSIONARY CAMPAIGN, vers. 36-41.

THE PROPOSAL. 36. Let us go again and visit our brethren. It was at least a year since they had seen the churches they had founded. Paul would visit his spiritual children to see how they were growing in grace. He would look at the tender vines in the vineyard he had planted, to see what further care was required. These churches, so far separated from others, having received but a small portion of the truths of the gospel, exposed to temptations, to errors, and to dangers, had no small need of apostolic care and training. Barnabas was quite ready to go.

37. And Barnabas determined, ἐβουλεύσατο, wished, planned, took council with himself. "Determined" is too positive a word. To take with them John . . . Mark. Mark was the kinsman of Barnabas, and wished to go. He may have been sorry that he left the missionary company three or four years before, especially when at Jerusalem he heard the glowing accounts of their success, and was fired with new missionary zeal.

38. But Paul thought not good, etc. But Paul was unwilling to risk taking with them as a helper one who had left them in the lurch in the midst of their first journey. If at that time he was sick with the malarial fever, the loss of

¹ St. Paul, 175.

² So Knowing. See Rendall.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Prof. Stokes in *Expositor's Bible*.

⁵ The freedom given to men by Christ is illustrated by the drama of *William Tell*, where Tell is represented as overtaken in the mountains by a furious storm, and saying,—

"I thought of other lands whose storms

Are summer flaws to those of mine and just

Have wished me there: the thought that mine was free

Has checked that wish: and I have raised my head,

And cried in thralldom to that furious wind,

'Blow on! this is the land of liberty!'"

So the Christian dwells in the land of liberty, and he can say to every impulse and desire of his renewed heart,

"Blow on! this is the land of liberty."

39 And ^{the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed} asunder one from the other; and ^{so} Barnabas took Mark ^{with him,} and sailed away unto Cyprus;

s Cp. ch. 17. 16 (Gk.). t Cp. Col. 4. 10.

one on whom he had depended may have touched his feelings too deeply for him to risk it again; and left the impression that Mark would not make a good missionary on such dangerous journeys as he would have to make.

39. And the contention was so sharp. "There came to be a sharp contention," *παροξυσμός*, from *παροξύνω*, to make sharp, hence, irritation, exasperation, excitement, sometimes anger; in Acts 17: 16, *righteous provocation*. That they departed asunder, as the only wise solution of the difficulty. "The altercation which determined Paul and Barnabas to follow each of them his own independent course, though it turned on the conduct of Mark, was not purely personal. While Mark had formerly preferred the ties of Jerusalem to the claims of the mission to the Gentiles, Barnabas had recently been tempted by Jerusalem influences to put a slight on Gentile Christians. The hearts of both were evidently turning back to Jerusalem, while Paul was looking forth to the great Gentile world as his future harvest. They did well, therefore, to sever their connection. It enabled each to choose the sphere of labor he most coveted. There is no trace of permanent estrangement."¹ It has been exaggerated into a "quarrel bitter and angry." There was certainly a sharp, excited manifestation of feeling, but there is no sign of anger, nor of bitter words. It was not a case "where neither put in practice the exquisite and humble Christian lesson of putting up with less than his due." They did not "part in anger." Nor is it true "neither would yield to the other; therefore both were wrong." On the contrary, they seem to have separated as friends. Says Conybeare, "It is very likely that they made a deliberate and amicable arrangement to divide the region of their first mission between them." Paul mentions Barnabas with honor in his writings (1 Cor. 9: 6; Gal. 2: 1, 9).² "In his two imprisonments St. Paul mentions Mark in terms of high approval (Col. 4: 10, 11; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4: 11). In the first imprison-

ment St. Paul significantly recommends him to the Colossians as being the cousin of Barnabas, one of his own fellow laborers unto the kingdom of God, one amongst the few who had been a *παρηγορία*, a comfort unto him. In such words as these St. Paul breaks the silence of the years during which we hear nothing of the relations between him and Mark, although the same notice in Colossians seems to indicate an earlier reconciliation than the date of the letter, since the churches of the Lycus valley had already been instructed to receive Mark if he passed that way."³

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Paul and Barnabas were among the choicest saints the earth has ever known. But they were of very different natures, just as a flower, a fruit, a gold coin, a watch, a steam-engine, are all good, but in entirely different ways. Two parts of a tune, each one perfect of its kind, will make wonderful harmony if set to the same key, but the same perfect parts bring only discord if set to different keys. I can conceive of two angels as working best in different spheres. This is the legitimate way in which different denominations arise, — one wishes to shout in meeting, another to be quiet; one loves to worship with a liturgy, another with words born of the occasion. All are right; but they must act separately in order to be in perfect harmony. It is only when they separate with wrong feelings, or oppose one another, and refuse to unite where union is possible, that there is sin.⁴

2. At the same time the narrative implies some degree of imperfection. But would to God that no friends, no Christians, had worse imperfections. Such a difference of opinion and separation would scarcely be noticed at all in any ordinary person. It shows that they were human, of "like passions as we are," with the same difficulties, the same temptations of temper, the same liability to differences of opinion. It shows, too, that God can do very great work for the salvation of men with imperfect instruments. Indeed,

¹ Rendall.

² See *Expositor*, August, 1897, "St. Mark in the N. T.," by Dr. Swete, p. 85.

³ Knowing.

⁴ Dr. Holmes in his *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* makes it plain that there are at least six personalities distinctly to be recognized as taking part in a dialogue between John and Thomas:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Three Johns. | { | 1. The real John, known only to his Maker. |
| | | 2. John's ideal John, never the real one, and often very unlike him. |
| | | 3. Thomas's ideal John, never the real John, nor John's John, but often very unlike either. |
| Three Thomases. | { | 1. The real Thomas. |
| | | 2. Thomas's ideal Thomas. |
| | | 3. John's ideal Thomas. |

It is not strange that they should misunderstand each other, and not always agree.

40 ^{And} But Paul chose Silas, and ^{departed,} ^{went forth,} "being recommended by" the brethren ^{unto} ^{to} the "grace of ^{God.} the Lord."

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, "confirming the churches."

u ch. 14. 26. v ver. 1. w ver. 11. Cp. ch. 11. 23. See Rom. 16. 20. x ver. 32. ch. 16. 5.

all the progress of the world has been made in this way, not by the imperfections, but in spite of them.¹

3. It is well that the faults as well as the virtues of God's saints are recorded.²

4. Both suffered on account of the division. Paul had to part "from the man to whom he probably owed more than to any other human being; and Barnabas was separated from the grandest spirit of the age." "They never met again."³

5. God overruled this event to the furtherance of the gospel. There were two streams of missionary influence instead of one, and all the persons concerned did good work for the cause. It has been said that Barnabas was proved to be in the right by the sequel, for Mark regained the confidence of Paul, and became a highly useful man. Barnabas certainly had the deep insight of a loving, enthusiastic spirit; but it seems almost certain that Paul's refusal was the sharp discipline by which Mark's full manhood was brought out.

Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus. Here "he could be sure of influence, since by family he belonged to the Jews settled there (4 : 36)." Barnabas is not mentioned again in the Acts. "Mark was stirred up to greater diligence by Paul, and the kindness of Barnabas made him cling to him all the more devotedly."⁴ The results of their work are not recorded in the Acts, but are recorded in the great Book of Life, to be made known at some future day.

40. And Paul chose Silas, not in the place of Mark, but of Barnabas.

"The same antecedents that made Silas a welcome representative at Antioch of the Jerusalem church recommended him to Paul as a companion in his new mission. While he stood high in the

confidence of his own church, his selection proves his cordial sympathy with Paul and Barnabas on the question of Gentile liberty. He was moreover like Paul a Roman citizen, and therefore more in sympathy with a Græco-Roman population than most Jews, and better able to enter into Paul's enthusiastic desire to win the Roman world to Christ."⁵

Recommended by the brethren, showing their utmost confidence in him.

41. And he went. The singular number, implying that while Paul had chosen him, Silas was not at Antioch at the time, but met Paul in Asia Minor (16 : 4, where the plural begins to be used). Paul therefore started alone from Antioch, by land along the road leading north, and then turning west to Tarsus in Cilicia. Here he struck the great Roman road through the Cilician gates, the pass through the Taurus mountains to Derbe and Lystra, and afterwards to Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia, in the opposite order from that of his first visit to these places. At Lystra Paul was joined not only by Silas but by Timothy, and at Troas by Luke (16 : 10, where "we" is first used).

Through Syria, in order to reach Cilicia by land. Here he was at his old home, where he had spent some time after his conversion (9 : 30; 11 : 25; Gal. 1 : 21-23).

Confirming the churches, ἐπιστηρίζων, from ἐπι, denoting increase, addition, more of a thing, and στήριζω, to make firm, to strengthen; hence, to make more strong and firm, to establish on a firmer foundation, by his instructions and personal experience. The mention of churches in Cilicia, although nothing had been previously said of their founding, is a confirmatory coincidence of Gal. 1 : 21 and Acts 11 : 25, where it is said that Paul had been in Cilicia since his conversion.

¹ Mrs. Gatty, in her *Parables from Nature*, "Imperfect Instruments," gives a beautiful illustration of God's use, and our use, of imperfect instruments in doing his work.

² Max Müller, in his *Autobiography*, quotes Prof. Jowett as saying: "Friends always think it necessary (except Boswell, that great genius) to tell lies about their deceased friend; they leave out all his faults, lest the public should exaggerate them. But we want to know his faults, — that is probably the most interesting part of him." Then he adds: "Surely every man has his faults, and his little and often ridiculous weaknesses, and these weaknesses brought quite as much to a man's character as his strength; nay, with the suppression of the former, the

latter would often become almost unintelligible." He compares such faultless biographies to photographs or pictures with every characteristic wrinkle rubbed out.

³ Stalker. See Jacox' *Secular Annotations*, vol. ii, p. 152.

Thackeray's *Virginians*, where George Warrington lets fall a choice cup, and in his fever dreams afterwards exclaims, "Broken, broken; never, never can be mended."

Coleridge has a poem of two friends in youth who "parted ne'er to meet again : —"

"They stood aloof, the scars remaining;
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder."

⁴ Knowling.

⁵ Rendall.

CHAPTER 16.

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

ASIA MINOR AND EASTERN EUROPE.

ASIA MINOR. Revisiting the churches, vers. 1-8.	{ Derbe. { Timothy joins Paul. { Lystra. { Silas joins Paul. { Iconium. { Jerusalem resolutions given to the churches. { Antioch. { Rapid growth. { Region of Galatia. { Phrygia. { Guidance by the Spirit. { Troas. { Vision of Paul.	A. D. 50. Spring.
EUROPE. Founding of the first church, at Philippi, vers. 9-15.	{ The call to Macedonia. { Entering Europe. { Philippi. { Prayer meeting by the river. { Conversion of Lydia.	A. D. 50, 51.
PHILIPPI, vers. 16-40.	{ The pythoness. { Saved by Paul. { Imprisonment of Paul and Silas. { Singing hymns in prison. { The midnight deliverance. { Conversion of the jailor. { Release of Paul and Silas.	

1 ^{THEN} AND he came ^{he also} to Dēr'bē and to Lŷs'trā: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named ^{Tim'o-the-us,} ^{Tim'o-thy,} the ^{son of a} ^{certain woman, which was a} Jewess' ^{and} ^{which} believed; but his father ^{was} a Greek:

y ch. 17. 14 & 18. 5 & 19. 22 & 20. 4. Rom. 16. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 17. Phil. 2. 19. Col. 1. 1. 1 Thess. 3. 2. 2 Thess. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 2, 18. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Heb. 13. 23, al. z 2 Tim. 1. 5 & 3. 15.

REVISITING THE CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR, vers. 1-8.

1. Then came he, *κατήντησεν*. "This word always in the Acts denotes arrival either at some definite stage, or at the final goal of a journey."¹ To Derbe and Lystra, in the natural order as he came by land from Antioch through Cilicia. The two are grouped together as belonging to one Region of the Roman government. The repetition of the "to," *eis*, before Lystra in the Greek of our version, indicates that Lystra alone is referred to in the story of Timothy, who belonged in that city.

Timotheus, *Τιμόθεος*, honored of God. He was probably converted during Paul's first missionary journey, for Paul calls him his "own son in the faith" (1 Tim. 1: 2).

The son of a certain woman, . . . a Jewess. Her name was Eunice, *Εὐνίκη*, and his grandmother was Lois (2 Tim. 1: 5), who having become believers carefully trained Timothy in the Scriptures.

But his father was a Greek, probably not even a proselyte, or Timothy would have been circumcised as a child; for such a duty according to Jewish law rested primarily upon the father.² And yet he may have been a religious man like Cornelius, or the Capernaum centurion. Such mixed marriages were not uncommon at the time among the Dispersed Jews, although they were forbidden by the law (Ezra 10: 2). "Grotius asserts that whilst the law strictly prohibited Jews marrying Gentile women, it did not forbid a Jewess to marry a Gentile; and he appeals to the case of Esther. But Josephus, on the other hand, in mentioning the marriage of Drusilla to Felix, expressly says that Drusilla married Felix in contempt of the law (*Antiq.* 20: 7, 2). According to the notions of the strict Jews, the children of such mixed marriages were regarded as illegitimate (Ewald)."³ The tradition is that his father was dead at this time, from the curious addition of "widow" in Acts 16: 1, in one manuscript (compare 1 Tim. 5: 4, 5). Blass infers the same from

¹ Rendall.

² See Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 115.

³ Gloag.

2 ^{Which}_{The same} was well reported of by the "brethren that were at Lys'tră and Ī-cō-ni-ūm.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and ^{he}_{he} took and circumcised him because of the Jews ^{which}_{that} were in those ^{quarters}_{parts}: for they ^{knew all}_{all knew} that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went ^{on their way}_{that were} through the cities, they delivered them the "decrees for to keep, ^{which had been}_{which that} ordained of the "apostles and elders ^{which}_{that} were at Jerusalem.

5 ^{And so were the churches established}_{So the churches were strengthened} in the "faith, and increased in number ^h_{daily}.

a See John 21. 23.

b Cp. Gal. 2. 3.

c ch. 17. 7.

d ch. 15. 28, 29.

e See ch. 15. 2.

f Cp. ch. 9. 31.

g See ch. 6. 7.

h ch. 2. 47.

the use of the past tense in ver. 3, "was (had been) a Greek."

2. Which was well reported of, *ἐμυνησμένοι, borne witness to, by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium*. Lystra is nearer to Iconium than to Derbe. The commercial and social relations between the two cities were very close. The fact that Timothy was well reported of in these cities shows that he must have been active in Christian work, and thus prepared for the larger work now offered to him.

3. Him would Paul have to go forth with him. The generalship and wisdom of Paul are shown by his selection of his assistants and co-workers. Circumcised him because of the Jews. The special interest in this fact is its connection with the decree just brought to the churches from Jerusalem, and Paul's own well-known opinions.

1. This was not contrary to these, for the decree was for Gentiles and not for Jews. The Jews had liberty to remain Jews, and the Gentiles liberty not to become Jews.

2. It was in accord with Paul's well-known opinions, for it was not done as a condition of salvation, and hence was a matter of indifference. "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5: 6). The case of Titus (Gal. 2: 3), whom Paul refused to circumcise, came under an entirely different principle. For Titus was a Greek, a Gentile, and his conforming to the Jewish ceremonial was demanded as an essential condition of salvation, on the express ground that Gentiles must become Jews in order to be Christians. Paul repelled this in defence of his vital principle. It was contrary to the decision of the council.

3. In the case of Timothy no principle was involved. It was simply a question of effectual labor among the Jews. Paul never required them to give up their Jewish ceremonies in order to be Christians (Gal. 5: 6). It would have been as bigoted and unreasonable to forbid circumcision

as a national rite, for the sake of the work, as it would have been to insist on it as a condition of salvation. Paul simply carried out his words, "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews" (1 Cor. 9: 20). Paul was sometimes misunderstood as to his course in this matter, but his action was eminently wise, conciliatory, and Christian, — an example to be followed by all Christians. For Timothy, being the son of a Jewess, was regarded as a Jew. If he remained uncircumcised, he would be regarded as a renegade Jew, and an object of abhorrence to the Jews, and as such would be shut out from influencing them; and Paul, as his companion and defender, would also be greatly hindered in his work. (See Rom. 1: 16; 3: 1; 1 Cor. 9: 20.)¹

4. They delivered them the decrees, *τὰ δόγματα, opinions, precepts*, the four rules described in the last chapter. "St. Paul might well feel himself bound to deliver the decree to the churches evangelized by him before the conference in Jerusalem. Weiss, therefore, is probably right in pointing out that as no mention is again made of any similar proceeding, the action was confined to the Pauline churches which had been previously founded, churches which were, as it were, daughter churches of Antioch."² In the churches later formed he could easily state the true principles involved, without a formal presentation of "decrees" that were not sent to them. The change from "he" of ver. 1 to "they" in ver. 4 indicates that here Silas joined Paul.

5. And so. Two results followed the promulgation of religious freedom to the Gentiles, and the renewed presence of Paul among the churches.

(1) Were the churches established in the faith, *ἐστερεοῦντο, strengthened, confirmed*. Their inner life was strengthened for every good word and work.

(2) And increased in number. The religion of Jesus became more attractive than ever before, with its freedom from Jewish ceremonies and claims, and great numbers rejoiced in "the

¹ For some difficulties in regard to this case, see McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, 233, 234.

² Knowing.

- 6 Now when ^{And} they ^{had gone throughout} went through the region of Phryg'ia and ^{the region of} Gă-lă'tiă, ^{and were} having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to ^{preach} speak the word in Asia;
- 7 ^{After} And when they were come ^{to} over against Mÿs'ia, they assayed to go into Bî-thÿn'î-ă; ^{but} and the Spirit of Jesus ^{suffered} them not;
- 8 And ^{they} passing by Mÿs'ia, they ^k came down to Troas.

† ch. 18. 23. Cp. Gal. 4. 13. † Rom. 8. 9. Gal. 4. 6. Phil. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Cp. ver. 6 & ch. 8. 29. † ch. 20. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 2. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 13.

glorious liberty of the sons of God," and entered into it through faith.

6. **Phrygia and the region of Galatia.** The better reading is that of the R. V., "the Region of Phrygia and Galatia," that is, the Phrygo-Galatic country, "ethnically Phrygian, and politically Galatian," that part of the Phrygian race which belonged to the Galatian province.¹ *Galatia* is *Gaulatia*, the country of the Gauls or Kelts.

Paul completes his work in this region by visiting all the churches there which were formed around Antioch and Iconium as centres.

And were forbidden, *καταθύρες*, hindered, prevented, forbidden, that is, hindered by a command. It is not said in what way they were forbidden, whether by inward monitions, by vision or other divine communication, or by some providence as a political disturbance. Very possibly the command came in more ways than one, each confirming the other. Compare Acts 8:26; 10:19; 13:2; 22:17-21. In verses 6-9 are recounted "the successive steps by which the Spirit overruled the will of the apostles in order to shape the destined course for them."

"Four events determined this course: first, the completion of the visitation tour; secondly, the prohibition to preach in Asia, which in the Acts means Asiatic Greece, the western zone of the province Asia, its eastern zone being designated Phrygia; thirdly, the prohibition to preach in Bithynia; fourthly, the vision at Troas. These are here presented in combination, and an examination of the circumstances enables the reader to see in them one continuous chain of divine appointment."²

It is quite probable that it was their plan to go to Rome, and begin their work in Europe at the centre of the empire; for Paul says in his letter to the Romans (15:22, 23), written in A. D. 58, only six years later, that he had "been much hindered from coming to you," while he had had "a great desire these many years to come unto you." Rome was not then in a condition for

Paul to begin his work there, for the Jews were expelled from Rome very soon after this (early in A. D. 52), and Paul, being a Jew, could not have remained there. Moreover, God had a much better way, as well as more fitting time, for Paul to go to Rome. To preach the word in Asia. They had now come within the province of Asia, the western province of Asia Minor, which included Mysia, Lydia, and Caria, and the cities Ephesus, Smyrna, and Sardis, and the others of the seven churches of Asia,³ but they were forbidden to preach there.

7. "They therefore kept to the north across Asia Phrygia with the intention of entering the adjoining province of Bithynia; but when they were come to (opposite) Mysia, where the road branched off to the left, 'skirting the southern borders of Mysia, till near the coast it struck into the coast road to Troas;' and assayed (were attempting) to go out of Asia into Bithynia, the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not."²

8. **And they passing by Mysia.** "Neglecting Mysia, that is, passing through it without preaching." They passed along Mysia, skirting it on the southern portion. "The words cannot mean 'passing by without entering.'" "Troas could not be reached without crossing Mysia."¹ **Came down to Troas.** A seaport in the same district as Homer's Troy, but farther south. On a later occasion Paul left his cloak, books, and parchments there (2 Tim. 4:13).

At Troas Luke joined the party, as we learn from the change in ver. 10 to the first person plural. This "throws valuable light on a critical period of his life. For he not only met the apostolic party at Troas, but joined them as an important partner in their work, accepting the summons to Macedonia as a personal call, and embracing the mission as his own. He accompanied them to Philippi, took part in preaching there, and abode in the city after the enforced departure of Paul and Silas, to complete the work of the mission. He had probably been converted during Paul's previous visit to Asia Minor."⁴

¹ So Ramsay, Knowling, and others. See Ramsay's *Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, which shows the road systems at various periods, and we see that a great Roman road followed the very route which St. Paul took. Suetonius (*Augustus*, 49) and Gibbon, in the second chap-

ter of his *History*, describe the postal system and routes of the Roman Empire.

² Rendall. See his Appendix on the Provinces of Asia Minor.

³ See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

⁴ Rendall.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There ^{stood} ^{was} a man of Măç-ē-dō'nī-ā' ^{and prayed} ^{standing, beseeching him, and saying,} Come over into Măç-ē-dō'nī-ā, and help us.

10 And ^{after} ^{when} he had seen the vision, ^{immediately} ^{straightway} we ^{endeavoured} ^{sought} to go forth ^{'into} Măç-ē-dō'nī-ā, ^{assuredly gathering} ^{concluding} that ^{the Lord} ^{God} had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

l vers. 11-17. ch. 20. 5-8, 13-15 & 21. 1-18 & 27. 1-28. 16. Cp. Col. 4. 14.

THE MACEDONIAN CALL, vers. 9, 10.

9. And a vision, *ὕπανα*, that which is seen, a sight divinely granted in an ecstasy or trance or



MODERN ARAB.



MODERN GREEK.

Showing how Paul might recognize the Greek of Macedonia by the difference in his dress.

From Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

sleep.¹ Luke never uses *ὕπανα*, the word for dream. Compare Joel 2: 28; Acts 2: 17; Luke 1: 22, Zacharias; Acts 10: 10, Peter; Acts 10: 3, Cornelius; Acts 18: 9; 22: 17; 27: 23; 2 Cor. 12: 2-10, Paul. There stood a man of Macedonia, recognized as from Macedonia by his dress (Blass), or by his words "come over into Macedonia." Ramsay, as Renan, thinks it was a vision of Luke whom Paul had previously known, and whom in his vision he recognized as his old physician and acquaintance who had some connection with Philippi, and whom Paul had met before somewhere in his travels.² Macedonia lay to the north of Greece. Thessalonica was its capital. "It had numerous flourishing cities, of which Philippi, Thessalonica, Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Berea are mentioned in the Acts. It now constitutes a part of Turkey; and notwithstanding the op-

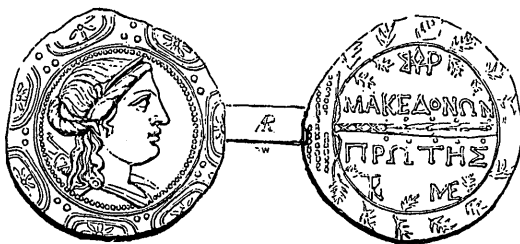
pression of the Turks, Christianity, though in a poor condition, exists to this day."³ Prayed him. "Beseeching him." Come over into Macedonia, and help us. "The form of the vision is striking. It does not come in the shape of a command from Christ, but in that of a petition from man."⁴

10. Immediately we endeavoured (sought means) to go. Paul's answer to the call was earnest and instant. Assuredly gathering, *συμβιβάζοντες*, bringing, or putting together, as for comparison; hence, examining as evidence, inferring, concluding from the various and persistent intimations by Providence, the Holy Spirit, and visions, and the finding of a new helper in Luke the good physician.

With ver. 10 we begin the first of the four "we sections" denoting that the writer was present and recorded the facts from personal knowledge. "They are evidently notes of travel written by one of Paul's own companions."⁵

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. "This in many respects is the most remarkable paragraph in Acts." The divine action is introduced three times in four verses, on three distinct occasions, the guidance being manifested in three different ways for one purpose.

"I know not the way I am going,
But well do I know my Guide."⁶



COIN OF MACEDONIA.

Obverse: The head of Diana.

Reverse: *Μακεδονῶν Πρωτῶν.*

(Of the Macedonians, First division.)

From the British Museum.

¹ Thayer.

² *St. Paul*, pp. 200-204. Goodwin's *Harmony of the Life of Paul* has an appendix on Paul's visions.

³ Glog.

⁴ Maclaren.

⁵ McGiffert, who, as others, regard them as one of "the sources" which the writer of the Acts (not Luke) used

in composing his book. These passages present a difficult problem, for which see *Apostolic Age*, pp. 236-239, 433-436. Knowling's *Acts*, Introduction. Ramsay, *St. Paul*, chaps. 8, 9.

⁶ See Bushnell's *Sermons for the New Life*, "Every Man's Life a Plan of God."

11 Therefore ^{loosing} ^{setting sail} ^{therefore} from Troas, ^{we} ^{came with} ^{made} a straight course to ^{Sam-o-thra'cia, and} ^{Sam-o-thra'ce,} and the ^{next day} ^{day following} to Nē-āp'ō-līs;

12 And from thence to "Phī-līp'pī, which is ^{the chief} ^a city ^{of that part} of Māç-ē-dō'-nī-ā, ^{and a} ^{the first of the district, a Roman} [°] colony: and we were in ^{that} ^{this} city ^{abiding} ^{tarrying} certain days.

m ch. 21. 1.

n Phil. 1. 1.

1 Thess. 2. 2.

o Cp. ver. 21.

2. As often to us so there came to Paul a very difficult question to decide. "He felt the whole heathen world calling him, but he did not know where to begin." "All Europe lay before him, but Asia lay behind him unevangelized." "Should he go forward, or should he turn back and make another experiment." "It might well seem to him a step of doubtful expediency, to leave the better known lands and peoples, and plunge into new and unfamiliar scenes."¹

3. Light is thrown by this incident upon the way God calls us to our work for him, and guides us in our decisions as to duty. (1) A great need of something to be done. (2) Fitness and power to do that work. (3) The guiding hand of Providence, hedging our way from other things. (4) The voice of the Holy Spirit, impressing our minds and guiding our judgments.

4. The figure of the Macedonian "embodies the unconscious cry of weary humanity, knowing certainly that it sorely needs help, but, alas! not knowing where is the help it needs. Neglected classes and peoples cry, with strong emphasis on the last word, 'Come and help us.' Men's needs are a legitimate argument with which to stir the church's zeal, though they are not the highest consideration. The true help for all sorrows of all men is to carry the gospel to them."²

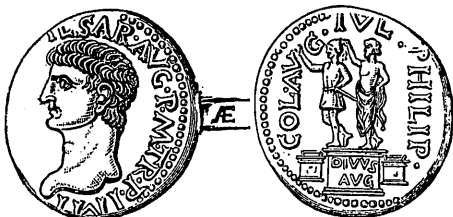
5. "In the light of eternity we shall see that what we desired would have been fatal to us, and that what we would have avoided was essential to our well-being."³ The unexpected meeting of Luke the physician at Troas, giving Paul physical aid, a helper, and a writer concerning his missionary labors, may have prolonged Paul's life for his work, as it certainly helped to make his work and influence immortal.

FOUNDING OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN EUROPE, vers. 11-15.

11. Samothracia was an island in the Ægean, on the Thracian coast, about sixty miles in an air-line from Troas, the highest point, except Mt. Athos, in this part of the Ægean, and a familiar landmark to sailors. The next day to Neapolis. "New city," the same word as "Naples." It was the seaport of Philippi, about seventy-five miles from Samothracia in an air-line.⁴ "With

adverse winds and calms the voyage from Philippi to Troas takes five days (Acts 20: 6)."⁵

PHILIPPI. 12. Thence to Philippi. About ten miles from Neapolis, on the river Gangites. The city was named after Philip of Macedon,



COIN OF PHILIPPI.

Obverse: Head of Augustus, with the legend, *Cæsar Aug. P. M. Tr. P. Imp.* (Cæsar Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribune Power, Imperator.) Reverse: Figure of a god crowning Augustus. Legend: *Col(onia) Aug(usta) Iul(ia) Philip(p)i*. From the British Museum.

its builder. About a mile to the north of Philippi in the mountains were the famous gold mines which yielded him the enormous sum of 1000 talents (\$30,000,000) a year.

On the plain west of the city near the river was fought one of the most memorable and decisive



THE TRIUMVIRATE, who gained the victory at Philippi: Octavius, Antony, Lepidus.

From C. W. King's *Antique Gems*.

battles in history, between Augustus Cæsar (then Octavius) and Antony, of the Roman Triumvirate, on the one side; and Brutus and Cassius, on the other, B. C. 52; almost exactly a century be-

¹ McGiffert.⁴ *Century Atlas*.² Maclaren.⁵ Knowing.³ Fénelon.

13 And on ^{the} sabbath day we went ^{out of the city} forth without the gate ^{by} a river side, where ^{prayer was wont to be made;} we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we ^{resorted thither,} sat down, and spake unto the women ^{which were come together.}

14 And a certain woman named *Lydia*, a seller of purple, of the city of *Thy-
ā-tīrā*, ^{which} one that ^{us:} worshipped God, heard ^{us:} 'whose' heart the Lord opened, ^{that} unto the things which were spoken ^{of} by Paul.

^p See ch. 13. 14.
^u 2 Macc. 1. 4.

^q Cp. Ezra 8. 15, 21 & Ps. 137. 1.

^r Matt. 5. 1.

^s ch. 13. 7.

^t See Luke 24. 45.

fore Paul came to win a greater victory there than Caesar, and found a more enduring empire than that of Rome.¹

Which is the chief city, rather, the first city they came to, of that part, district or province, of Macedonia. Thessalonica was the capital, but farther away in the interior.

And a Roman colony. To the victory of Augustus, Philippi owed the honor of being a Roman colony, not in the ordinary sense of a modern colony, but one "settled with freedmen and soldiers, and organized as to government, laws, and social customs on the model of imperial Rome." "It was a miniature likeness of the great Roman people." "They were governed by their own senate and magistrates."² "It was governed by two Roman magistrates (duumviri) referred to in ver. 20."³

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS was written to the church, now founded in this city, by Paul when in prison at Rome (A. D. 62), about ten years after this his first visit to them.

13. We went out of the city gates. Probably there was no synagogue in the city. Where prayer was wont (accustomed) to be made. R. V., "Where we supposed there was a place of prayer." "Where there was, according to custom, a place of prayer."⁴ "That the river side should be chosen as the place of resort was very natural for the purpose of the Levitical washings."⁵ It is much more probable that they went there as a pleasant place of retirement. "The word *προσευχή*, a place for prayer, is well known as the designation of a slight and temporary structure, commonly circular, frequently open to the sky, erected for the purposes of Jewish worship," especially where there were not enough Jews for a regular synagogue. "A modern parallel, until quite recently, was the Protestant place of worship at Rome, which was

compelled to be outside the city, beyond the Porta del Popolo."⁶

And spake unto the women which resorted thither. "It is noticeable that in the three Macedonian towns, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, women are especially mentioned as influenced by the apostles' labors, and, as in the case of Lydia, the women of Philippi occupied a position of considerable freedom and social influence. See this picture fully borne out by the Macedonian inscriptions, which assign to women a higher social position in Macedonia than was the case, for instance, in Athens,"⁷ where it was impossible for a woman of respectable position and family to have any opportunity of hearing Paul.⁷

14. Named Lydia, or a Lydian. Lydia was a common name among the Greeks and Romans. A seller of purple. "Either of the coloring matter, or, more likely, the fabric already dyed. The purple color, so esteemed in the ancient world, included many tints."⁸ "She was a seller at Philippi of the purple-dyed garments of Thyatira." "Lydia was evidently a person of some means, as capital would be required for the trade in so costly a material. That large fortunes were often made by dyers, we learn from an old epigram in the Greek anthology, which may be translated:—

"Our dyer was poor, but by dint of his art
He has dipped all his rags, and made himself smart."⁹

"Lydia was thus in a position to help Paul in the expenses connected with his trial." Of the city of Thyatira. The city of Thyatira, on the confines of Lydia and Mysia, and one of the seven churches of Asia addressed in the Apocalypse, was celebrated in very early days for its purple dyes and purple fabrics.

"And as by Lydian or by Carian maid,
The purple dye is on the ivory laid."¹⁰

¹ Compare Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Act IV., Scene 3, and Act V., Brutus' vision of Caesar's ghost; the battle of Philippi and the death of Brutus.

² Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*. Mommsen's *Rome*.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Wendt.

⁵ Knowling. See Juvenal's *Satires*, III. 2; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 14: 10, 23.

⁶ Prof. Isaac H. Hall.

⁷ See Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 227, 252.

⁸ Schaff.

⁹ *Greek Anthology*, xi. 423.

¹⁰ See Homer's *Iliad*, IV. 141.

15 And when she was baptized, and ^{her} household, she besought ^{us}, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she ^{was} constrained us.

16 And it came to pass, as we ^{were} going ^{to} ^{the} place of prayer, that a certain ^{damsel} ^{possessed with} ^{having} a ^{spirit} of ^{divination} met us, ^{which} brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

v See ch. 11. 14. w Gen. 19. 3. Luke 24. 29. z ver. 13. y Luke 13. 11. z See Lev. 19. 31. a ver. 19.

"Among the ancient inscriptions found at Thyatira are several relating to the guild of the dyers."¹ **Which worshipped God.** Who was truly religious, perhaps a Jewish proselyte. She was thus prepared for further light. "To him that hath shall be given." **Heard us.** Imp., denoting continuous hearing. **Whose heart the Lord opened,** by removing prejudices, enlightening her mind, making her receptive of the truth (see Matt. 11 : 25; Luke 24 : 45; 1 Cor. 3 : 6, 7). "Probably the opening was a process that had been going on for a long time. From day to day her heart longed more for God; from day to day

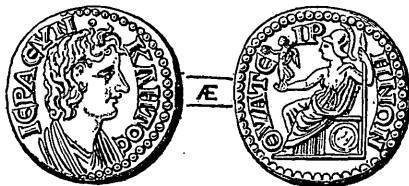
nected with her trade, or all these collectively, cannot easily be decided."³ "We do not know whether she had children, or even was married."⁴ **If ye have judged me to be faithful.** Then prove it, and reward me by coming into my house, making it your home. **She constrained us,** *παρεβιάσατο*, "contrary to (*παρά*) their apparent intention," she used (moral) force (*βιάζω*), the word used by Jesus when he said the kingdom of heaven is taken by violence, as it were, carried by storm.

This, like Peter's reception at the house of Simon the Tanner, was an early instance of the hospitality characteristic of the early church.⁵

PAUL AND THE PYTHONESS, vers. 16-18.

16. A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, *πνεῦμα Πύθωνα*, a *Python spirit*, or, in another reading, *spirit of a Python*. "Python, in the Greek mythology, was the serpent which guarded Delphi, the famous oracle on Mt. Parnassus. According to the legend as related in the Homeric hymn, Apollo descended from Olympus in order to select a site for his shrine and oracle. Having fixed upon a spot on the southern side of Mt. Parnassus, he found it guarded by a vast and terrific serpent, which he slew with an arrow and suffered its body to rot (*Pythein*) in the sun. Hence the name of the serpent *Python* (rotting), *Pytho*, the name of the place, and *Pythian* applied to Apollo. The name *Python* was subsequently used to denote a prophetic demon, and was also used of soothsayers who practised *ventriloquism*, or speaking from the belly. The heathen inhabitants of Philippi regarded the woman as inspired by Apollo, and Luke . . . uses the term *Python-spirit*, presenting phenomena identical with the convulsive movements and wild cries of the Pythian priestess at Delphi."⁶

Professor Ramsay regards the damsel as a ventriloquist, and this art was no doubt one of the ways in which she manifested her frenzy or possession by a spirit. She was "a sibyl (*Doric σιο-βολλη* = *θεοῦ βουλῆ*, the will of God). The



COIN OF THYATIRA,
The birthplace of Lydia.

Obverse : *Ιερα συγκλητος*
(Sacred Senate.)

Reverse : *Θυατιρηνων*
(Of the Thyatirenes.)

From the British Museum. (Lewin.)

her prayer rose more eagerly to the throne."² From day to day she tried to do the Lord's will. She used the means of grace. Her experience deepened, and many things came to her with new power and meaning. Her heart was opened to the truth as flowers to the gentle influences of the spring sun.

15. **And when she was baptized.** As soon as she believed, she made a public profession of her faith in the appointed way, — by baptism. There is not much depth to the faith and love which do not desire openly to confess the Lord and Saviour in the way of his own appointment. **And her household.** "Whether we are to understand by this term her children, her slaves, or the work-people engaged in the manual employment con-

¹ Canon Tristram.

² Arnot.

³ Conybeare and Howson.

⁴ Plumptre. On the women of Philippi, see Lightfoot's *Commentary on Philippians*.

⁵ See Uhlhorn's *Charity in the Early Church*, pp. 91, 325.

⁶ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

17 The same ^{followed} Paul and us ^{and b} cried out, saying, These men are ^{the} ^{following after} servants of ^{most high} the God, which ^{show} ^{proclaim} unto ^{us} you ^c the way of salvation.

b See James 2. 19.

c Dan. 3. 26.

d See Mark 5. 7.

e Cp. ch. 9. 2 & Matt. 7. 14.

sibyls were usually regarded as maidens dwelling in lonely caves, or by inspiring springs throwing up vapors like those ascending from the chasm and cave at Delphi, which was discovered by its throwing some wandering goats into convulsions. They were possessed with a spirit of divination, and gave forth prophetic utterances while under the influence of enthusiastic frenzy."¹ The fame of Delphi became so widespread that foreign princes and nations eagerly sought responses from the sacred tripod, and loaded the altar with rich and costly offerings. The Philippians regarded the damsel as a priestess of the Delphic Apollo, and her masters interpreted her hysterical cries, "as the priests at Delphi did those of the Pythia, as inspired." This was the current pagan estimate of her case. Virgil's description of the Cumæan Sibyl Dēiph'ōbē, in the *Æneid*, written B. C. 30-20, furnishes a good idea of this slave girl's appearance when the afflatus came upon her. Even when the sibyl comes in view of the awful doors she begins to go through the terrible struggle which, according to all legends, invariably accompanied this form of prophecy.

"Her visage pales its hue,
Her locks dishevelled fly,
Her breath comes thick, her wild heart glows;
Dilating as the madness grows,
Her form looks larger to the eye,
Unearthly peals her deep-toned cry,
As breathing nearer and more near
The god comes rushing on his seer."²

"Her color changed, her face was not the same;
Her hair stood up, convulsive rage possessed
Her trembling limbs, and heaved her laboring
breast: . . .

Her staring eyes with sparkling fury roll,
When all the god came rushing on her soul.
Swiftly she turned, and foaming as she spoke.

At length her fury fell: her foaming ceased,
And, ebbing in her soul, the god decreased."³

This case is quite different in its manifestations from the demon-possession described in the Gospels. There are in our own day similar strange phenomena, connected with hypnotism, clairvoy-

ance, and allied subjects. Dr. Lyman Abbott says "she was a mixture of fraud, clairvoyance, insanity, and devil." The fraud, however, was doubtless chiefly in her owners, who pretended to interpret her ravings.

"It is worthy of note that a heathen medical author, Hippocrates, points out the distinctions between epilepsy and possession."⁴ He says that some symptoms of epilepsy were *popularly* attributed to Apollo.

Brought her masters much gain by sooth-saying, *μαντευομένη*, from *μαντις*, a seer, akin to *μαίνομαι*, to rave; hence, *delivering an oracle, practice of divination*. Our word "soothsayer" is literally one who *says the sooth* (truth), tells future facts, but is used of one who pretends to speak with prophetic powers. "Her masters traded on her supposed inspiration, and made the girl give answers to those who sought for oracular guidance in the perplexities of their lives,"⁵ or who came to have their fortunes told, or to get help in finding things that were lost. The slave girl procured them much employment by her hysterical cries, which they interpreted, probably very much according to the desires of their patrons. Even at Delphi the Pythian priestess could be bribed, as history presents us with several instances of such imposture.⁶ At Philippi, as at Delphi, the gains would be great. The wealth of the oracle at Delphi was so great that armies were sent to capture it, and the Phocians plundered the temple of \$11,000,000 of silver and gold.⁶ "The value of this poor slave was so great that she was the property of a joint stock company, as beyond the means of a private person; for such instances of possession were very rare."⁷

17. The same followed Paul, *κατακολουθοῦσα*, was following continuously (*κατά*), and cried, imp., kept crying. These men are the servants of the most high God. Ramsay thinks she had no special motive in uttering these words, but "with her sensitive nature she became at once alive to the moral influence which the intense faith by which the strangers were possessed gave them, and she must say what she felt without any idea of the result therefrom."⁸ But the expression

¹ Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, "Sibyllæ" and "Delphi."

² *Æneid*, Bk. VI. Translation in *Ancient Classics for English Readers*.

³ *Æneid*, Bk. VI. Dryden's translation.

⁴ Canon Tristram. Dr. Nevius in his *Demon Possession and Allied Themes* (1895) gives some very interesting testimony from his 40 years' observation in China. He relates the case of a female slave possessed of a spirit,

who was highly prized by her master as a means of gain. Others spoke in two, three, four, and even six separate voices speaking in character, or displayed knowledge which the normal person did not possess.

⁵ Plumptre.

⁶ Harper's *Classical Dictionary*. See Herodotus, 5: 62, 90; 6: 66.

⁷ Tristram.

⁸ *St. Paul*, 216.

18 And this ^{did she} ^{she did for} many days. But Paul, being ^{grieved,} ^{sore troubled,} turned and said to the spirit, I ^{command} ^{charge} thee ⁱⁿ the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And ^{he} ^{it} ^{came out} ^{that very} hour.

19 And ^{But} ⁱ when her masters saw that the hope of their ^{gains} ^{gain} was gone, they ^{caught} ^{held} hold on Paul and Silas, and ^{drew them} ^{dragged them} into the marketplace ^{unto} ^{before} the rulers,

20 And ^{when they had} brought them ^{unto} the magistrates, ^{saying,} ^{they said,} These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

^f Cp. Mark 1. 25, 34.
[&] 21. 30. James 2. 6.

^g See Mark 9. 38.

^h Cp. Matt. 17. 18.

ⁱ ver. 16. Cp. ch. 19. 25, 26.

^j ch. 17. 6-8

[&] 21. 30. James 2. 6. Cp. ch. 8. 3 & 18. 12 & Matt. 10. 18.

shew unto us the way of salvation points to the divided consciousness which we sometimes find in the gospel accounts of demoniacs, so that in her saner moments the girl cries out of her own misery with a longing for deliverance from her bodily and spiritual bondage, and feels herself as one of those who are looking for some way of salvation. See Mark 3: 11, 12; Luke 4: 34, 35.

18. But Paul, being *grieved*, *διανοηθείς*, *worked up* (*διδ*), *troubled*, *pained*, combining the ideas of grief, pain, and indignation.

The cause of the *grieved indignation* of Paul was complex. He pitied the sad condition of the slave girl; he was indignant that men should so misuse her for their own gain; and he felt that there was danger that her words might compromise the gospel, as if its power and blessings were connected in some way with evil spirits, divination, and sinful gains. Said to the spirit, as distinct from his victim. So the Master forbade the evil spirits to speak in his favor.

I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ, not in his own name, but the name of him who had all power over evil spirits, to come out of her, *ἐξελεῖν ἀπὸ*, to come out, and depart from her. "Its repeated use in the third Gospel to denote the cure of demoniacs proves that the author recognized the independent existence of the evil spirit after he had come out, and the danger of his returning to haunt his victim, unless bidden also to depart."¹

And he came out the same hour. "Here the history ends, as far as the damsel was concerned; but we can hardly think that she was left to drift back into ignorance and unbelief. Would not such a one find shelter and comfort at the hands of the women who 'labored' with the apostle? (Phil. 4: 2.) May we not think of her gratitude as showing itself in the gifts that were sent to the apostle, upon whom she had unwillingly brought so much suffering? (Phil. 4: 15.)"²

PAUL AND SILAS BEATEN AND IMPRISONED, vers. 19-24.

19. The hope of their gains was gone. With the departure of the spirit went all the value of the slave to them. Money was lost, but a soul was saved.

Farrar quotes "the interesting fact that the priest of Obo, in the Society Isles, found himself unable to reproduce his former convulsive ecstasies of supposed inspiration after his conversion to Christianity." Dr. Nevius found it the same in China.³ "Everywhere money the cause of evils: O that heathen cruelty! they wished the girl to be still a demoniac, that they might make money by her!"⁴

They caught hold of Paul and Silas, angry at their loss. "The most sensitive part of 'civilized' man is his pocket." "The love of money is the root of all evil." And drew, *ἔλκυσαν*, dragged with violence, into the marketplace, the public square where trials were held.

Unto the rulers, *ἄρχοντας*, "the ordinary Greek term for the supreme board of magistrates in any city."

20. Brought them to the magistrates, *στρατηγούς*, *civic commanders*, *prætors*. The two terms for rulers are regarded as referring to the same persons, by Blass, Weiss, and others. Knowing suggests that the words may refer to different stages in the case. The apostles were "violently dragged" before "the rulers," who happened to be in the marketplace, and then they were more gently "brought" before the chief magistrates, and the accusation assumed a political form.

These men, being Jews. "If the decree of Claudius expelling the Jews from Rome had been enacted it would easily have inflamed the minds of the people and the magistrates at Philippi against the Jews."⁵

"The real cause was not a religious, but a social and mercenary one," but the appeal to

¹ Rendall.

² Plumptre. See the poem *Beautiful Snow*.

³ *Demon Possession and Allied Themes*.

⁴ *Chrysostom, Homilies*, 30: 5.

⁵ Knowing. On the bad odor in which the Jews were held, see Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, xxviii.; *Juvenal*, xiv. 96-106. Also Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 19, etc.

21 And ^{the teach set forth} customs which ^{are it is} not lawful for us to receive, ^{neither or} to observe, ^{being} Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent ^{off} their ^{clothes,} garments ^{off them,} and commanded to ^m beat ^{them,} them with rods.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast ^{them} into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, ^{thrust cast} them into the inner "prison, and made their feet fast in the "stocks.

^k Cp. Esth. 3. 8. ^l Cp. ver. 12. ^m 2 Cor. 6. 5 & 11. 23-25. ¹ Thess. 2. 2. ⁿ See Luke 21. 12. ^o Job 13. 27 & 33. 11. Jer. 20. 2, 3 & 29. 26.

the rulers, to be effective, must be based upon the prejudices of the people. Do exceedingly trouble our city, *ἐκτραπείσουσιν*, from *ἐκ*, intensive, utterly, entirely, and *τραπείσσω*, to agitate as the sea, to throw into confusion or anarchy as an army or fleet, to trouble, disturb.

21. Customs . . . not lawful for us to receive, . . . being Romans. "Rome tolerated all religions, Judaism among the rest, but toleration did not extend to proselytizing. Attempts to convert a Roman was criminal, and conviction involved severe punishment. So, under the broad banner of the Turk, there is room for men of all religions. So long as they confine their religious activities to their own communities, they are unmolested; the moment an effort is made to convert a Moslem, bitterest passions are aroused. The apostate and those who have led him away are together held worthy of death. The Philippian magistrates were excited against the missionaries by the accusation that they had attacked the religion of Rome. Even so to-day, private revenge is often sought through groundless accusations against the enemy of having attacked Islam. This charge never fails to secure fanatical attention, and woe betide the poor unprotected Jew or Christian against whom it is brought!"¹ "How often in the ages of our fathers was it given in charge to the magistrates, to prohibit the performance of any foreign religious rites; to banish strolling sacrificers and soothsayers from the forum, the circus, and the city; to search for, and burn, books of divination; and to abolish every mode of sacrificing that was not conformable to the Roman practice."²

22. The multitude rose up together. An excited mob.³ The magistrates, without investigation or trial, rent off their clothes, the clothes of Paul and Silas. It was done not by their hands, but by their command. The sentence was, according to custom, "Summovete, lictores, despo-

liate, verberate," "Go, lictors, tear off their garments, scourge them." Commanded to beat them, *παθείναι*, from *πάβδος*, a rod; to beat with rods. The custom with the Romans was to inflict blows with rods upon the naked body.⁴ The magistrates feared the mob, and as these men were only a couple of foreign Jews, with no friends of account, they yielded to the pressure, and "to show how zealous they and the mob were for Roman law, they 'drove a coach-and-six clean through it.'" This was one of the three times Paul was beaten with rods (2 Cor. 11: 25), and is referred to by Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians, as having been "shamefully treated at Philippi" (1 Thess. 2: 2).

Why did they not escape by means of their Roman citizenship, as they did the next morning? Probably the clamor of the mob gave them no opportunity to be heard, and if they protested, their protests would be disregarded by the excited people. "The incident in 22: 25, which shows us how the apostle barely escaped a similar punishment amidst the tumult and shouts of the mob in Jerusalem, and the instances quoted by Cicero, *In Verrem*, v. 62, of a prisoner remorselessly scourged, while he cried 'inter dolorem crepitumque plagarum' *Civis Romanus sum*, enables us to see how easily Paul and Silas (who probably enjoyed the Roman citizenship, chap. 16, ver. 37) might have protested and yet have suffered."⁵ Again, "the colonists were Italians and spoke Latin. St. Paul spoke Hebrew and Greek, and though he may have known Latin, too, his Latin may not have been understood by these rough Roman soldiers."⁶

24. Thrust them into the inner prison. "The prison was probably like those in our Turkish cities. There is the outer and airier compartment, where people are herded together to await trial, or in punishment of trivial offences. Then there is the 'inner prison,' gloomy, oppressive, filthy, in which great or dangerous criminals are

¹ Rev. William Ewing, *Sunday School Times*.

² Livy, Book XXXIX. ch. 16.

³ Compare the story of Savonarola at Florence.

⁴ Livy, 2: 5.

⁵ Knowling.

⁶ Prof. Stokes.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas ^{prayed,} and ^{sang praises} unto God; and the prisoners ^{heard} were listening to them;

p Job 35. 10. Ps. 42. 8 & 77. 6 & 119. 62.

confined in chains or otherwise.”¹ “The Roman state prison was commonly attached to the government buildings, and consisted of two parts. The first was the *vestibule*, or outward prison, approached from the *prætorium*, and surrounded by cells opening into it. The prisoners who were confined in these cells had the benefit of the air



ANCIENT STOCKS.

and light which the hall admitted. From the vestibule there was a passage into the *interior* prison, called *Robur* or *Lignum*, from the beams of wood which were the instruments of confinement, or from the character of its floor. It had no window or outlet except this door, which, when closed, absolutely shut out light and air. This apartment was the place into which Paul and Silas were cast at Philippi. The utter darkness, the heat, and the stench of this miserable place, in which the inmates were confined day and night, is often dwelt upon by the martyrs and their biographers.”² Their feet fast in the stocks. “An instrument of torture as well as of confinement, consisting of a heavy piece of wood with holes, into which the feet were placed in such a manner that they were stretched widely apart so as to cause the sufferer great pain. Frequently the stocks had five holes,” for spreading the feet at different distances apart.³ “Potter, in his *Roman Antiquities*, tells us that not unfre-

quently they dislocated the joints.”⁴ One of the “stocks,” like the one referred to here, was found in Pompeii.

NOTE. Worldly opposition to the gospel still grows chiefly from this same cause. The gospel stands absolutely and forever against unjust gains, oppressions of the poor, lotteries, and gambblings, and all methods of making money by injuring others, while it always favors true and lasting prosperity, and enriches the community where it is obeyed. So long as those who preach the gospel do not interfere with the business or gains of bad men, they are apt to let it alone. But when it does interfere, and there are efforts to reform the evils, opposition arises; then “These good men do exceedingly trouble our city.” They say as Ahab to Elijah, “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” Or like the hog-raisers of Gadara, they desire Jesus, with his gospel, to depart out of their borders. The real reasons for the opposition are kept in the background, while plausible moral and religious reasons are presented to the public.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT, ver. 25.

Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises. Literally, “praying, they sang hymns,” both in one act. “Their wounds were undressed, filth and vermin added to their pain, their position was one of torture, sleep was out of the question. But they passed the night in devotions. The imperfect tenses of the verbs in this verse imply that the prayers and singing were continued. It is very probable that they used the Psalms, some of which would be especially appropriate. It is a significant fact that the most joyous of Paul’s epistles is that written to the church at Philippi, born out of his experience of suffering.”⁵ And the prisoners heard them, were listening to them, for such songs were an unusual sound in prison.⁶ Like Christian and Hopeful, in Giant Despair’s Dungeon, the apostles found the key of hope. They were like Daniel in the lions’ den.⁷ Com-

¹ Rev. William Ewing.

² John Henry Newman in *Calista*.

³ “Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, vi. 39, writes of the noble Origen’s sufferings when, under an iron collar and in the deepest recesses of the prison, for many days he was stretched to the distance of four holes in the stocks.”—Schaff.

⁴ Gloag.

⁵ Lyman Abbott.

⁶ Compare Madame Guyon’s poem, *A Little Bird am I*, written while she was in prison at Vincennes, and the prayer of Mary Queen of Scots on the night before her execution:—

“O domine Deus! speravi in te!
O care mi Jesu! nunc libera me!

In dura catena—in misera pœna—
Desidero te!

Languendo, gemendo, et genu flectendo,
Adoro, imploro, ut liberet me!”

⁷ Farrar, in his *Messages of the Books*, pp. 303-306, contrasts Paul’s rejoicing in prison with great and world-known men in far less painful circumstances, such as Ovid, Seneca, Dante.

Dr. Wm. Butler’s *From Boston to Bareilly* says that it

26 And suddenly there ^{was} a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the ^{prison} ^{prison-house} were shaken: and immediately ^{all} the doors were opened; and ^{every one's} bands were loosed.

27 And the ^{keeper of the prison} ^{awaking} ^{jailor being roused} out of ^{his} sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, ^{he} drew out his sword, and ^{would have killed} ^{was about to kill} himself, supposing that the prisoners had ^{been fled.} ^{escaped.}

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

q See ch. 4. 31.

r ch. 5. 19 & 12. 10.

s ch. 12. 7.

t Cp. ch. 12. 19 & 27. 42 & 1 Kin. 20, 39.

pare the Hallelujah victory in the valley of Bera-chah, recorded in 2 Chron. 20. All the Jewish army did was to look on and sing songs of praise, while the different bands of the enemy slew one another.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT ARE SIGNS OF THE MORNING. (1) When we praise God in the night, we are led to see the best things of life, — God, heaven, holiness, salvation. (2) Songs in the night are a proof of our sincerity. Any one can sing in the daytime, but it takes faith to sing in the night. (3) Songs in the night recommend our religion to others. (4) We are fitted by a thankful spirit to receive deliverance and greater blessings. (5) The night gives God an opportunity of showing us his wonderful goodness and power. Only to those confronted by the sea can a path be made through the waters. Only in the thirsty land can water flow from the smitten rock.

THE MIDNIGHT DELIVERANCE, vers. 26-28.

26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake. This was the Lord's answer to prayer, whether it came by miracle, or was timed by special providence.

All the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. "Either by the action of the earthquake, or by the same supernatural power which produced the earthquake."¹ Compare the release of Peter (12: 7). "There are several difficulties which occur to every one on first reading this passage. (1) The opening of the doors and undoing of the bonds by the earthquake seem incredible to one who thinks of doors like those in our prisons, and of handcuffed prisoners. But any one who has seen a Turkish prison will not wonder that the doors were thrown open; each door was merely closed by a bar, and the earthquake as it passed along the ground forced the doorposts apart from each other, so that the bar slipped from its hold, and the door swung open. . . . The chains and stocks were detached

from the wall which was shaken so that spaces gaped between the stones. . . . An earthquake behaves sometimes like a playful, good-natured sprite, when it spares its full terrors. (2) Why did not the prisoners run away when their fetters were loosed? An earthquake strikes panic into the semi-Oriental mob in the Ægean lands." They were only partially free. They had only a moment for action. The jailor quickly appeared on the scene, lights were called for, the guard would come with them; and the opportunity was lost.² In the terrible cyclone at St. Louis, Mo., May 27, 1896, "a 20-foot section of the western wall of the city jail was blown down, exposing the interior. It was during exercise hours, and two hundred prisoners exercising in the building became panic-stricken. They were too frightened to try to escape." The jailor "was on the scene in a moment, and with the aid of a number of detectives and policemen, the prisoners were placed in their cells."

27. The keeper . . . would have killed himself, because he was responsible for the safety of the prisoners, and he would avoid by suicide the disgrace of an execution. By the Roman law the jailor was subject to the same death as the escaped prisoners would have suffered. "Self-murder among the Romans in the first and second centuries was fearfully common, and was approved of by the Stoic philosophy. Many of the noblest of the Romans ended their days in this manner, as Brutus and Cassius."³

28. Paul cried with a loud voice, . . . we are all here. "It seems hypercritical to ask, How could Paul have seen that the jailor was about to kill himself? That there must have been some kind of light in the outer prison is evident, otherwise the jailor could not have even seen that the doors were open, nor is there any difficulty in supposing that Paul, out of the darkness of the inner prison, would see through the opened doors any one in the outer doorway, whilst to the jailor

is an historical fact that Christianity is the only religion that inspires men to sing. "Mohammedanism has no hymnal, nor has Hinduism, nor Buddhism. No glorious outburst of sacred song from the hearts and lips of the

people ever awoke the echoes of any heathen or Mohammedan temple."

¹ Lyman Abbott.

² Ramsay's *St. Paul*, 220-223.

³ Revision Com.

29 ^{Then} And he called for ^{a light,} lights, and sprang in, and, ^{came} trembling ^{and} for fear, "fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, "what must I do to be "saved?

31 And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, ^{Christ,} and thou shalt be saved, ^{thou} "and thy house.

32 And they spake ^{unto him the word of the Lord, and to the word of the Lord unto him, with} all that were in his house.

^u ch. 10. 25. ^v ch. 2. 37 & 22. 10. Luke 3. 10, 12, 14. Cp. John 6. 23, 29. ^w Cp. ver. 17. ^x See Mark 16. 16
y See ch. 11. 14.

the inner prison would be lost in darkness. Moreover, as Blass notes, Paul may have heard from the jailor's utterances what he meant to do."¹ The jailor probably "gave vent to loud expressions of despair."² The earthquake, opening doors and shattering walls, must have let into the outer prison whatever light of moon or stars was shining without.

CONVERSION OF THE JAILOR, vers. 29-34.

29. **Called for a light.** The Greek is plural, *lights*, torches or lamps. **Fell down before Paul and Silas.** He connected the earthquake with their religion, of which he must have heard. He must have known something of their miraculous power, especially in connection with the cure of the slave girl on account of whom they were imprisoned.

30. **Brought them out, of the inner prison, into the open court, or into his own house.** "The Bezan text preserves a little detail which is so suggestive of the orderly, well-disciplined character of the jailor that we are prompted to accept it as genuine. The jailor first attended to his proper work and secured all his prisoners; and thereafter attended to Paul and Silas."³ This was at least true, for the jailor's life was at stake. **And said, Sirs, Κύριοι.** The same word that is used by the apostles, in ver. 31, in its higher sense as the title, Κύριον, of Jesus Christ.

What must I do to be saved? Saved from what? The question "cannot refer to any fear of punishment from the magistrates; for he had now ascertained that the prisoners were all safe, and that he was in no danger from that source. Besides, had he felt exposed to any such danger, he must have known that Paul and Silas had no power to protect him; it would have been useless to come to them for assistance." The jailor had done no wrong to his government. But he was conscious of having done wrong toward God. He probably did not understand all that was meant by salvation. Who does? But he was aware that these men proclaimed salvation, even as the slave girl herself had proclaimed. It would

be strange if, in that small city, during the many days Paul and Silas had preached, the jailor had not heard them, and become interested in their new doctrine of salvation.

THE JAILOR'S MOTIVE IN ASKING THE QUESTION was a consciousness of sin, of danger, of need, and of the goodness produced in Paul and Silas by their religion. Each one of these is a right feeling. The fear of consequences is not a leading motive in the Christian life, but it is often a motive with a sinner leading him to become a Christian. A man that refuses to consider the consequences of what he is doing is simply a blind fool. The danger was not of harm from the Roman government, but from his sinful life. The motives that lead to a better life are usually manifold.

WHAT SHALL I DO TO BE SAVED? is the most important question any person can ask, for it determines not only (1) his happiness, but (2) his character; (3) the best use of life here; (4) his usefulness in the world; (5) his relations to God; (6) his redemption from the guilt and punishment of sin; (7) his eternal destiny, character, and usefulness in heaven.

31. **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.** Saved from sin, from its punishment, and to holiness and heaven. Faith in Christ saves men because it is the accepting him as teacher and guide; it is a consecration of themselves to Christ and to God; it fills their souls with heavenly love; the Holy Spirit gives new and eternal life through him; and God pardons their sins for his sake. **And thy house.** By leading his family to the same faith. No one believes for himself alone, and no one can believe for another. But hereafter all the influences of his home, the whole spiritual atmosphere, would be Christian.⁴

32. **They spake unto him the word of the Lord,** for as a heathen he must have been almost entirely ignorant of both the truths and the practical morality of the gospel. Paul would furnish him with the true foundation for his faith.

¹ Knowing.

² Goag.

³ Ramsay's *St. Paul*, 222.

⁴ Compare the story in the *Life of Benjamin Franklin*,

of the way he would cultivate the virtues, without the implanting of a new heart by the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus.

33 And he took them the ^z same hour of the night, and washed ^{their} stripes; and ^a was baptized, he and all his, ^{straightway.} immediately.

34 And ^{when} he ^{had} brought them ^{up} into his house, ^{he} and set ^b meat before them, and ^c rejoiced^d greatly, ^{believing in God with all his house.} But ^{greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.}

35 ^{And} when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

^z ver. 25. ^a See ch. 8. 12. ^b Ps. 23. 5 (for mg.). ^c Ps. 9. 14 & 13. 5. ^d Isai. 25. 9. Luke 1. 47. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 8. Cp. ch. 2. 46.

33. He took them, *παλαβὼν, taking them along with him (παρί),* to some other part of the prison where water was convenient. Washed their stripes, washed them from (*ἀπὸ*) their stripes, cleansed away the blood, and purified the flesh wounds. This shows how severe the flagellation had been. Washed, *ἔλουσε, bathed.* It expresses the washing of the entire body, as *νίπτειν* commonly means the washing of a part of the body.¹ And was baptized, to express his faith in Jesus, and his joining the company of disciples. "He washed them, and he was washed; he washed them from their stripes, he himself was washed from his sins."² And all his, all that had heard them preach the gospel, and believed. They seem all to have felt as did the jailor.

34. And when he had brought them, *ἀναγαγὼν, brought them up (ἀνά),* "Blass thinks that the *ἀνά* means that he brought them up from underground, but it may simply mean that the house was built over the prison."³ His house was the most comfortable place for them. The jailor's great kindness under the circumstances was one strong proof of the reality of his conversion. "In all this the jailor was not acting illegally. For while he was responsible for the prisoners, he was under no obligation to fulfil this duty in any particular way. Paul and Silas of course would not try to escape. . . . Besides, a much better way was open to them."⁴

Set meat (food) before them. The two sufferers may have well needed food. "If the tumult had begun, as is probable, as they were going to the *proseucha* for morning prayer, at the third hour of the day (9 A. M.), they had probably been fasting for nearly twenty-four hours."⁴

And rejoiced, *ἡγαλλιάσατο*, always used in the New Testament for *great, exultant joy and gladness.* The same word is used to express the intense, exulting gladness of the early church in their first experience of the gospel at Jerusalem. "Here was indeed an *Ag'āpē*, a Feast of Love."

Believing in God, *πιστευκώς*, "perfect particeps, shows that this fullness of joy was caused by his full profession of belief; it was the joy of the

Holy Ghost which followed on his baptism."⁵ He rejoiced because he believed.

This representation of faith in Jesus, as the precursor of joy, is frequent in the Acts (8: 39, etc.). It may be remarked here that the church at Philippi, of which the jailor's household and that of Lydia were the nucleus, was very dear to Paul. From his imprisonment in Rome he wrote the *Epistle to the Philippians*, which is one of the most cheerful and buoyant productions in all literature. There he urges them again and again to "rejoice in the Lord;" and so precious are the memories of the Philippian church to him that he calls its members "his joy and crown" (4: 1).⁶ With all his house. The R. V. connects this with the rejoicing. It belongs to both the rejoicing and the faith. All those who believed rejoiced.

PAUL AND SILAS RELEASED BY THE AUTHORITIES, vers. 35-40.

35. And when it was day. All that has just been described took place in the night. The magistrates sent the serjeants, *βαδούχους*, from *βάδος*, a rod, or a staff, and *ἔχω*, to have, to hold, hence, *those who hold the rod.* The Roman lictors, who attended the magistrates to guard their persons and execute their orders. The badge of their office was the *fascēs*, an axe bound up in a bundle of rods, but in the colonies they carried staves; very probably the same ones who had beaten them the day before. Saying, Let those men go. What produced this remarkable change of attitude? 1. "Perhaps the earthquake had roused their superstitious fears on account of the irregular and arbitrary proceedings of yesterday." The Bezan revisers insert this reason in the text: the Prætors "assembled together in the Agora, and remembering the earthquake that had taken place, they were afraid."⁶ 2. On reflection the authorities may have felt that they had acted too hastily in yielding to the mob, and recalled the fact that the prisoners had done no wrong. They may also have heard reports of an appeal by Paul and Silas to their Roman citizenship, which, if true, made their action illegal and dangerous.

¹ So Vincent, Trench, etc.

² Chrysostom.

³ Knowing.

⁴ Plumptre.

⁵ Schaff.

⁶ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 224.

36 And the ^{keeper of the prison told this saying} ^{jailor reported the words} to Paul, ^{saying}, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore ^{depart,} ^{come forth,} and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us ^{openly} ^{publicly,} ^{and} ^{uncondemned,} ^{being} ^{men that are} Romans, and have cast ^{us} into prison; and ^{now do they thrust} ^{do they now cast} us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and ^{fetch} ^{bring} us out.

38 And the serjeants ^{told} ^{reported} these words unto the magistrates: and ^{they} ^{feared,} when they heard that they were Romans;

39 And they came and besought them; and ^{when they had} brought ^{them} ^{out,} ^{and} ^{they} ^{desired them} ^{asked them} to ^{depart out of} ^{go away from} the city.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* ^{Lydia}: and when they had seen the ^{brethren}, they comforted them, and departed.

d ch. 22. 25, 29.

e Cp. Matt. 8. 34.

f ver. 14.

g See John 21. 23.

All these things concurred to touch their consciences and change their minds. Sending the missionaries away was the simplest way out of their difficulty.

36. Go in peace. The jailor no doubt rejoiced that he could set them free.

37. But Paul knew a better way, and stood upon his rights, quite as much for the good of the young church as for himself. They have beaten us *openly* *uncondemned*, ἀκατακρίτους, ἀ, not, *kard*, against, expressing hostility, κρίνω, to pronounce judgment; hence, they had been subject to a judgment pronounced against them without investigation. "They had no right to flog them even after a fair trial; but the absence of any trial aggravated their offence, not perhaps against Roman law,"¹ but against Paul. They had no right even to imprison him without a trial. There are four distinct allegations in Paul's reply, "beaten," "publicly," "uncondemned," and "being Romans."

Being Romans. "The Porcian and Valerian laws exempted all citizens of Rome from stripes and torture. In a famous passage of one of Cicero's orations, the following statement occurs: 'In the midst of the forum of Messina was a citizen of Rome scourged with rods. In the midst of his suffering, and the noise of the rods, the only word which was wrung from the unhappy man was, "I am a Roman citizen."' "² And again, in the same oration, he writes: 'It is a misdeed to bind a Roman citizen, a crime to scourge him; it is almost parricide that he should be executed.' "³

Let them come themselves and fetch us out. As openly as they arrested us for criminals, let them declare our innocence. If Paul and Silas had gone away secretly, a stain would have rested

on their reputations, which would have reflected dishonor on the gospel they preached.

38. They feared, when they heard, etc. They were liable to a prosecution such as Cicero instituted against Verres. The crime was regarded as treason, and those who committed it were liable to degradation from office, confiscation of property, and perhaps death. Hackett quotes from Lucian a case of false imprisonment, in which the governor of a province not only acknowledged his error, but paid a large sum of money to those whom he had injured, in order to bribe them to be silent. "In the year 44, Claudius had deprived the Rhodians of their privileges because some Roman citizens had been put to death by them."⁴

39. They came and besought them, *παρεκδέεσαν*, begged, entreated, "that is, not to make any legal complaint—apologized for their conduct, and implored forgiveness."⁵

And desired, asked, them to depart out of the city, so that there might be no further disturbance.

40. Entered into the house of Lydia, with the dignity and self-possession of conscious innocence, and as masters of the situation. They comforted the brethren who needed it more than the missionaries did. But they wisely agreed to the request of the magistrates, and departed.

From this point on to 20: 6, the narrative passes into the third person, indicating that the author is no longer with them. Hence it is regarded as "probable that Luke remained at Philippi to confirm the faith of the converts, and rejoined the apostle at Troas (20: 6), after an interval of seven years, according to a calculation followed by Cook and Plumptre."⁴ Five or six years, by most authorities.

¹ See Ramsay's statement, *St. Paul*, 225.

² Oration, *In Verrem*.

³ Schaff.

⁴ Bible Commentary.

⁵ Gloag.

CHAPTER 17.

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY (*continued*).

THESSALONICA, vers. 1-10.	{ Paul preaches the gospel in the synagogue. Good success. Assault on Jason. Paul and Silas leave by night.	A. D. 51-52.
BEREA, vers. 11-14.	{ Searchers of the Scriptures. Many believers. Opposition from Thessalonica. Paul sent away. Timothy and Silas remain.	
ATHENS, vers. 15-34.	{ Timothy and Silas sent for. Paul reasons { in the synagogue. daily { in the market square. Paul encounters { Epicureans. { Stoics. Paul's address on Mars Hill. Effects. { Mockery. { Delay. { Believers.	

1 Now when they had passed through Ām-phil'ō-līs and Āp-ōl-lō'nī-ā, they came to ^a Thēs-sā-lō-nī'cā, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

^a ch. 20. 4. Phil. 4. 16. 1 Thess. 1. 1. 2 Thess. 1. 1, *al*.

PAUL AT THESSALONICA, vers. 1-4.

1. Now when they, Paul, Silas, and Timothy, on the way from Philippi, had passed through, along the famous Egnatian road which extended 500 miles from the Hellespont through Macedonia to Dyrrhachium, the seaport of Illyria, whence travellers sailed across the Adriatic to Brundisium, the seaport of Rome, as Calais and Dover are the seaports on the road from Paris to London. The road was really a continuation of the great Appian Way; so that Paul was on the road which led to the gates of Rome. Through Amphipolis, 32 or 33 miles southwest from Philippi, the capital of the first of the four districts of Macedonia. Here were fought some of the battles of the Peloponnesian War,¹ and it was for a failure to succor this city that Thucydides was exiled.²

And Apollonia, 30 miles further on toward Thessalonica. The missionaries did not stop long, probably over night only, in either of these places. It was not wise to remain so near Philippi as Apollonia; in neither city was there a synagogue as a basis of operations; both could be better evangelized from Philippi and Thessalonica; and Paul found he could be more successful in found-

ing churches in the great centres of population, whence the gospel could radiate into the surrounding regions. The route may well have been one of the most beautiful of any day's journey in St. Paul's many travels.³

They came, 37 miles farther, or about 100 miles on the Egnatian road from Philippi. To Thessalonica, the largest city in Macedonia, and famed as a commercial centre. Under its old name, Therma (Hot Springs), we read of it in Herodotus and Thucydides. It was rebuilt by Cassander, and renamed after his wife, Thessalonica, sister to Alexander the Great. This princess received her name to commemorate a victory won by her father, Philip of Macedon (over Thessaly), on the day he received the news of her birth.⁴ It is now called Salonica (of Roumelia, Turkey), and is an important commercial emporium of 100,000 inhabitants. "Rising with its white domes and minarets, its vines and cypresses, up the sides of a steep hill, between two ravines, it presents a splendid appearance, as the traveller sails into the deep blue waters of its noble bay, and gazes from it upon the snowy mountain crests of Olympus and Pelion. But when you enter the

¹ Thucydides, 5: 6-11.

² Thucydides, 1: 26.

³ Renan, *St. Paul*, 154, 155.

⁴ Schaff.

2 And Paul, ^{as his manner custom} was, went in unto them, and ^{for} three sabbath days reasoned with them ^{out of} ^{from} ^j the scriptures,

i See ch. 13. 5.

j See ch. 8. 35.

town, all its beauty disappears.”¹ “Xerxes rested his army here before attempting the invasion of Greece. Cicero, in his exile, came from Rome to Salonica, where he remained seven months (B. C. 58).”² “It is now one of the most important towns in European Turkey, and it played a great part in the history of the Middle Ages as the bulwark of Christendom in the East. It was captured by the Saracens A. D. 904, then by the Crusaders in 1184, and lastly by the Turks in 1430. Even now there is a large Christian ele-

ment among its population, and a still larger number of Jews.”³

Where was a synagogue of the Jews. The article before *synagogue* implies (and the form *συναγωγη* instead of *οἶ*, for *where*, favors it) that this was the chief, if not the only synagogue of the district, and that there were none in the two towns he had passed through on his way from Philippi.

2. And Paul, as his manner (custom) was,⁴ “To the Jew first” and then to the Gentiles, was his wise custom, because they had been trained in



MODERN THESSALONICA.

From Dr. Davis' Bible Dictionary, by per.

the Scriptures and were best prepared to receive the fulfilment of the promises in Jesus Christ.

Three sabbath days, that is, three weeks with their sabbaths. This undoubtedly refers not to the entire length of his stay in Thessalonica, but to the “period of work within the circle of the synagogue,” before he had to seek outside places for his work, as at the house of Jason. Three things show that his residence in the city must have been much longer. (1) His great success,

as related in ver. 4. He formed the nucleus of a large and flourishing church, chiefly composed of Gentile converts. (2) His own statements in his letter to the Thessalonians, chaps. 1, 2, imply a long and successful work there. (3) Although he supported himself in part by working with his own hands (1 Thess. 2: 9), yet he remained there long enough to receive help twice from Philippi, a hundred miles away, and it is reasonable to think of some interval between the gifts.

¹ Farrar.

² Rev. E. G. Porter, D. D.

³ Cambridge Bible.

⁴ “There is a great advantage in what has been called ‘Clock-work Christianity,’ regular hours for prayer, for reading the Bible, regular habits of giving and of work,

in contrast with a spasmodic, impulsive religion.”—J. M. Oxley.

“The quickest way to outgrow rule is to make faithful use of rule.”—Parkhurst.

“So shall our path of life, however lowly, be a royal pathway, growing brighter and brighter to a perfect day.” See Gannett's *Blessed be Drudgery*.

3 Opening ^k and alleging, that ^{Christ must needs have suffered, it behoved the Christ to suffer,} and ^m risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, ^{said he,} I ^{preach} proclaim unto you, is the Christ.

^k Luke 24. 26, 32.

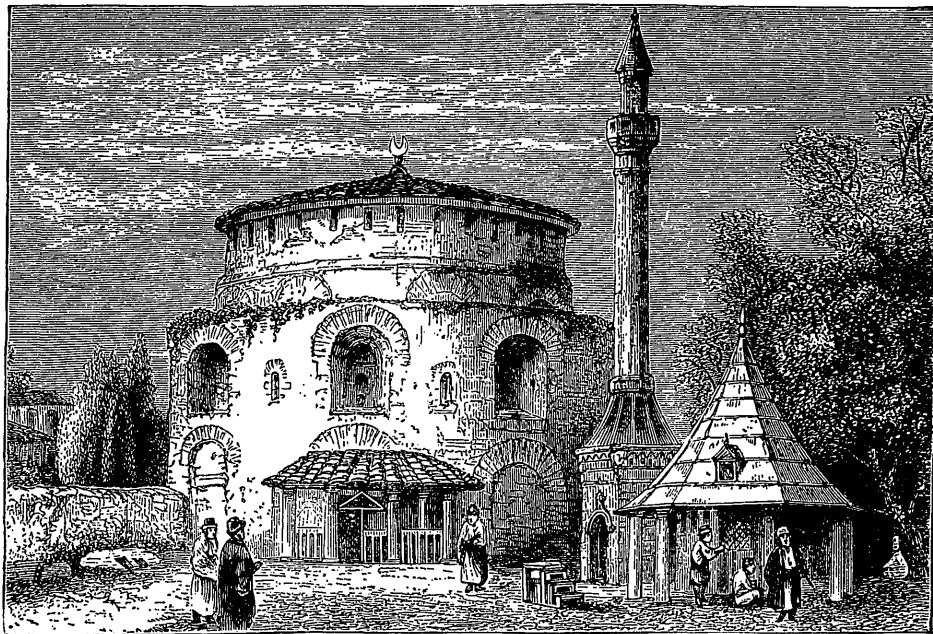
^l See ch. 3. 18.

^m See John 20. 9.

Ramsay estimates his residence there as five or six months, December to May; and Lewin at two or three months.

Reasoned with them, *διελέγετο*. The verb means to speak, to speak back and forth as in a conversation, or dialogue (which is a transcript

of the Greek noun). He showed his reasons for believing as he did, in the form of a dialogue, or discussion, or conversation, with individuals or in assemblies. Out of the scriptures. As the common ground which they acknowledged as true, and "every letter of which they valued as divine;



THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA,
in which, according to tradition, Paul preached. From Cousinery. Lewin.

and then, after calling their attention to this or that well-known and often-read type or prophecy of Messiah, he would turn to the life and death of Jesus, every detail of which at least the well instructed of the foreign synagogue well knew, and would ask them, Was not *this One*, after all, the Messiah, the Christ? ¹

3. Opening, *διανοίγων*, "to open by dividing or drawing asunder (*διδί*), to open thoroughly, what had been closed."² Unfolding the scripture truths, pointing out to them the things they had

not noticed, or applications which they had not understood. Paul was to them like an expert who points out to the poor owner of a rocky farm the rich mines of gold and silver beneath the surface; or opens to the possessor of a common pasture the oil wells which are of more value than mines of silver. Science is continually opening the common things of life and finding in them greater treasure than the "Open, Sesame" did in the *Arabian Nights*.³

And alleging, *παρτιθέμενος*, setting before,

¹ Schaff.

² Thayer, *Greek-Eng. Lex.*

³ Hawthorne compares Christianity to a grand cathedral with divinely pictured windows. Viewed from without, it is impossible to gain the slightest conception of the

beautiful forms and radiant colors manifest to those who look at them from within. So it is with Christ. There is a glory in him not visible to those without, but revealed to those who dwell in his heart of hearts.

4 And "some of them ^{were believed,} ^{were persuaded,} and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout "Greeks" a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

n Cp. 1 Thess. 2, 1, 2. See ch. 14, 4.

o See John 7, 35.

p ver. 12.

placing beside or near, as food on a table; then setting out arguments, but without the idea of assertion as is implied in the modern English "allege." In old English "allege" meant to set forth, like the Greek verb of which it is here a translation. Bengel well expands these words: "Ut si quis nucleum, fracto cortice, et recludat et exemptum ponat in medio," (as if one, having broken the shell of a nut, should open it and place the extracted kernel before his audience). Paul set forth the scriptures and the arguments which proved that Christ, the Messiah they were looking for, must needs have suffered. He is so pictured in the scriptures. And any one claiming to be the Messiah, who did not suffer as foretold in Isaiah 53, could not be the true Messiah. The absence of this mark would prove him an impostor. This portion of the scriptures needed to be "opened" and "set forth" to them. For in dwelling upon the Messiah as a Deliverer, a Mighty Prince, they had neglected their other descriptions of him, for they could not put the two descriptions together. But Paul showed them that only by suffering could the Messiah be a Prince and Deliverer, and found the kingdom of heaven among men. "That St. Paul did speak of Messiah's glorious (spiritual) kingdom foretold in the prophetic scriptures themselves, may be gathered by comparing together the Acts and the Epistles to the Thessalonians."¹ And risen again from the dead. "For they, like the disciples themselves in earlier days (John 20: 9), 'understood not the scriptures (such as Psa. 16: 10) that he must rise again from the dead.'² The missionaries preached a living Christ, exalted at the right hand of God, and who was the rightful king of all the earth, a living, present Saviour and Lord. And that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. Having shown them from the scriptures a true description of the promised Messiah, they show that Jesus was the one described. The Old Testament picture was a portrait of Jesus.

4. And some of them, the Jews, believed, or "were persuaded" by Paul's reasoning. Consorted with Paul and Silas, *προσκληρώθησαν*, were added or assigned by lot. Ramsay retains the passive meaning, — these Jews were allotted to them, associated with them, as disciples (by God). Rendall gives the passive a middle meaning, — "some men joined themselves to the

apostles as partners in their Christian inheritance, and cast in their lot with them. So in Eph. 1: 11, *ἐκκληρώθημεν* seems to denote obtaining a portion in Christ, the aorist passive having the force of the middle voice. The A. V. *consorted* conveys an impression of outward association only."³ Consorted "is a kind of military term; it belongs to the camp and the bivouac. After the battle the men have met to divide the spoils. They range themselves in different groups, each group throwing their chances into one, and taking part and lot together, share and share alike." Such is the picture of these believers. "They cast life, property, all, into the great transaction. They literally made the lot and portion of these humble disciples their own for this world and the next, forsaking all else."⁴

And of the devout Greeks a great multitude. This implies that after the three Sabbaths in the synagogue, Paul labored for some time among the Gentiles. Chief women not a few. Many ladies of the highest social standing joined the disciples here as they did at Philippi and Berea. "The better educated people seem to have supplied most of the converts. Men of all classes were impressed by the preaching of Paul, but only women of the leading families."⁵ The reason is that these were less under the sway of superstition, better able to appreciate the truth, and probably were much freer to have access to the preaching of Paul than were the lower classes. In Athens "woman was little better than a slave. To educate her was to advertise her as a harlot." "In Macedonia, however, monuments were erected to women by public bodies; and records of male proper names are found, in Macedonian inscriptions, formed on the mother's name instead of on the father's. Macedonian women were permitted to hold property, and were treated as mistresses of the house. . . . Their prominence in church affairs is indicated by Paul's special appeal to two ladies in the church at Philippi to reconcile their differences, which had caused disturbance in the church, and by his commending them to his colleagues as women who had labored with him in the Lord (Phil. 4: 2, 3)."⁶

Ramsay,⁷ using light from the Bezan Text, makes this verse describe four classes of converts instead of three.

1. Jews.

2. Greek God-fearing proselytes (devout).

¹ Conybeare and Howson.

² Cambridge Bible.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Rev. J. W. Weddell in *S. S. Times*.

⁵ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 229.

⁶ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

⁷ *St. Paul*, 227, 235.

5 But ^{the} Jews, ^{which believed not, being} moved with ^{envy, jealousy,} took unto them ^{certain} ^{lewd} fellows of the ^{baser sort, rabble,} and ^{gathered} ^{company, and} set ^{all} the city on an uproar; ^{and assaulted} the house of ^{Jā'sōn,} and they sought to bring them ^{out} forth to the people.

6 And when they found them not, ^{they drew} Jason and certain brethren ^{unto before} the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

g 1 Thess. 2. 14-16. See ch. 13. 50. r See ch. 5. 17. s Cp. Judg. 9. 4 & 11. 3 & 2 Chr. 13. 7. t Rom. 16. 21 (?).
u ch. 16. 19-21.

3. Greeks.

4. Honorable women.

PAUL'S MANNER OF LIFE AT THESSALONICA. From 1 Thess. 2: 5-11 and 2 Thess. 3: 7, 8-11, we learn additional particulars about Paul's life during his stay at Thessalonica. "Paul and his companions were poor; the money and provisions they carried were soon spent in travelling. There were no Christian friends to receive them. We picture them seeking some humble lodging, and Paul going round to the master tent-makers asking for work."¹ He worked and preached incessantly. For some reasons peculiar to this place, he was unwilling to be a charge to the people, lest they should think he was seeking for money.² Paul was holy, just, unblamable, loving the people, giving not receiving, giving not only the gospel but his very life. And all this amid many trials, and much opposition and persecution. But he had comfort from the Philippians, who in their love sent him aid once and again.

THE ASSAULT ON PAUL, SILAS, AND TIMOTHY, vers. 5-9.

5. Moved with envy.³ Jealousy at their own decline and the growth of Christianity. **Lewd**, in its older sense of vile, worthless, fellows of the baser sort, *ἀγοράων*, from *ἀγορά*, the market-place; hence loungers in the market-place, loafers in the public squares, natural lounging-place of the lazy and worthless rabble, ready for any excitement, like the Lazaroni at Naples. Xenophon calls them *τὸν ἀγοράων ὄχλον*, "the market-place crowd;" and Cicero *subrostrani*, those who hung round the *rostra*, or platform for speakers in the forum. The modern term is *canaille*. "The language of Paul in his first letter to the Thessalonians (2: 14-16) shows that a powerful, dan-

gerous, and lasting sentiment was roused among the classes which made the riot."⁴

Gathered a company, a crowd, a mob. Set all the city on an uproar. It is strange how wild and reckless a crowd can become, swept along by a whirlwind of excitement.

And assaulted the house of Jason, with whom Paul and Silas were lodging, or the house where the Christian assemblies were held.

Jason is otherwise unknown. "It is probable, however, that St. Paul would, in the first instance, take up his abode with a Jew, and that Jason, as in the case of the apostate high priest of 2 Macc. 4: 7, was the Greek equivalent for Joshua or Jesus."⁵

Sought to bring them out to the people, ὄχμον, the mass of the people assembled in a public place. That is, to the mob assembled in the market-place ready to do them violence.

6. **They drew, ἔστυον, dragged with violence, Jason, as a Christian and harbinger of Paul, and certain brethren, as the nearest substitutes on which to vent their passions, perhaps hoping to make them reveal where the missionaries were hidden, or to induce Paul and Silas to give themselves up in order to save their converts.**

Unto the rulers of the city, πολιτάρχας (politarchas). This is a very peculiar Greek term, used here only in the New Testament, and not at all by classical writers. "This would certainly be set down as a blunder by skeptical criticism but for the happy providence which has preserved it on a large inscription of St. Paul's day, and which St. Paul's own eyes must have seen carved on the entablature of a triumphal arch, which spanned the main street of Thessalonica. . . . The stones on which ran the inscription were shipped to England during the outbreak of 1876,

¹ Newman Hall.

² Just as Moody and Sankey refused to take for themselves the royalty on the Gospel Hymns (amounting to nearly a million dollars in all) lest their revivifying work should be hindered by the charge that they were doing it for money.

³ They remind us of "a piteous story of a prisoner for years and years shut in a dungeon, his only light a narrow

ray from a chink in the wall. His friends came at last with power to demolish the cruel barriers and let in a flood of God's sweet sunshine; but he, poor, pallid wretch, prayed that they would not destroy the walls and with them his precious chink, his one blessed gleam of light!"

⁴ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 229.

⁵ Plumptre. See, also, Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12: 5, 1.

7 Whom Jason hath received : and these all ^{do}_{act} contrary to "the decrees of Cæsär, saying that there is ^w another king, *one* Jesus.

8 And they troubled the ^{people}_{multitude} and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

v ch. 16. 4. Luke 2. 1. w See Luke 23. 2.

and are now safe in the British Museum."¹ "Surely the stones of Thessalonica cry out in defence of Luke's accuracy."

Burton has collected no less than 17 inscriptions on which this word or its corresponding participle occurs, five of them in Thessalonica, "extending from the first of the first century to the middle of the second."² Thessalonica had five or six Politarchs, or "rulers of the city." "Thessalonica was a free city with municipal magistrates and a popular assembly, besides being the residence of the Roman governor of Macedonia."³

These that have turned the world upside down. A testimony to the power and extent of Christianity. Christ foretold this result (Matt. 10 : 34 ; Luke 12 : 53). It is the business of the gospel to turn the world upside down, so far as the wrong side is up in practice or principle. Whatever wrong is now enthroned, whatever sin is now popular, whatever evils seem to rule men, whatever falsehoods are flourishing, the gospel will cast down, and nothing can be settled till it is settled right. Nothing can remain on a solid foundation till the laws of God bear rule, till righteousness and love are supreme. The disturbances, the moral earthquakes, the wars, the revolutions, the uneasiness of society, are, in large measure, the signs of the process of turning the world right side up. The same process goes on in the individual heart, and it can never be at peace till selfishness, false doctrines, evil passions, and all worldly interests are put beneath, and love to God and man, and reason, and conscience rule the soul.

7. Whom Jason hath received, and so is partaker in the wrong charged against Paul and Silas, as a confederate.

All do contrary to the decrees of Cæsär, referring to the successive decrees of the emperors against treason. "The Jewish agitators hoped, by exciting the city mob of this commercial city against the preaching of the apostles, to provoke the interference of the assembly, and perhaps convince the magistrates that they were revolutionary and anarchical fanatics. The recent action of the magistrates at Philippi made it easy too to denounce the apostles as revolutionary fanatics."³ The Jews used political arguments

in order to gain their religious ends, as the Pharisees did in their charges against Jesus before Pilate. And their specific and most specious charge was the same as that used by the Thessalonian Jews, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus. It was very easy to misapprehend the Christian teaching about Christ as a King, of whose kingdom the apostles were heralds. Jesus himself had been misunderstood and his words perverted. "We can scarcely now realize the suspicions which must have been roused against the early preachers of Christianity by the very language they used." The Jews looked upon the expected Messiah as a worldly king. Jesus proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. Jesus was King. He was coming again. His kingdom was to triumph over the world. It was the duty of every one to be subject to this King. Nor was it easy for the Gentiles to see how this was a purely spiritual kingdom, and was the very best possible force in all honest worldly government. The charge seemed very plausible that Jesus was the rival of Cæsär in his own empire.⁴

8. And they, the mob with these exciting charges, troubled the people, *ἐράραξαν*, agitated, like the waves of a sea in a storm.

A similar word is used in ver. 13, and translated "stirred up the people," as a storm stirs up the sea.

The people, the citizens in general, and the rulers, the Politarchs. There was danger of an insurrection and mob violence, which would expose them to punishment from Rome, possibly the loss of the freedom of their city, or deposition from office. The rulers were perplexed as to what to do. They were themselves exposed to the charge of treason, if they took no notice of this charge against the missionaries. "Many a man was ruined by such a charge under the earlier emperors. The very suggestion of treason against the emperors often proved fatal to the accused."⁵ It was bad to yield to a mob. It was dangerous to punish Roman citizens, without a trial and better charges than any the mob had brought forward without proof. It would make trouble to persecute the Christians, many of whom were Gentiles of the better class, and "honorable women not a few." Whichever way they looked they saw trouble ahead.

¹ Farrar.

² *American Journal of Theology*, July, 1898.

³ Rendall.

⁴ See Tacitus, *Annals*, 3 : 38. For the law of Treason, see Merivale's *History of the Romans under the Empire*.

⁵ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 229-231.

9 And when they had taken security ^{of} from Jason and ^{of} the ^{other} rest, they let them go.

10 And ^{Be-ræ'a} the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto ^{Be-ræ'a} who ^{coming thither} when they were come thither ^ⁱ went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 ^{These} Now these were more noble than those in Thēs-sā-lō-nī'cā, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, ^{and searched} ^ⁱ examining the scriptures daily, whether ^{those} these things were so.

z ver. 14. See John 21. 23.

y ver. 2.

z Cp. Isai. 34. 16 & John 5. 39.

9. They got over the difficulty by a compromise. When they had taken security, *ἰκανὸν* sufficient, adequate, properly a pecuniary surety or bail, sufficient to protect against loss, by depositing a sum of money which would be forfeited if anything illegal or treasonable was done by them or by the missionaries. They were bound over to keep the peace, "and clearly this implied that they were bound over to prevent Paul, the cause of the disturbance, from coming to Thessalonica."

There was one curious result from this taking "security." Paul greatly desired to return to them, as we learn from his first letter to them written a few months later (1 Thess. 2: 17, 18; 3: 10). But Satan hindered him (1 Thess. 2: 18). Ramsay is probably right in regarding that hindrance to be this ingenious device suggested to the rulers by Satan, of the security given by Jason. Till there was some change in policy or government, Paul could not return without endangering Jason and his friends.¹

PAUL AT BEREÆ, vers. 10-14.

10. Immediately sent away Paul and Silas. Apparently they had been in hiding, and as soon as it was possible the brethren took them to a place of safety from the mob, perhaps in obedience to the rulers. Paul left with deep regret. Timothy was with them, or followed soon after, for we find him at Berea (ver. 14). Paul, unable to return, sent Timothy back to Thessalonica, 1 Thess. 3: 2.

Unto Berea, about 50 miles southwest of Thessalonica,² on the eastern slope of the Olympian range, on the river Haliaemon. Cicero, in his oration against Piso, says that unable to face the chorus of complaint at Thessalonica, Piso fled to

the out-of-the-way town of Berea.³ So Paul may have gone to Berea on account of its seclusion.

Went into the synagogue of the Jews, ἀπὲς-σαν, went away from, to (eis). Left their escort and went into the synagogue. Rendall refers it to the escort, who, conducting Paul and Silas to the synagogue, left them with the Jewish congregation, and themselves went away to Thessalonica.

11. These were more noble, εὐγενέστεροι, literally, of more noble birth, hence, as here, of more noble character.⁴

This nobility expressed itself (1) in that they received the word with all readiness of mind. Their minds were open to all truth from every source. They were not afraid of it because it was new. (2) In that they . . . searched, ἀνακρίνοντες, implying a thorough examination (ἀνὰ), up from bottom to top through a series of objects or particulars; to investigate, as a judge in a court sifts the evidence. The scriptures, where the evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus was to be found, by comparing the Scriptures with the facts Paul presented.⁵ They did not take things by hearsay, but sought the truth for themselves. "Search for the truth is the noblest occupation of man."⁶ "To love truth for truth's sake is the principal part of human perfection in this world, and the seed-plot of all other virtues."⁷ Such searchers are noble because they are governed by the highest qualities of mind and heart, and because they received the truth only on good evidence. They were not led captive by every new idea, but first waited till they could find that it was true. They did not reject a truth because it was old. They searched the old Scriptures. The gospel, so far from being opposed to the search for truth in all fields, is the great friend of research. It

¹ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 229-231.

² Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

³ In *Pisonem*, 26.

⁴ "Howe'er it be, it seems to me

'T is only noble to be good ;

Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

Tennyson.

⁵ Coleridge divided readers into four classes. The first class he compares to an hour-glass, their reading being as

the sand ; it runs in and runs out, and leaves not a vestige behind. A second class resembles a sponge, which imbibes everything, and returns it in nearly the same state. A third class is like a jelly-bag, which allows all that is pure to pass away, and retains only the refuse and the dregs. The fourth class, like the slave of Golconda, casts aside all that is worthless, preserving only the pure gems." — A. T. Pierson, D. D.

⁶ Madame de Staël.

⁷ Locke.

12 Therefore ^a many of them ^b believed; also of ^c honourable ^d women ^e which were Greeks, ^f of honourable estate, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was ^g preached ^h proclaimed of Paul at ⁱ Berea, ^j they came thither ^k also, and ^l stirred ^m up ⁿ and ^o troubling the ^p people, ^q multitudes.

14 And then ^r immediately the brethren sent ^s away ^t Paul to go as ^u it were ^v to the sea: ^w but ^x and ^y Silas and ^z Timothy ^{aa} abode there still.

15 ^{ab} And ^{ac} they that conducted Paul brought him ^{ad} unto ^{ae} Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and ^{af} Timothy ^{ag} that they should ^{ah} come to him with all speed, they departed.

^a ver. 4. ^b ch. 13. 50. ^c ver. 8. ^d ver. 10. See Matt. 10. 23. ^e See ch. 16. 1. ^f Cp. ch. 15. 3. ^g ch. 18. 1. 1 Thess. 3. 1. ^h ch. 18. 5.

welcomes all the discoveries of science, and gives the right hand of fellowship to all sincere investigators, knowing well that the works of God, rightly understood, will ever help us to understand the Word of God who did the works.

12. Therefore, as the result of such Bible study, many of them believed.

Honourable women, *εὐσημόνων*, influential, of good position and rank, wives of the chief citizens. See on 13: 50, of the women of Pisidian Antioch.

And of men. The term Greeks, *Ἑλληνίδων*, "Greek women," "relates to the men as well as to the women — the Jewish men had already been included in the first word, πολλοί, many."¹

The work of the apostles here as elsewhere extended beyond the synagogue.

13. When the Jews of Thessalonica, etc. They were bitter against the gospel, and especially against Paul as its chief representative. This is a testimony to the marvellous power of Paul. The statement implies that Paul's stay in Berea lasted some weeks,² for there was time to gain a considerable number of converts, and then for the news to reach Thessalonica, and for the return of emissaries from that city.

Stirred up the people, *σαλεύοντες*, from *σάλος*, billows, waves, hence, agitated, as the winds and storms, the sea.

14. Then immediately, lest there arise a mob and rioting, as at Thessalonica.

Sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea. The A. V. gives the impression that the movement was a feint in order to baffle the pursuers, while Paul went in another direction. He went "as far as" the sea, R. V., which follows another reading, *ἔως*. Rendall retains the other text, *ὡς ἐντ*, "marking the sea as their destination." They went "toward the sea."

Silas and Timothy abode there still. They were not so exposed to danger, nor did they so

expose the Christians to danger, as Paul would by remaining. They "remained behind at Berea, probably to gain the first intelligence from Thessalonica as to the possibility of St. Paul's return, and to bring the news to the apostle, whose next stage may not have been decided upon until he reached the coast."³

PAUL AT ATHENS, vers. 15-34.

15. And they, the escort from Berea, that conducted Paul, *καθιστῶντες*, brought to the spot (*κατὰ*), "implying that the disciples went with Paul throughout the journey for the sake of guidance and protection."⁴ **Brought him unto Athens.** Whether by land or sea is unknown. "The distance between Berea and Athens by land is 250 Roman miles, and would have occupied about twelve days; whereas three days would have sufficed for the voyage by sea: and it is natural to suppose that Paul would take the most expeditious mode of travelling."

Rendall gives reasons for thinking that Paul went by land. "The word *ἡγαγον*, brought, seems to imply a land journey. Besides, the route by sea was full of risk, as the Thessalonians were sure to watch the seaports; while the Thessalian roads were absolutely safe if the fugitives moved swiftly and secretly before the pursuers got on their track, which was prevented by the pretended start towards the sea." But against this is the fact that the Berean persecutors could not tell which road they would take to the sea, and there was no large seaport near (no seaport is marked on Ramsay's large map), so that Paul must have gone in some coasting vessel.

Commandment unto Silas and Timothy. Since when Paul left they did not know where he was going. For to come to him. They were unable to reach him at Athens, but joined him at Corinth (18: 5).

THE CITY OF ATHENS has one of the most

¹ Knowing. See Alford, Weiss, Wendt, Zückler.

² So Lewin.

³ Knowing.

⁴ Gloag.

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was ^{stirred in} provoked within him, ^{when} ^{as} he ^{saw} beheld the city ^{wholly given to idolatry.} ^{full of idols.}

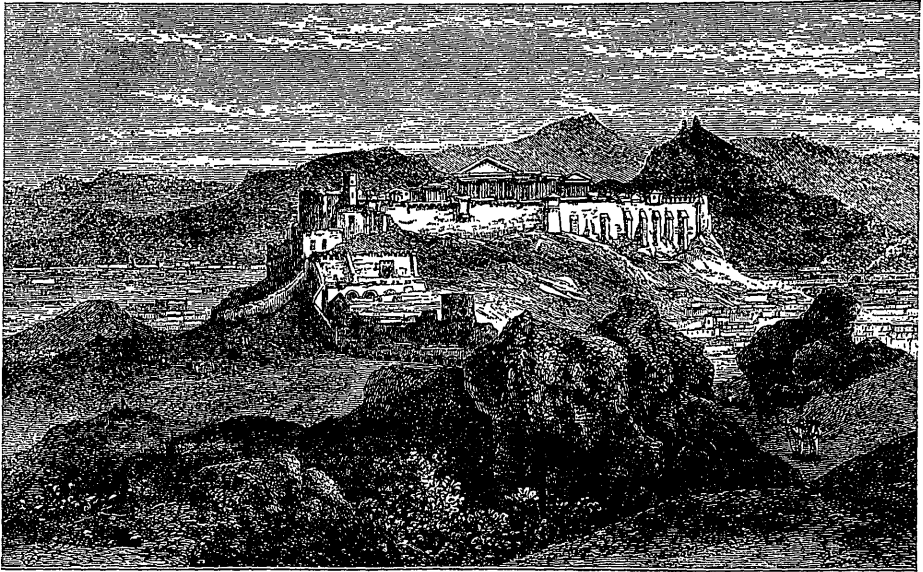
i Cp. 2 Pet. 2. 8.

j Cp. Isai. 2. 8.

beautiful situations in the world. "It is situated about five miles inland northeast of the Saronic Gulf, an arm of the Ægean Sea. Four famous mountains lie around it, and four still more famous hills are within the city; the *Acropolis*, the *Areopagus*, or Mars Hill, the *Pnyx*, on which the assemblies of the people were held and Demosthenes spoke his oration, and the *Museum*.

"The name of Athens was synonymous with

the most graceful conceptions of art and the profoundest study of philosophy. There human wisdom had sat enthroned. All succeeding generations and civilized nations have acknowledged her intellectual supremacy. Athens was the mother of the fine arts, the patron of poetry, the founder of systems of philosophy. She gave birth to the products of genius in almost every department of literature and art which have scarcely, if ever,



ATHENS, VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.

The Acropolis in the centre. Areopagus at the left. The open space south of these is the site of Agora, Forum, or Market-Place. (From Lewin.)

been surpassed."¹ Athens was one of the three most influential cities of the world's history.²

"In its prime it sent forth more great men in one hundred years than all the rest of the world could show in five hundred." Recall such world-famous names as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Æschylus, Sophocles, Aristides, Themistocles, Phidias, Zeno, Epicurus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Pericles.

"Roman Athens retained the literary preëminence of the ancient city, though its extensive com-

merce and political importance were gone. It was now the principal university, in which the young Roman nobility received their higher education from Greek instructors, and in which the schools of philosophy, whose lectures contributed largely to determine the theoretical standard of morality and religion, had their headquarters."³

16. Now while Paul waited, either hoping to return with them to Macedonia to complete his work, when they found it safe (Ramsay), or more probably unwilling to go alone into strange places,

¹ Schaff.

² See a long and interesting description of the then state of Athens, its buildings, etc., in Conybeare and Howson,

chap. 10, vol. i. pp. 407 ff. Lewin, vol. i. p. 242. Uhlhorn's *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*.

³ Ramsay.

17 Therefore disputed he ^{So he *k* reasoned} in the synagogue with the Jews and ^{with} the devout persons, and in the ^{market daily} marketplace every day with them that met with him.

18 Then ^{And} certain ^{philosophers of the Ep-i-cu-re-ans, and of the Sto-ics} also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, 'What ^{will} ^{would} this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because ^m he preached ^{unto them} "Jesus" and the resurrection.

k See ch. 13. 5.

l Cp. 1 Cor. 4. 10.

m See ch. 5. 42.

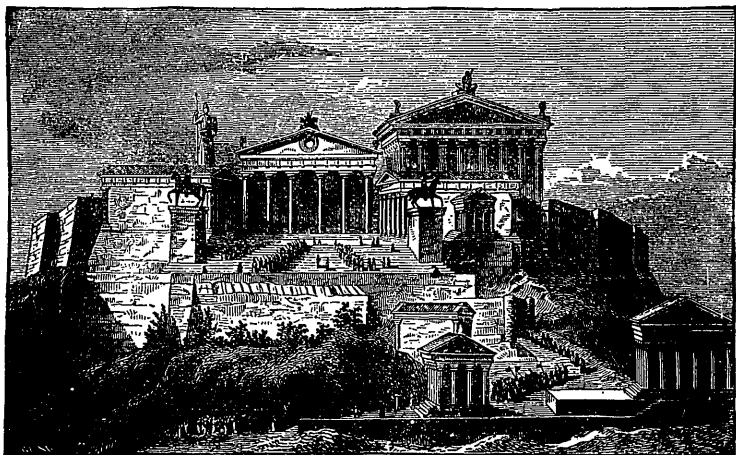
n vers. 31, 32. ch. 4. 2. Cp. 1 Cor. 15. 12.

amid great difficulties and dangers, without his companions, for advisers and helpers.

His spirit was stirred in him, *παρωξύνετο*. The verb means, first, to sharpen, then to stimulate, urge on as with a sharp spur or goad; hence to exasperate, irritate.

When he saw the city wholly given to idolatry, being *κατείδωλον*, full of idols. "The language of the A. V., wholly given to idolatry, gives quite a false impression of the city. It was

filled with statues of gods, but these represented religious æstheticism or art-worship rather than superstition. It was the absence of earnest devotion or serious faith in God that stirred the spirit of Paul to indignant protest." ¹ Pausanias tells us that there were more gods in Athens than in all the rest of the country. "We learn from Pliny that at the time of Nero, Athens contained over three thousand public statues, besides a countless number of lesser images within the walls



THE ACROPOLIS RESTORED.

of private houses. Of this number the great majority were statues of gods, demi-gods, or heroes. In one street there stood before every house a square pillar carrying upon it a bust of the god Hermes. Every gateway and porch carried its protecting god. Every street, every square, nay, every purlieu, had its sanctuaries, and a Roman poet ² bitterly remarked that it was easier in Athens to find gods than men." ³

17. Therefore disputed he, *διελέγετο*, reasoned, discussed, conversed, first in the synagogue with the Jews, on the Sabbath, as was his custom, and with the proselytes, devout persons, who had accepted the true God of the Jews. Be-

sides this he went other days into the market, the forum, the great square south of the Areopagus, and the Acropolis, like the Piazza or square of St. Mark's at Venice, surrounded by the most beautiful buildings and busiest stores in the city. "On its west side was the celebrated painted porch, so called from the numerous paintings with which it is decorated. Here Zeno the Stoic (from the Greek *stoa*, a porch) founded his school of philosophy. The whole quarter of the city known as the Agora was a market; for at the same time that it contained all the finest temples and statues and public edifices of Athens, it was one great bazaar of an irregular form, but everywhere pre-

¹ Ramsay.

² Petronius the Satirist.

³ G. S. Davies, *St. Paul in Greece*.

19 And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the [°] Ἄρ-ἔ-ῶπ'ᾱ-gūs, saying, May we know what this ⁿ new ^{doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is ? teaching is, which is spoken by thee ?}

o ver. 22. Cp. ver. 34. p Mark 1. 27. Cp. John 7. 16 & Heb. 13. 9.

senting the busy scene of commercial life, flower piazzas, fish stalls, marts for clothing, books, perfumes, pottery, vegetables, and fruits of all descriptions." ¹

It is a false inference from the silence of Luke that Paul had no appreciation of the marvellous beauty of the arts and architecture of Athens. A man whose soul was alive to the beauties of language of which his writings are full could not well be dead to art. It was while he was viewing the glories of Athens that he found the altar to the unknown god.

18. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, "so called from their founder Epicurus (342-270 B. C.). His disciples were known also as the School of the Garden, from the garden in Athens where the master instructed them, in distinction from the disciples of the Porch (Stoics) or of the Academy (Plato and others)." Epicurus taught that the end of living was pleasure, "but insisted that it was the pleasure of an entire life at which we must aim, and taught that this can be secured, not by indulging whims and instincts as they momentarily arise in us and solicit us, but only by reconciling them into a systematic whole in which each shall receive the amount of satisfaction which belongs to each. . . . He taught that the enjoyment of tranquil pleasure was the highest end of human existence." ²

But in Paul's time, in spite of the safeguards of Epicurus, his teaching degenerated "into a mere series of prudential calculations or a mere indulgence of the senses and appetites;" and "his followers were given to gross sensualism." ³

"On the other hand, a modern writer (Mr. Pater, in *Marius the Epicurean*) has shown how much good there was in Epicureanism, and how much it had in common with Christianity. Both were opposed to the vulgar mythology; both ascribed to the Deity a lofty immunity and repose from every lower passion and feeling; both taught the doctrine of free will, both inculcated kindness to man and beast; both frugality and contentment." ⁴

And of the Stoics. "Panteists. The name *Stoic* was derived from *stoa*, a porch. Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, held his school in the

Stoa Pacile, or painted portico, so called because adorned with pictures by the best masters. God was the soul of the world, or the world was God. Everything was governed by fate, to which God himself was subject. They denied the universal and perpetual immortality of the soul; some supposing that it was swallowed up in deity; others, that it survived only till the final conflagration; others, that immortality was restricted to the wise and good. Virtue was its own reward, and vice its own punishment. Pleasure was no good, and pain no evil." ⁵ It is well to note the tenets of these philosophers in connection with Paul's address, to see how he answers them by his positive teaching.

Encountered him, met him in debate. And some said, What will this babbler say, σπέρμο-λῶγος, seed picker. This is a very interesting word. It was Athenian slang, meaning "a bird that picks up seeds as food," hence, the type of the worthless fellows who lived at the expense of others lounging about the market-place, and picking up the scraps of food which fell from the loads carried about. It was then applied to "the picker-up of learning's crumbs," the literary plagiarist who picked up the refuse and scraps of the philosophers, without the knowledge or capacity to apply them correctly; those "who make a show, in unscientific style, of knowledge which they have got from misunderstanding of lectures." "Dean Farrar's rendering 'picker-up of learning's crumbs' is happy, but loses the touch of slang." ⁶

Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange, foreign, gods. "*Socrates is guilty of bringing in new gods*," was one of the charges on which Athens put to death her wisest son. ⁷ The "strange gods" could hardly have referred to the God of the Jews, for there was a synagogue there for his worship. But the true God, the Father as represented by Jesus, might well be strange; and Jesus the Messiah would be regarded as a god; and many think that these philosophers regarded the Anastasis, the Resurrection, as a goddess, just as they had altars erected to Pity, Piety, Modesty.

19. And they took him, "took hold of him."

¹ Lewin.

² Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

³ So Knowing, Vincent, and others.

⁴ F. C. Conybeare in Hastings' *Bib. Dic.* See Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 1: 67-80.

⁵ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

⁶ See Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 242, 243; Horace's *Odes*, 1: 9 and 11.

"This fellow pecks up wit as pigeons pease,
And utters it again when Jove doth please.

He is wit's pedlar and retails his wares

At wakes and wassails, meetings, markets, fairs."

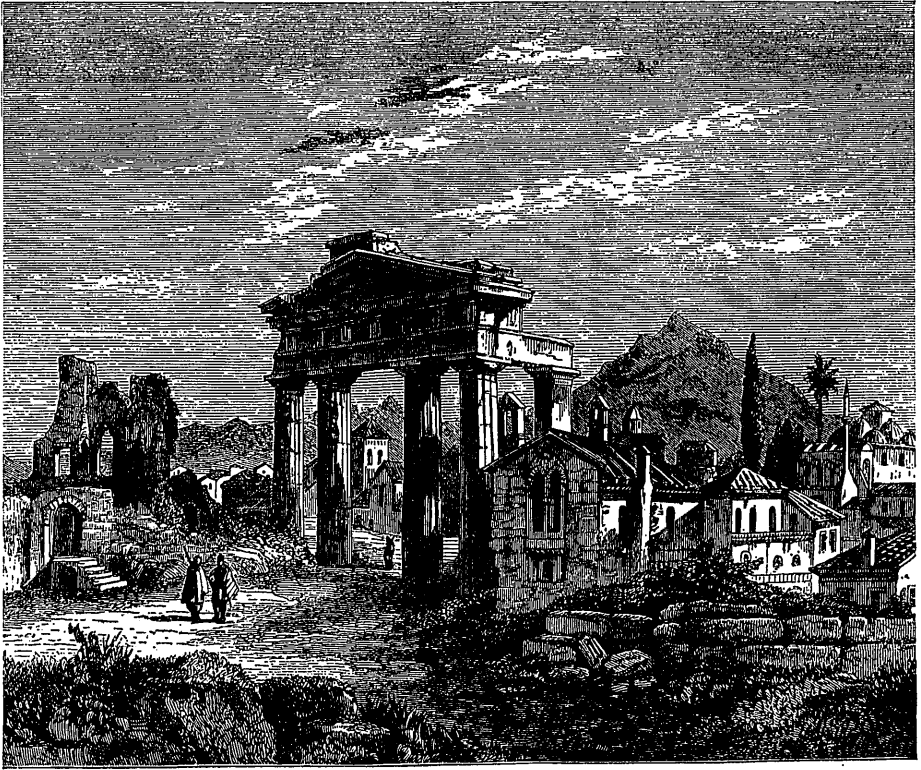
Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*.

⁷ Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1: 1. See, also, a case mentioned in Josephus, *Apion*, 2: 38.

There is no sign that force was used as of one arrested, but they brought him unto the **Areopagus**, as one is brought to a public hall, for him to speak more formally before a public society or audience.

There are two views as to the meaning of **Areopagus** here. 1. It means the Hill of Mars,

on the summit of which are the benches cut from the solid rock on which the council of the Areopagites sat in the open air. The two large rude stones, called "the stone of implacability" and "the stone of ill-doing," still remain, on one or the other of which sat the accused and the accuser of murder. To us the awful associations



GATE OF THE MARKET-PLACE, ATHENS.

On the north of the Acropolis. From Fisher's *Belgium*, etc. (Lewin.)

which attached to the hill, and to the cave of the Furies at its foot, made it a fitting background for St. Paul's solemn declaration of a new faith in the unknown God.¹

On Areopagus, Mars' Hill, had often assembled "the noblest blood of Athens, the first politicians, the first orators, the first philosophers; a court the most august, not only of Athens, but of Greece, and indeed of the whole world." It was at this bar that Socrates was arraigned and condemned, on the ground of innovating upon the state religion. This platform will hold about one

hundred people. The court sat in "seats arranged in concentric circles one above another."

2. The Areopagus was not the hill, but the Council of the Areopagus, which sat in some hall in the market-place, perhaps the king's hall, where, according to Demosthenes, the court sometimes met. The council consisted of the established lecturers and professors of the university, who tested strange teachers to see whether they should be allowed to compete with the professors who had regular salaries and large fees from their pupils. "Those who came with estab-

¹ Hastings' *Bib. Dic.* See Lewin's *St. Paul*; and Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*, ch. 10,

20 For thou bringest certain "strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 ^{(For} Now all the A-thē-ni-āns and the strangers ^{which were sojourning} there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

22 ^{Then} And Paul stood in the midst of ^{Mars' hill,} the Areopagus, and said, Ye ^{to} men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ^{in all things} ye are ^{too somewhat} "superstitious.

q 1 Pet. 4. 4, 12. Cp. Hos. 8. 12. r Cp. ch. 25. 19 (mg.).

lished fame were accepted on their reputation. Those who came unknown were required to give some public display as a test and proof of their skill."

We are to imagine, then, Paul surrounded by the philosophers and professors of the Athens University, and lecturers who occupied chairs in the university. Beyond these were the Corona (like the corona of the sun, the lesser flames which surround the central mass), the general audience of the people surrounding the philosophers. These were ever running after some new thing, and crowded around to hear what Paul would say, as men now rush to hear a popular preacher or lecturer. "Owing to the absence of printing, and the difficulty of multiplying literary productions, public opinion could not make itself felt so strongly in any other way; and hence the applause or the disapproval of the Corona came to represent the public verdict on all intellectual questions and achievements."

Ramsay argues strongly for this. (1) The form of expression indicates that Paul was brought not to Areopagus, but *before* it, as a council. (2) Paul was not on trial as a criminal to be brought before the high court. (3) He was tried as a teacher, a trial which belonged to the Areopagus Council. (4) The pride and national dignity of the Athenians would have revolted at such an insult as that this stranger should harangue them about his foreign deities on the spot where the Athenian elders had judged the god Ares and the hero Orestes, where the goddess Athenæ, from whom the city was named, had presided in the highest court of her chosen people. (5) The scene and the speech breathe the spirit of the Agora, the open free crowded life of Athens, and not the quiet atmosphere of the philosophic study or class room.¹ Here the people streamed as to a popular preacher or a star actor in our own day.²

May we know, *Δυνάμεθα γινῶναι*.—Can we know? "A polite request, thus contradicting the notion that there was a judicial trial. The Athenians were celebrated for their politeness."³

20. For thou bringest certain strange things, *ἐξέλκοιρα, astonishing, novel, startling things.*

21. For all the Athenians. Omit "the;" all Athenians, as a characteristic of the whole race,⁴ and strangers which were there, *ἐπιδημῶντες, sojourning there, resident strangers; spent their time in nothing else, ἐκκαλοῦν, had leisure for nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing, some newer (καινότερον) thing, the latest news.*⁵ New things are of no account, they must have the newest. "This character of them is abundantly sustained by ancient writers. Demosthenes observes,⁶ in almost the same words, 'We Athenians stay at home doing nothing, always delaying, and making decrees, and asking in the market if there be anything new.' The love of gossiping and news among this mercurial people is shown by the fact, that there were at Athens regular gossiping houses, devoted to the accommodation of persons who met together to hear and tell news. These may have answered in some measure to our coffee shops, and it is stated that there were three hundred and sixty of them in Athens. Others resorted for exchange of news to the shops of the surgeons and the barbers."⁷ "Their own orators and poets lashed them for this peculiarity. Aristophanes styles Athens *the city of the gapers* (*Knights*, 1262). Demades said that the crest of Athens ought to be a great tongue. . . . In the speech of Cleon to the Athenians, given by Thucydides (iii. 38), he says: 'No men are better dupes, sooner deceived by novel notions, or slower to follow approved advice. You despise what is familiar, while you are worshippers of every new extravagance. You are always hankering after an ideal state, but you do not give your minds even to what is straight before you. In a word, you are at the mercy of your own ears.'⁸

22. Then Paul stood in the midst of the Council or Court of Mars' hill, of the Areopagus. See above.

Ye men of Athens, the usual way of beginning a speech, as frequently by Demosthenes.

¹ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 243-249.

² See Mr. Capes, *University Life in Ancient Athens*.

³ Gloger.

⁴ See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "Athens;" Renan's *St. Paul*, 183-187, on the population of Athens.

⁵ "See for a practical and forcible lesson on the words, F. D. Maurice, *Friendship of Books*, pp. 84, 85."

⁶ See *Philippic*, i. 43.

⁷ Kitto, *Daily Bible Illustrations*.

⁸ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

23 For as I passed ^{by, along,} and ^{beheld} observed the ^{*objects of your} ^{devotions,} worship, I found ^{also} an altar with this inscription, ^{TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom} ^{ignorantly worship, him} ^{TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What} therefore ye ^{worship} in ignorance, ^{declare I} ^{this set I forth} unto you.

24 The ^{seeing that he is} God that made the world and all things therein, ^{he, being} Lord of heaven and earth, ^{dwelleth not in temples made with hands ;}

s 2 Thess. 2. 4 (mg.). t Cp. John 4. 22 & 1 Cor. 15. 34. u Cp. ver. 30. v Isai. 42. 5. See ch. 14. 15.
w Matt. 11. 25 Cp. Deut. 10. 14 & Ps. 115. 16. z See ch. 7. 48.

I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious, *δεδιδαιμονιστέους*, a word compounded of *δεδω*, to fear, to reverence, and *δαμων*, a god, and inferior deity. In the comparative degree. Hence, *more full of reverence for deities than the other Greeks, very religious, alluding to the great number of idols in the city, and to the fact that the two great philosophical sects, Epicureans and Stoics, were deeply concerned with religious questions.* Ramsay renders, "More than others respectful of what is divine." The A. V. rendering, "too superstitious," and the R. V., "somewhat superstitious," are not in accord with either Paul's courtesy, or his skill as an orator, or as a Christian seeking to gain converts. So at Ephesus, the town clerk having seen Paul for three years, testifies that Paul was not a blasphemer of the goddess Diana (Acts 19: 37).

"This religious temper of the Athenian people was often noticed by writers. Thus Sophocles, in the *Ced. Col.*, says they surpassed all the world in the honors they offered to the gods. Xenophon relates how, in comparison with other peoples, they observed twice the number of festivals (*De Repub. Athen.*). Pausanias tells us they exceeded all others in their piety toward the gods (*Attica*). Josephus especially mentions that the Athenians were the most religious of the Greeks (*Contra Apion*). Paul did not mean to praise his hearers for true devoutness, but to make a reference to their religious nature, evidences of which he saw all around him."¹ "A less skilful man would have denounced their idolatry at once; but Paul had learned to look at the various forms of heathenism as but the gropings of men in the dark after truth. Therefore instead of crying down the error which he saw, he went first beneath it to that spiritual craving from which it all sprung."² The religious nature is the highest nature, and it was one mark of the intellectual superiority of the Athenians that they were so deeply interested in religious subjects.

23. For as I passed by, or along, the streets and avenues of the city. And beheld, *ἀναθεωρῶν*, looked up and down (*ἀνὰ*), throughout, attentively observed again and again, your devotions. Not

acts of worship, but objects of worship, such as temples, altars, images. I found an altar . . . TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, or AN unknown God. *To unknown God.* There is no article in the Greek, but it is frequently absent in inscriptions, and the article may be implied here. As in heathen countries now, they then sacrificed to gods to propitiate them, and keep them from sending trouble upon them. "That no deity might punish them for neglecting his worship, or remain uninvoked in asking for blessings, they not only erected altars to all the gods named or known among them, but also to any other god or power that might exist, although as yet unrevealed to them."³

Pausanias in *Attica*, iv., Philostratus, in *Life of Apollonius*, vi. 3, and Tertullian in *Ad Nationes*, ii. 8, testify to altars of this kind. Epimenides of Crete (about A. D. 600) was invited to Athens, and in the time of a plague brought white and black sheep to the Areopagus, and letting them loose, bade the Athenians build an altar wherever a sheep lay down, "to the unknown god," the god, whoever he was, who brought the plague. Thus there came to be at Athens many "anonymous altars."⁴ Some think that Paul refers to Jehovah whom the Jews worshipped, whose name they refused to pronounce to the Greeks, and who having no image or symbol would be practically unknown to the heathen.

Whom (or what) therefore ye ignorantly worship. Rather, whom ye worship, *not knowing* his name, and attributes, and nature. There is no reproach implied, as there is in our translation — "ignorantly." Him declare I unto you, or better, *this set I forth unto you.* The very God whom they knew not, the God whose nature is so infinite, whose character is so holy, whose love is so great, that they had no conception of him, and yet had unconsciously longed for because they needed him, this God Paul set forth. "It was death for any private person to disturb the religion of the state by the introduction of any foreign god that had not been publicly recognized. But how admirably does Paul avail himself of the inscription on the altar! Who could accuse him of innovation, when he only expounded to the Athenians the

¹ Schaff.

² Wm. M. Taylor, D. D.

³ Hackett,

⁴ Related by Diogenes Laertius in *Epimenides*. Quoted in full in Wetstein.

25 Neither is ^{worshipped with} ^{he served by} men's hands,^y as though he needed anything, seeing he himself ^{giveth to all} ^a life, and breath, and all things;

26 And ^b ^{lie} ^{made of one} ^{blood all nations} ^{every nation} of men for to dwell on ^c all the face of the earth, ^d ^{and hath} ^{having} determined ^{the times before appointed,} ^{their appointed seasons,} and ^e the bounds of their habitation;

^y Ps. 50. 8-12. Cp. 1 Chr. 29. 14, 16 & Job 22. 2 & 2 Macc. 14. 35. ^z 1 Tim. 6. 17. James 1. 5, 17. ^a Gen. 2. 7 & 7. 22. Job 33. 4. Cp. Job 27. 3 & Eccles. 12. 7 & Zech. 12. 1. See ver. 28. ^b Cp. Gen. 3. 20 & Mal. 2. 10. ^c Gen. 11. 8. Luke 21. 35. ^d Cp. Job 12. 23 & 14. 5. ^e Deut. 32. 8. Cp. Ps. 74. 17.

attributes of the God whom they had ignorantly worshipped?"¹

24. God that made the world. Not an idol, not one of many deities with which the Greeks peopled the world, but the Creator of all things, the Supreme Being, the one God. Science, by its discoveries, has proved beyond a doubt the unity of God. The question of his unity, so much discussed fifty years ago, is settled forever. The Lord of heaven and earth. In this sentence shines wisdom, power, omnipresence, goodness, authority. Great duties and great privileges grow out of this truth. Dwelleth not in temples made with hands, though as beautiful as those they saw around them. He was infinitely above such gods as they were worshipping. In the temple of man's heart he dwelleth by his Holy Spirit. "Even the wisest among the ancients judged that God must have a human shape, as they represented him in statues, and because the imagination of man could neither conceive nor dream of God, except in human form, and a nature which allowed of his dwelling in temples made with hands."²

25. Neither is worshipped, *θεραπεύεται*. The word means to do service, to attend upon, as a physician upon a sick person. With men's hands, as idols were worshipped. The heathen clothed them with costly garments, overlaid them with silver and gold, carried them in state, installed them at banquets, and brought them costly offerings of food and drink.³ God can be worshipped only in spirit and in truth, by the service of the heart. He wants not help, but love. For man can give him nothing but what he already has in abundance, except the love of the heart. That, man can give even to God.

"The prayer of Chryses, priest of Apollo, in *Iliad*, I. 37 sq., expresses the true spirit of heathenism in this respect:—

"If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain,
God of the silver bow! thy shafts employ,
Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy."

Compare Whittier's picture:—

"Thy litanies, sweet offices
Of love and gratitude;
Thy sacramental liturgies,
The joy of doing good."

Seeing he giveth to all life and the breath which sustains it; the one thing which no person can bestow; which marks the place where God says to Science, "Thus far and no farther." And all things, which man uses and enjoys, but cannot create. Every good thing is the gift of God.

26. And hath made of one blood. The R. V., with the best manuscripts, leaves out *blood*, but the meaning is the same: God has made of one ancestor, or one source, or one nature, all nations of men. All men, therefore, are brethren. This gives us hope that all nations, even the lowest, can be saved and exalted by the gospel; and lays upon us the duty to help all men, to send the gospel to all men, and to treat all men justly and lovingly, even the lowest races of men. "It was not given to the Greek or to the Roman, but to the Jew, separated though he was from every other nation, to safeguard the truth of the unity of mankind, and to proclaim the realization of that truth through the blood of a Crucified Jew."⁴

And hath determined the times before appointed. The R. V. accepts a slightly different reading, "determined their appointed seasons." In what way Paul does not state. The seasons are not only summer and winter, seed time and harvest, but the times of changes and eras of development. God's control is over all. He is the Ruler and Lord of all the earth. All history is under his guidance and providence. He does not dwell apart from the affairs of men, as did the Epiphanian gods, nor is he merely an all-pervasive impersonal spirit, as the pantheistic Stoics taught. The special application may be that God determined the best time in history for his son Jesus to come.

And the bounds of their habitation. "We

are divine. They are vindictive, passionate, intriguing, mendacious. They are dedications of Ahab and Jezebel, of Machiavelli and Lucretia Borgia, of Henry VIII. and Catherine de Medici. Well cried Vespasian on his death-bed, 'Woe is me, for I am about to become a god.'"—Abbott.

⁴ Alford.

¹ Lewin.

² Denton (see Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*, 1: 18).

³ "The gods of Homer and Virgil are not only feasting gods, but roistering, bacchanalian, drunken gods. They are not only sensuous, marrying and giving in marriage; they are openly and grossly licentious; adultery and rape

27 That ^{the Lord,} they should seek ^{God,} if haply ^{every} they might feel after him, and find him, ^{he} though he ^{is} not far from ^{each} one of us :

28 For ^{also even} in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain ^{also even} of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

f Cp. ch. 15. 17. *g* Cp. Job 23. 3, 8, 9. *h* Cp. Deut. 4. 7 & Ps. 145. 18 & Jer. 23. 23, 24. See ch. 14. 17. *i* Job 12. 10. Dan. 5. 23. Cp. Wisd. 7. 16 & Heb. 2. 11. *j* Cp. Tit. 1. 12.

need not *limit* the words to the assertion of the fact that God has given to various nations their different geographical bounds of mountain, river, or sea, as we recognize the influence exerted upon the *morals* of the inhabitants of a country by their physical surroundings. St. Paul's words teach us to see also in these conditions 'the works of the Lord.' The words of the most scientific observer, perhaps, of Palestine, Karl Ritter, are these: ¹ 'Nature and the course of history show that here, from the beginning onwards, there cannot be talk of any chance.' ²

27. That they should seek the Lord. Rather, *God*, which is the best reading. "The whole object of the divine providence, *in his dealings with nations as well as with individuals*, is to bring them to a knowledge of the one true God."⁸ **Might feel after him, and find him.** "The particle, *εἰ ἄρα γε*, expresses a very real intention of God's providence that the heathen should feel after and find God (comp. 8: 22); while the optative points to the fact that this intention had not yet been realized."⁴

Paul here defines the actual position not only of idolatry, but of the modern systems of religion, such as rationalism, spiritualism so far as it is a religion, and all systems that leave out Christ and an inspired Bible. They ask questions to which Christ is the answer. They express longings and aspirations, while Christ bestows that for which they long. They are the sphinx's riddle, which they cannot solve, and yet not to solve them is death. They are expressions of the religious hunger of men. There are in them some faint echoes from God, some dim visions of an answer, but they seem like one great interrogation point written over the whole heart of humanity. They seem to say with Tennyson, —

"I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar stairs,
That slope through darkness up to God;

"I stretch lame hands of faith, and *grop*e
And gather dust and chaff, and call

To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope."

For man without the gospel is but

"An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."⁶

Though he be not far from every one of us. He is near us in nature and its laws, in conscience, in our own spiritual nature, longing and looking upward; near us in love and care, near by his Spirit, and by his Word. He is only waiting for us to open our eyes that we may see and know him.⁶ "The words may well have struck a responsive chord in the hearts, not only of some in the crowd, but of some of the Stoics who were listening, contradictory and incongruous as their system was, with its strange union of a gross material pantheism, and the expression of belief in the fatherly love and goodness of God."⁷

28. **For in him we live, and move, and have our being.** This is true both of our natural and of our spiritual life. He is the source of life; everything around us is the gift of God. We are surrounded and filled with his laws. We are sustained by his power and love.

As certain also of your own poets have said. Aratus, of Soli in Cilicia, a countryman of Paul's (B. c. 270); and Cleanthes, the successor of Zeno (B. c. 300). Both were Stoics.

"From Zeus begin we; never let us leave
His name unloved. With him, with Zeus, are filled
All paths we tread, and all the marts of men;
Filled, too, the sea, and every creek and bay;
And all in all things need we help of Zeus,
For we, too, are his offspring."⁸

"Most glorious of immortals, many-named,
Almighty and forever, thee, O Zeus,
Sovran o'er nature, guiding with thy hand
All things that are, we greet with praises. Thee
'Tis meet that mortals call with one accord,
For we thine offspring are, and we alone
Of all that live and move upon this earth,
Receive the gift of imitative speech."⁹

"No doubt it is possible to exaggerate, with Bentley, St. Paul's knowledge of classical litera-

¹ Knowing.

² G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 112, 113 and 302, 303 ff.

³ Lyman Abbott.

⁴ Rendall.

⁵ *In Memoriam*.

⁶ Compare Whittier's *Poems*, "The Chapel of the Hermits," "We lack but open eye and ear," etc.

⁷ Knowing. See Lightfoot on *Philippians*, 298.

⁸ The *Phænomena* of Aratus.

⁹ Cleanthes, *Hymn to Jupiter*.

29 ^{Forasmuch as} ^{Belug} ^{then as we are} the offspring of God, 'we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and ^{man's device,} ^{device of man.}
 30 ^{And the} ^m times of this ignorance therefore "God ^{winked at;} ^{overlooked;} but 'now he "com-mandeth all men ^{that they should all everywhere} repent:
 31 ^{Because} ^{inasmuch as} he hath appointed a " day, in the which " he will judge the world " in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; ^{whereof} ^{whereof} he hath given assurance unto all ^{men,} ^{men,} " in that he hath raised him from the dead.

℥ Cp. Luke 3. 38 & Heb. 12. 9. ℥ Isai. 40. 18, 19, 25 & 46. 5. Cp. Wisd. 13. 10 & Rom. 1. 23. m Eph. 4. 18.
 1 Pet. 1. 14. Cp. ver. 23. n Cp. Rom. 3. 25. See ch. 14. 16. o Cp. Mark 1. 15 & Tit. 2. 11, 12 & 1 Pet. 4. 3.
 p ch. 26. 20 (for mg.). Mark 6. 12. Luke 24. 47, al. q Matt. 12. 36. Rom. 2. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 9.
 1 John 4. 17. Jude 6, al. Cp. Isai. 2. 12, &c. r 2 Tim. 4. 8. See ch. 10. 42. s Ps. 9. 8 & 96. 13 & 98. 9. 1 Pet. 2.
 23. Cp. Rom. 3. 6. ℥ Cp. John 16. 10, 11 & Rom. 1. 4. u See ch. 2. 24.

ture,¹ but on the other hand it is not perhaps an unfair inference that a man who could quote so aptly from the poets as here, in 1 Cor. 15: 35 and in Tit. 1: 12, could have done so at other times if occasion had required."²

29. Forasmuch, etc. The necessary inference follows. We ought not to think, etc. It is impossible that a spirit should have an idol for its father.³ Idolatry degrades man because it degrades God. That God is a great personal Spirit, who has created matter, and still uses it, and that we are his children, made in his likeness, is the grandest conception, both of God and of man, that has ever entered the human mind. Nothing else so ennobles man, so enlarges his spirit, so fills him with aspirations and hopes. By art and man's device. Alluding "to those masterpieces of sculpture in ivory, gold, and marble which were standing near him on the Areopagus." "The Athenians had very productive silver mines at Laurium, and marble quarries on Mount Pentelicus. In the Parthenon facing the apostle was Minerva's (Athene's) statue in ivory and gold, and towering over it the bronze colossus of the same Power."⁴ This statue was by Phidias, and was 40 feet high.

30. And the times of this ignorance, or "the times of ignorance," God winked at, *ὑπερβῶν*, overlooked, took slight notice of, did not punish with the severity idolatry deserved, but let it go on working out its own futility to satisfy and save men. Compare Rom. 3: 25.

Sins committed in ignorance are different from those committed against light and conscience. They do not so harden the soul against God and

the good. Alford remarks that in the word *overlooked* "lie treasures of mercy for those who lived in the times of ignorance." But now. Since Christ has come with new light, new motives, a new message from God. Commandeth all men everywhere to repent. To turn from their sins, and live as children of a holy God should live. "To both Stoic and Epicurean the counsel would appear not merely needless, but objectionable. To the latter because it would conflict not only with his denial of immortality, but with his whole idea of the gods, and to the Stoic because the wise man was himself a king, self-sufficing, who stood in no need of atonement, who feared no judgment to come; the famous picture of Josephus was so far realized, and the Epicurean might be called the Sadducee, and the Stoic the Pharisee of ancient philosophy; but in one respect both Stoic and Epicurean were at one — whether they were just persons or not, they 'needed no repentance.'"⁵

31. Paul now presents a new motive for repentance. Because he hath . . . a day, some set time, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness. Every decision will be absolutely right and correct. There will be no bribery, no covering up. The righteousness of the judgment is what makes it terrible to the conscience. By that man whom he hath ordained. The man Jesus Christ, whom God had ordained as the Saviour of all who will believe, and the judge of all the disobedient.⁶ Hath given assurance, or confirmation. Literally, *giving or offering faith*; i. e., a ground for faith to rest upon, viz., of a judgment to come.⁷ In that he hath raised

¹ See Farrar's *St. Paul*, Excursus on "Classical Quotations of St. Paul."

² Knowing.

³ See quotations from Seneca, as "The whole world is the temple of the immortal gods," in *Lightfoot on Philip-pians*, p. 290, and his *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age* "Paul and Seneca." For a recent view of the possible acquaintance of Seneca with Christianity, see Prof. James Orr's *Neglected Factors in the Study of the Early Progress of Christianity*, ch. 3, "The Penetrative Influence of Christianity on the Thought and Life of the Empire."

⁴ Canon Cook.

⁵ Jesus reveals the Unknown God something as in Rome the mirror below reveals Guido's great picture of Aurora on the lofty ceiling.

⁶ Æschylus, in the *Agamemnon*, his greatest drama, expressed the view that "the impious act breeds more, like to its own kind: it is the nature of crime to beget new crime, and along with it the depraved audacious will that settles, like an irresistible spirit of ill, on the house." See, also, the interesting discussions in Pintarch's *Delay of Divine Justice*, with notes by Prof. Penbody.

32 ^{And Now} when they heard of the ^v resurrection of the dead, ^w some mocked; ^{and but} others said, ^x We will hear thee ^{again of concerning this matter.} yet again.

33 ^{So Thus} Paul ^{departed went out} from among them.

34 ^{Howbeit But} certain men clave unto him, and believed: among ^{the which was whom also was} Δι-ο-νύσι-ῖ-ος ^v the Ἄρ-ἔ-ῶ-π'ᾱ-γίτε, and a woman named Δάμ'ᾱ-ρίς, and others with them.

^v Heb. G. 2. See ver. 18.

^w Cp. ch. 2. 13 & 26. 8.

^x ch. 24. 25.

^y vers. 19, 22.

him from the dead. The resurrection of Christ brought assurance of the judgment of the world by Christ, because (1) it proved Christ's claim that he was the Son of God. (2) It proved that his teaching was true, a part of which was that he should judge the world. (3) It proved the resurrection of the dead and a life beyond the grave, without which there could be no judgment in the world to come.

Thus the duty to repent was enforced by *new motives* of fear, of love, of hope; by *new light* on conduct, on the judgment, on God, on heaven, on the future; by *new helps and opportunities*, through Christ's love, and teachings, and atonement, and example, and the Holy Spirit; by *new proofs*, through the resurrection of Christ, and the assurance it gave that he was the Son of God, and that there is immortal life.

32. **And when they heard.** Of course we have only the barest outline of Paul's address. "The report given in the Acts contains about two hundred and fifty words, and must have lasted little more than two minutes, if that was all St. Paul said."¹ Some have spoken as if Paul omitted here his usual preaching of the gospel, but there is every appearance that Paul was stopped before he had completed his speech. **Some mocked,** ἐχλεύαζον, from χλεύη, *a jest, a joke*. The imperfect implies *they began to mock*, marking the outbreaking of the derision. Paul's teaching

was opposed both to their philosophy and their lives. The easiest way to escape his conclusions was to sneer at them. They must either repent or turn the edge of his argument. At the same time this kind of answer was a proof that Paul's argument had told upon them, and that they themselves were not as intellectual as their ancestors. "The seat of the scorner is never a good one for a learner to occupy, who wishes to profit." **Others . . . We will hear thee again.** Like Felix, they would wait for a more convenient season.

33. **So Paul departed from among them,** from the Council of the Areopagites and the Corona of the listening people.

34. **Howbeit.** There was a third but small class, who differed from the two others, and **clave unto him, and believed** on Jesus. Two only are named. **Dionysius the Areopagite**, that is, a member of the Council of Areopagus, "to which belonged the supervision of the entire public administration, the conduct of magistrates, the transactions of the popular assembly, religion, laws, morals, and discipline, with power to call even private persons to account for offensive behavior."²

A woman named Damaris. For what she was noted is unknown, but she must have been a woman of distinction and power. A church was founded here later, and the Parthenon became a Christian temple.

¹ Prof. Stokes.

² Harper's Classical Dictionary.

CHAPTER 18.

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY CONCLUDED; THE THIRD BEGUN.

A YEAR AND SIX MONTHS
AT CORINTH, vers. 1-18.

Paul goes from Athens to Corinth.
 Aquila and Priscilla his co-workers.
 Silas and Timothy rejoin Paul.
 Driven from the Jewish synagogue.
 House of Justus becomes the Christian centre.
 Later also a church at the house of Aquila (1 Cor. 16: 19).
 Vision of courage and cheer to Paul.
 Paul brought to trial before Gallio.
 His opposers driven from the court.
 Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, beaten.
 The Philippians send a contribution to Paul.
 Paul writes two letters to the Thessalonians.

A. D. 51-52.

RETURN TO ANTIOCH,
vers. 18-22.

Paul sails for Syria.
 Touches at Ephesus.
 Arrival at Cæsarea.
 Brief visit to Jerusalem.
 Arrival at Antioch, Syria.
 End of second missionary journey.

A. D. 52.

THIRD MISSIONARY JOUR-
NEY BEGUN.

Paul revisits the churches of Asia Minor.
 Apollos at Ephesus.
 Apollos at Corinth.

A. D. 53-56.

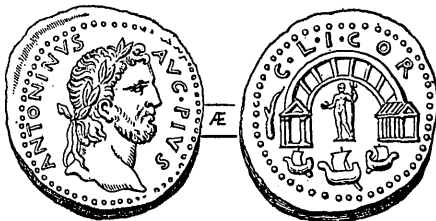
1 AFTER these things ^{Paul}_{he} departed from Äth'ens, and came to Cörr'inth:¹

PAUL AT CORINTH, vers. 1-18.

1. After these things, described in the last chapter, Paul departed from Athens. He seems not to have made any determined effort to stay in that city, probably because he could do better work, be more successful, and reach many more people elsewhere than there. The narrative reads as if he had not intended to make Athens a centre of gospel work, but only a stopping place on his way to Corinth. Perhaps that was the reason why Paul had so little encouragement in Athens. "Our disappointments, our apparent failures, may be the very experiences by which we shall be enabled most to glorify God and bless humanity."¹

And came to Corinth. (1) Because of its situation as a strategic centre of operations for the spread of the gospel. (2) Because its varied population gave unusual freedom of thought and action. (3) Because of its very badness. The desperate need of the gospel in a place is a strong reason for any minister's choosing it as his field of labor. Besides, there are almost always some hearts in such a place which are sick of the evil around them, and ready to grasp any means that may aid them in resisting its power. It is always

one of God's compliments to us, a special mark of his favor, when he gives us a hard field to work in. CORINTH, on the isthmus of the same name, commanded by its position the Ionian and the



COIN OF CORINTH.

Obverse: Head of Antoninus, with legend Antoninus, Ang. Pius. Reverse: Port of Cenchrea, with a temple at each end, and statue of Neptune with his trident in the centre. Below are ships. The legend runs, —

C. L. I. Cor.
 (Colonia Laus Julia Corinthus.)
 From Millingen. (Levin.)

Ægean seas, and held, as it were, the keys of the Peloponnesus. The advantages of its situation were so preëminent that it became the seat of opulence and arts, while the rest of Greece was

¹ Prof. Rush Rhees.

2 And ^{he} found a certain Jew named ^z Ā'quī-lā, ^{born in a man of} Pōn'tūs' by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife ^z Prīs-cī'lā; * (because ^{that} a Clau'dī-ūs had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome:) and ^{he} came unto them;

^z vers. 18, 26. Rom. 16. 23. 1 Cor. 16. 19. 2 Tim. 4. 19.
11. 28.

* This clause is not a parenthesis in the R. V. a ch.

snunk in comparative obscurity and barbarism.¹ The city has been called "The Star of Hellas," "The Eye of Greece," "The Bridge of the Sea," "The Gate of the Peloponnesus," "The Vanity Fair of the Roman Empire." "As the seat of a proconsul, as a place delightful for its climate, and, above all, as the spot where the Isthmian games were held, it attracted many strangers, including a multitude of Greeks from every part," to which contests Paul refers twice in his letters to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 9: 24; 2 Cor. 2: 14-16). It was the centre of government and commerce, as Athens was of education. The Corinthians were the first to build war galleys, or triremes (Thucydides). The arts of painting and sculpture attained the highest perfection at Corinth; the finest bronze was "Corinthian brass;" our small fruit, the currant, derives its name from Corinth. But "none of her sons are mentioned among the illustrious writers of Greece."

"There was little in the new Corinth to recall the more famous ancient city. Her imperial pride as the mother of colonies, the hereditary dignity and splendor of her merchant princes, the artistic skill of her artisans, had perished in the utter ruin of city and people in B. C. 146. Roman Corinth was a new colony consisting mainly of freedmen, planted by J. Cæsar in his last years. It soon became a wealthy mart of commerce, the capital of Achaia and residence of the proconsul, but suffered from democratic license and turbulence."²

It contained a population, according to Farrar, of 400,000, but of the most heterogeneous nature possible; "a population of Greek adventurers and Roman bourgeois, with a tainting infusion of Phœnicians—a mass of Jews, ex-soldiers, philosophers, merchants, sailors, freedmen, slaves, tradespeople, hucksters, and agents of every form of vice—a colony 'without aristocracy, without tradition, without well-established citizens.'" It was the seat of every kind of licentiousness and excess. Vice and profligacy here held high revels, with a shamelessness consecrated by the rites of their false gods.

"Its very name had become a synonym for reckless debauchery. . . . East and West mingled their dregs of foulness in the new Gomorrah of classic culture."³ "Suffice it to say that to the

temple of Venus were attached more than a thousand courtesans, under the cover of religious rites. . . . Such was the Augean stable which the Christian Hercules now addressed himself to purify."⁴ "It has sometimes struck me as being not without significance that the three most celebrated sites in the ancient world, dedicated to these hideous orgies under the cloak of religion,—Corinth, Daphne, and Apheka of Adonis,—have been utterly desolated, and scarce one stone left on another of all their world-famed temples."⁵

While it is true that here was a great opportunity for the preaching of the gospel, on account of the vigorous and varied life of the city; yet it is no wonder that Paul came to them feeling his "weakness, and in fear and in much trembling" (1 Cor. 2: 3), and needed the vision of cheer (ver. 9).

2. And found a certain Jew. He always worked first among the Jews. They were easier of access at first, through their synagogues and their scriptures. "A Jewish guild always keeps together, whether in street or synagogue. In Alexandria the different trades sat in the synagogue arranged into guilds; and St. Paul could have no difficulty in meeting, in the bazaar of his trade, with the like-minded Aquila and Priscilla."⁶

Aquila . . . Priscilla, diminutive from *Prisca*. These were common Roman names. As Aquila is called a Jew, but Priscilla is not, it has been inferred that she was a Gentile. In ver. 18, and usually by Paul, Priscilla is mentioned first; so that it is probable that she came from a higher social rank, and had received a better education, than Aquila. That she married a tent-maker, though a man of some wealth, "may afford us another proof, among many, of the influence of educated women in Rome."⁷

"It appears that Priscilla was a woman of marked ability, being not only mentioned as sharing the hospitality of the family, but also in the theological instruction of Apollos. . . . From the fact that her name is always mentioned first, it has been inferred that she was the more energetic of the two (Chrysostom thought it was because she was the more fervent in spirit), but it is a fact worthy of note that the two are always

¹ See Harper's *Classical Dictionary*.

² Rendall.

³ Farrar.

⁴ Lewin.

⁵ Tristram. See Corinth in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*. McGiffert, pp. 262-272.

⁶ Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*.

⁷ See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18: 3, 5.

3 And ^b because he was of the same ^{craft, trade,} he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their ^{occupation} trade they were tentmakers.

b ch. 20. 34. 1 Cor. 4. 12 & 9. 15. 2 Cor. 11. 7 & 12. 13. 1 Thess. 2. 9. 2 Thess. 3. 8.

mentioned together, from which we may conclude that they furnish a happy example of harmony and sympathy in Christian life."¹ She was a distinguished instance of one of those bright, earnest women whose powers were called into action by the work and teaching of Jesus Christ and his chosen friends, one of the pioneers of that devoted band of women workers who have now for eighteen hundred years done such splendid work for their Lord's cause, in all climes and among all peoples.²

Born in Pontus. A small province in the northeastern part of Asia Minor, bordering on the Black Sea. **Claudius.** Fourth Roman emperor. This was the twelfth year of his reign. **Commanded all Jews to depart from Rome.** This took place early in A. D. 52. "The real cause of the expulsion was that Judea was at that time in a state of all but open rebellion, and that it was thought not prudent to have thousands of the disloyal nation within Rome itself."³

Suetonius,⁴ who wrote half a century after the event, says that Claudius drove the Jews from Rome, "because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus. Chrestus was a common name, Christus was not; the two were often used interchangeably; the pronunciation was the same, or nearly so; hence the surmise is not unreasonable that Christianity had already reached Rome at this time; that the Jews instigated riots against their Christian brethren, as in other places in the Roman Empire, — Corinth (ver. 12), Berea (chap. 17: 13), Thessalonica (chap. 17: 5), — and that Suetonius, who wrote half a century after the event, formed the impression that this Christus or Chrestus was somehow responsible for the outbreaks, and therefore represented him as their instigator."⁵

"Dion Cassius (60: 6), referring probably to the same event, says that Claudius did not expel the Jews from the city, as there were too many of them, but forbade them to hold meetings. Very likely an edict of expulsion was passed, and some of the Jews, including Aquila and Priscilla, left the city; but the Jewish colony was so large that it was found impracticable to carry out the edict, and so a prohibition of their religious ser-

vices was substituted."⁶ The edict, in any case, was not long in force.

And came unto them, as Christians, and perhaps in search of work among his own guild.

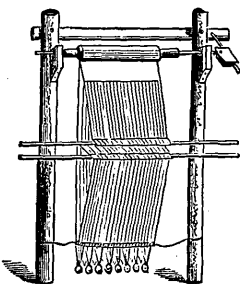
3. Because he was of the same craft, or trade. Every Jew was required by rabbinical laws to teach his son a trade, that he might be independent of the varying circumstances of their changing life, and it was especially necessary for the learned class, the scribes and rabbis, because they had no state pay or annuity. "It was a rabbinical principle that whoever does not teach his son a trade is as if he brought him up to be a robber. All the rabbinical authorities in Christ's time, and later, were working at some trade. Hillel, Paul's teacher, was a wood-cutter, and his rival, Shammai, a carpenter."⁷ Jesus himself was a carpenter.⁸

"As it was often enjoined upon a son not to forsake the trade of his father, perhaps because a similar trade might be more easily learnt at home, it is likely that Saul followed his father's trade, which both father and son might easily have learnt at Tarsus."⁹

He abode with them. Here was his home in Corinth, and Paul would have every possible advantage, in working for such a Christian, for using all possible time in preaching the gospel. The customers and workmen coming into the shop would give Paul an opportunity of reaching many.¹⁰

For . . . they were tentmakers, σκηνοποιοί. Not weavers of the goat's haircloth of which the tents were made, . . . but makers of tents used by shepherds and travellers, and also, according to Van Lennep, by Roman soldiers. The tent cloth was called Cilicium, from Cilicia, where the goats from whose hair the cloth was made abounded.

NOTE. Paul by his tent-making was preach-



AN ANCIENT ROMAN LOOM.

¹ Abbott. ² Schaff.

³ Tristram.

⁴ *Claudius*, 25.

⁵ Prof. M. B. Riddle. So most scholars.

⁶ McGiffert, 362, *Note*.

⁷ M. R. Vincent.

⁸ On the dignity of labor among the Jews at this time,

see Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, ch. 11; Taylor's *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*, pp. 18, 19, 141.

⁹ Knowing. See Schlürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. i. p. 44.

¹⁰ See Dr. Samuel Cox's *An Expositor's Note-Book*, pp. 419-438, the chapter on "St. Paul as a Working Man and in Waut."

4 And ^e he reasoned in the synagogue ^e every sabbath, and persuaded ^{the} Jews and ^{the} Greeks.

5 But ^d when Silas and Timothy came down from Măç-ē-dō'nī-ă, Paul ^e was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews ^{that} ^e Jesus ^{was} the Christ.

^e ch. 17. 17. See ch. 13. 5, 14. ^d ch. 17. 15. 1 Thess. 3. 6. ^e 2 Cor. 5. 14. Cp. Job 32. 18 & Jer. 6. 11 & 20. 9 & Amos 3. 8. ^f ch. 20. 21. ^g ver. 28. ch. 2. 36 & 5. 42 & 17. 3. Cp. ch. 3. 20 & 8. 5 & 9. 22.

ing a practical sermon day by day. He worked for his living, although he would have had a right to support from the Corinthians, lest he should hinder the gospel's progress by allowing any impression that his object was to make money out of them. See his words in his letter to them after he had left (1 Cor. 9: 6-15 and 2 Cor. 11: 6-10). He showed that men could serve God in honest daily labor. Business is a school in which men are learning God's lessons of truth, honesty, fidelity, patience, or Satan's lessons of dishonesty, deceit, selfishness. The motive to do good, the



ARAB TENTS.

desire for the glory of God, the service of Jesus Christ, transfigures and transforms daily toil, like the sun shining on the dark fogs and clouds of earth, and making them radiant as the gate of heaven.

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for thy laws,
Makes *that* and the action fine.

"This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told."¹

NOTE. Moses was the son of a poor slave; Gideon was a thresher; David was a shepherd boy; Euripides was the son of a fruiterer; Virgil of a baker; Horace of a freed slave; Tamerlane of a shepherd; Ben Jonson of a mason; Shakespeare of a butcher; Melancthon, the great theologian of the Reformation, was an armorer; Luther was the child of a poor miner; Fuller was a farm servant; Carey, the originator of the plan

of translating the Bible into the language of the millions of Hindostan, was a shoemaker.

4. He reasoned, διελέγετο, *was discoursing, persuaded, ἐπειθε, was persuading.* Ramsay, marking the imperfects, translates "He used to discourse, and tried to persuade."

Greeks, Greek proselytes, for other Greeks would not be worshipping in the synagogue.

5. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia. They had been left at Berea, when Paul was compelled to leave (Acts 17: 13-15). Timothy had been sent to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3: 6), and from Philippians 4: 15 we judge that he had visited Philippi also. Paul's friendly heart was cheered by their presence. Timothy also brought him glad tidings of the faith and love of these churches and of their longing to see him, so that he was comforted concerning them in all his distress and affliction through their faith. The Philippians also sent him aid, which, like Joseph's wagons to Jacob, brought proof of the abundant harvest of faith and love in the Philipian church.

Paul was pressed in the spirit, σπου-
χεται. The verb means literally, *to hold together* anything lest it come to pieces; then, in the passive, *to be closely occupied with, held by, oppressed with* afflictions, or duties, or feelings; then *to be impelled, urged, constrained.* "The word is applied to imprisonment, to sickness, or to moral constraint of any kind, like the engrossing duties of the ministry."

There are two meanings which can be attached to this expression according to the word which follows the verb, whether πνεύματι, *spirit*, or λόγῳ, *word*.

According to the reading of our common version, Paul's friends on reaching Corinth found him pressed in the spirit, working with his hands and preaching, "testifying" to the Jews while he was depressed in spirit, weak, sick, discouraged.

See 1 Corinthians 2: 3, where "weakness" refers to *bodily sickness*. He was with them in *fear and trembling*. In 2 Corinthians 11: 9, he speaks of being in *want*. His rough experience at Philippi, his small success at Athens, his being driven

¹ George Herbert. See, also, two poems in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, "Wrought into Gold," p. 223, and "If the dear Lord should send an angel down," p. 458.

6 And when they opposed themselves, and ^h blasphemed, ⁱ he shook ^{his} out his raiment, and said unto them, ^j Your blood *be* upon your own heads; ^k I ^{am} clean: ^l from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and ^{entered} into ^{a certain man's house,} the house of a certain man named Titus ^m Jūs'-tūs, ^{one} ⁿ that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And ^o Cris'pūs, the ^{chief} ruler of the synagogue, believed ⁱⁿ the Lord with ^p all his house; and many of the Cō-rin'thi-ans hearing believed, and were baptized.

^h See ch. 13. 45 (& mg. for mg.). ⁱ Neh. 5. 13. Cp. ch. 13. 51. ^j Ezek. 18. 13 & 33. 4. Cp. 2 Sam. 1. 16 & Matt. 27. 25. ^k ch. 20. 26 (Gk.). Cp. Ezek. 3. 18, 19. ^l See ch. 13. 46. ^m Cp. ch. 1. 23 & Col. 4. 11. ⁿ ch. 16. 14. ^o 1 Cor. 1. 14. ^p See ch. 11. 14.

from place to place, his loneliness without his accustomed helpers, the intense worldliness of Corinth and the slow success there at first, and the bitterness of the Jews against him, all tended to depress and weaken him. In writing to the Thessalonians from Corinth, he speaks of his "distress and affliction" (1 Thess. 3: 7). "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day" (1 Cor. 4: 11-13). But he did not cease his preaching that **Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah.**

According to the other reading, following the best manuscripts, Paul was **constrained by the word.** The coming of his friends, their aid, the good news they brought, enabled Paul to be *wholly possessed by and engrossed in the word.* He entered upon his preaching with new zeal and earnestness. Professor Ramsay thinks it indicates some specially marked character in the Corinthian preaching, less philosophical, great concentration of purpose, and simplicity of method; as he himself says in his first letter to the Corinthian Christians (2: 2-4), he determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified.¹

"Only a thought; but the work it wrought
Could never by tongue or pen be taught:
For it ran through a life like a thread of gold,
And the life bore fruit a hundred fold."

Rendall thinks that the phrase describes how the relief of the apostle from the heavy strain of daily labor, by this additional help and the material aid they brought, enabled him more thoroughly to devote himself to the preaching of the word.

6. **And when they opposed themselves, ἀντιτασσόμενοι, put themselves in battle array;** implying an organized opposition. The intensity and success of Paul's labors kindled an intensity of

opposition. It is a good sign, when the worldly forces are aroused. It shows that the power of the gospel is felt, that Satan fears for his kingdom. Satan does not make an ado over a sleeping church. **Shook his raiment, ἐκνίψας τὸν ποῦλον, shook out, or off from;** shook every particle of dust from their garments. Shaking off the dust as a testimony against them (Matt. 10: 14). A sign that he was relieved of all responsibility for their failure to be saved, and had no share in their character or conduct. **Your blood, in the sense of death and destruction, be upon your own heads.** You alone are responsible. This is not a threat, but a warning, a new effort to stop them in their mad career. (See Ezek. 33: 4.) **Henceforth, so long as he remained in Corinth, I will go unto the Gentiles.** Said one who was bitterly attacked: "They cannot harm me by what they say of me. I am too near the Great White Throne for that."

7. **And he departed thence.** From the synagogue (ver. 4), not from the city or from the house of Aquila. **A certain man's house, named Justus.** He used this house for the purposes of teaching and worship. We may suppose that for his own lodging he still remained with Aquila and Priscilla. **One that worshipped God, i. e., a proselyte, not a born Jew.** No doubt he became a Christian. Nothing more is known of Justus. **Joined hard to the synagogue.** This was probably the reason for the choice of this house. Its proximity would make his preaching a standing invitation to the Jews, while, being a Gentile's house, the Gentiles would feel welcome to go there.

8. But Paul had gained something from the Jews, for **Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue,** became a Christian. He was a prominent and influential man, and it must have been at no little cost that he left his position and his friends to join the company of Christians. From ver. 17 it would appear that he was succeeded in his office by Sosthenes, a man of very different char-

¹ St. Paul, 252. See McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, 203-206.

9 ^{Then spake} ^{And} the Lord ^{to} ^{said unto} Paul ^{in the night by} ^{a vision,} ^{Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:}

10 For ^{I am with thee,} and ^{'no man shall set on thee to} ^{hurt} ^{harm} thee: for ^{"I have much people in this city."}

^q ch. 23. 11 & 27. 23. ^r Cp. ch. 26. 16 & 2 Cor. 12. 1-4. ^s ch. 27. 24. Josh. 1. 5, 6. Jer. 1. 8. Matt. 28. 20. Cp. 1 Cor. 2. 3, *al.* ^t Cp. Luke 21. 18 & 2 Thessa. 3. 2. ^u Cp. John 10. 16.

acter. And many of the Corinthians hearing believed. That is, many of the idolatrous inhabitants of Corinth, in distinction from the Jews and proselytes before alluded to. And were baptized. Here, as everywhere, those who became Christians publicly professed their faith in the appointed way. It is a weak faith and feeble love which do not desire to confess Christ before the world, if, indeed, they be faith and love at all. The imperfects denote that the spread of the new faith was gradual and continuous; many "used to hear, and believe, and receive baptism."

In only three cases was the rite of baptism administered by Paul himself (1 Cor. 1: 14-16), — to Stephanas and his household, because he was the first fruits of Achaia, the Roman district of Greece to which Corinth belonged; to Gaius, his host on his later visit (Rom. 16: 23); and to Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue; all of them men of uncommon importance. The reason why he did not baptize more is given in 1 Cor. 1: 12-15.

9. Then spake the Lord, Jesus, to Paul in the night by a vision, as at other crises of his life (Acts 16: 9; 22: 17; 27: 23). In Job are two instances of instruction through dreams, — the vivid vision of Eliphaz (Job 4: 13-17), and one in the speech of Elihu (Job 33: 13-18). In Joel (2: 28, 29) there is a prophecy quoted in the Acts (2: 17, 18) that "your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

Often from pillows of stone, as to Jacob at Bethel, come the brightest visions of God and his angel messengers. The Valley of the Shadow of Death is on the way to the Land of Beulah and the Delectable Mountains.

Be not afraid, but speak. As we have seen in verses 5 and 6, there was much to trouble and discourage Paul at this time. See 1 Cor. 1: 10, 11, 12; 2: 3, 4; 5: 1, 2; 6: 1; 10: 7-10; 11: 18-22. Especially did all these things have double power

over him on account of his physical condition. It takes a great deal of faith and hope to shine through a disordered stomach and a sick body. "Even the most eminent saints, and men endowed with an heroic faith, have had seasons of weakness and hours of temptation, in which they needed encouragement and strength from above: Abraham before Abimelech; Moses in the wilderness; Elijah under the juniper tree; John in the prison; Jesus in Gethsemane; Luther in his temptation."¹

"Who comes to God an inch, through doubtings dim,
In blazing light God will advance a mile to him."²

Hold not thy peace. Keep right on, for you are right, you are doing my work.

10. For I am with thee. "One with God is a majority." When the Son of God was in the seven-times-heated furnace with the three worthies, the fire did not harm them. Paul was like the burning bush Moses saw, uninjured by the flame.³ So Elisha in Dothan was surrounded by an invisible army of defence.

"There are who like the Seer of old
Can see the helpers God has sent,
And how Life's rugged mountain side
Is white with many an angel tent."

I have much people in this city. Paul could not be harmed till his work was done. So a great man once said, "I am immortal till my work is finished." A large and influential church was formed in Corinth. "Though now serving at heathen altars, slaves now of the grossest vices, nevertheless they are my people; and here you are to abide, from these vile dust-heaps to gather out my jewels."⁴ "Paul had the pleasure of changing these impure and sinful souls into pure brides, whom he conducted to Christ, and to some of whom he could afterwards say, 'Ye were thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners; but ye are washed, sanctified, justified

¹ Lange. Compare Bunyan's Pilgrims in the Dungeon under Giant Despair's Castle, who had the key of deliverance all the time, and yet had forgotten to use it.

² Sayings of Rabia in Trench's *Poems*.

³ A butterfly within a glass window showed great alarm at the attacks of a sparrow. Neither saw the strong but transparent sheet of glass between them, an invisible but perfect defence.

The flower given to Ulysses by which he was safe when

he went into Circe's magic and dangerous palace. — Homer's *Odyssey*. — Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales*.

In Arnold's *Light of Asia*, the king has a vision, but he misunderstands it. He sees what seem to him seven great fears, importing ruin to him and his kingdom. But his wise men show him that each several fear was in reality a great joy.

⁴ Thomas Guthrie, D. D.

11 And he ^{continued} ^{dwelt} there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 ^{And} ^{But} when Gāl'il-ō was ^v the deputy ^{proconsul} of Ā-chā'īā, ^w the Jews ^{made insurrection with one} ^{with one accord} rose up ^{accord} against Paul, and ^x brought him ^{to} before the judgment seat,

13 Saying, This ^{fellow} ^{man} persuadeth men to worship God contrary to ^y the law.

^v See ch. 13. 7.

^w See ch. 13. 50.

^x See ch. 16. 19.

^y ver. 15.

in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God' " (1 Cor. 6: 9-11).¹ To the three leading citizens mentioned above (ver. 8) must be added Erastus, the treasurer of Corinth (Rom. 16: 23).

11. And he continued there, ἐκδήσας, he took his seat, i. e., as a teacher or Rabbi; or he settled



SENECA, BROTHER OF GALLIO.

From the Museum at Naples. (Lewin.)

down there, dwelt. A year and six months, probably the whole period of his ministry at Corinth. Though some think it was in addition to the period before the vision, and to the "many days" after Gallio saved him from the attack of the Jews (ver. 18).

During this period Paul wrote his two letters to the Thessalonians.

12. And when Gallio was the deputy, rather proconsul, the governor appointed by the senate,

and not by the imperial government. Here is a proof of the accuracy of Luke. From B. C. 27 to A. D. 15 Achaia had been governed by a proconsul; thence to A. D. 44 it was under an imperial legate, but in A. D. 44 Claudius made it again a senatorial province under a proconsul.

Gallio was the brother of the philosopher and poet, Seneca. His original name was Novatus, but he was adopted into the family of Lucius J. Gallio, the rhetorician, whence he took his name. He is described as a bright, affectionate, pleasant, popular man, "The Sweet Gallio" or "The Pleasant Gallio." Seneca declares that "those who love him to the utmost, don't love him enough." "No man on earth is so pleasant to me as this man is to all." "Gallio, my brother, whom there is none that does not love a little, even those who have not the power of loving more." He seems to have been a cultivated and polished scholar. "There is no other evidence that Gallio was proconsul of Achaia; but the statement of Luke is corroborated by the fact which Seneca mentions,² that Gallio caught fever in Achaia and took a voyage for change of air."³ Achaia included about the modern kingdom of Greece.

Made insurrection, κατεβήσαν, made a set assault, against, upon, Paul. Rendall says that the κατά does not mean "against," but expresses the culmination of the Jewish hostility in a set assault.

Brought him to the judgment seat. The court was usually held on fixed days in the marketplace. The judgment seat was sometimes fixed, and sometimes movable to any place the governor might choose.

The Jews "claimed jurisdiction over Christians as members of their synagogue (for Roman law allowed wide discretion to subject provinces in the management of their own religious affairs)."⁴

13. Persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. "What law? Roman or Jewish? In a certain sense the expression might include both, for as a *religio licita* the Jewish law was under the protection of the Roman law, and Josephus⁵ tells us how leave had been granted to the Jews to worship according to their own law.

¹ Lange.

² Epistles, 104.

⁴ Rendall.

³ Ramsay, St. Paul, 258.

⁵ Antiquities, 14: 10, 2.

14 ^{And} ^{But} when Paul was ^{now} about to open ^{his} ^{his} mouth, Gāl'li-ō said unto the Jews, If ^{indeed} it were a matter of wrong or ^{or} wicked ^{lowliness,} ^{villany,} O ^{ye} ^{ye} Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

15 But ^{if} ^{it be a question of} ^{they are questions about} words and names and ^{of} ^b your ^{own} law, look ^{ye to it;} ^{to it your-} for ^{for} I ^{will be no} ^{am not minded to be a} judge of ^{such matters.} ^{these matters.}

16 And he drave them from the judgment seat.

17 ^{Then} ^{And} they ^{all} ^{the Greeks took} ^{laid hold on} Sōs'thē-nēs, the ^{chief} ruler of the synagogue, and beat ^{him} ^{him} before the judgment seat. And Gāl'li-ō cared for none of ^{those} ^{these} things.

18 And Paul, ^{after this} ^{having} tarried ^{there} ^{after this} yet ^{a good while, and then} ^{many days,} took his leave of ^e the brethren, and sailed thence ^{into} ^{for} Sŷr'i-ā, and with him ^a Prīs-çil'lā and Ā'quī-lā; ^e having shorn ^{his} ^{him} head in ^{Cen'chre-a:} ^{Cen'chre-a:} ^e for he had a vow.

^z Cp. ch. 13. 10. ^a ch. 23. 29 & 25. 19. ^{Cp.} 1 Tim. 6. 4 & 2 Tim. 2. 14. ^b ver. 13. ^c See John 21. 23. ^d ver. 2. ^e Cp. ch. 21. 23, 24 & Num. 6. 2, 18. ^f Rom. 16. 1.

But Paul's teaching was to these Jews the introduction of something illegal, contrary to the religion which they were allowed to practice, and so they sought to bring his teaching under the cognizance of the proconsul. They may therefore have designedly used a phrase which had a double meaning."¹

14. When Paul was now about to open his mouth, to defend himself against the charge, Gallio said. Without waiting for any discussion, the governor took the charge out of court, declaring that they had no case. He drew a clearly defined line between illegality against the state, and what was illegal under the Jewish law.

15. I will be no judge of such matters. After the admission of Gentile converts and the secession of the Christian congregation from the synagogue, the Jewish claim of authority was clearly inadmissible. "The Jewish rulers had neither moral nor legal right; and Gallio's decision was true to the Roman principles of universal toleration, wherever religion was not made a pretext for sedition, disorder, or debauchery."²

The decision was important because it showed that freedom of religious speech was granted over the empire, so far as the Roman authorities were concerned. The door was open for Paul to make his way throughout the civilized world, and especially in the centres of civilization. The long stay in Corinth was an epoch in Paul's life, and this decision may have made more clear to Paul the feasibility of carrying the gospel to Rome itself, the hope of which his experience in Athens may have dimmed.

16. And he drave them, ἀπέλασεν, implying that some force was used; probably his lieutors, who would be commanded to clear the court.

17. Then all the Greeks, who were hostile to

the Jews, found it safe to vent some of their indignant feelings against Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, who probably took the place of Crispus (ver. 8), and who had been prominent in the assault against Paul. And beat him, ἐτυπτον, struck, cuffed, and roughly treated, not scourged. The Greeks may have had some experience of the difference between the Christians and the non-Christian Jews. A Sosthenes is mentioned as a Christian in 1 Cor. 1:1. But we need not suppose he was the same man as this ruler of the synagogue, for the name was common; or he may have become a Christian at a later date, as Paul did after persecuting the disciples of Jesus.

And Gallio cared for none of those things. "Neither for the questions raised nor for those who raised them. How little Jewish life was regarded by the Romans is shown in many places in their literature.³ Tiberius banished four thousand of them to Sardinia, saying that if the unhealthy climate killed them off 'it would be a cheap loss.'⁴

18. Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, many days. The assault of the Jews did not hinder his work.

Sailed thence into Syria, to the port of Cæsarea (ver. 22).

Having shorn his head in Cenchrea, the port of Corinth on the southeast, about nine miles from the city.

Commentators are divided as to whether it was Paul or Aquila who had the vow. Amongst recent writers, Wendt, Zöckler, Blass, Jünger, Matthias, favor the view that Aquila is the subject, whilst Weiss, Felton, Ramsay, Knowling, Hackett, Hort, Rendall, Page, Knabenbauer, Luckock, take the opposite view. It

¹ Knowing.

² Rendall.

³ See Farrar, *St. Paul*, vol. i. Excursus 14.

⁴ *Cambridge Bible*; Tacitus, *Annals*, 2: 85.

19 And ^{he} they came to ^o Eph'ē-sūs, and ^{he} left them there: but ^a he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

20 ^{When} And when they ^{desired him} asked him ^{to tarry} to abide a longer time, ^{with them,} he consented not;

21 But ^{bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but} I will return again unto you, ^{taking his leave of them, and saying,} if God will; ^{And he sailed} from Eph'ē-sūs.

g ch. 19. 1 & 20. 16, 17. 1 Cor. 15. 32 & 16. 8. Eph. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 18. Rev. 2. 1, *al.* *h* ver. 4. *i* 1 Cor. 4. 19 & 16. 7. Heb. 6. 3. James 4. 15. Cp. Rom. 15. 32 & 1 Cor. 16. 12 (ng.) & 1 Pet. 3. 17.

would seem most probable that the sentence about Aquila is parenthetical, and the vow belongs to Paul as the chief subject. The shaving of the hair indicates the nature of Paul's vow, as a vow of separation like that of the Nazirite prescribed in Num. 6, in a later modified form. The man under the Nazirite vow was to drink no wine or strong drink, and to let no razor pass over his head or face. The hair was shorn at the beginning and end of the period, so as to present that grown in the interval. At the end of the time during which the vow lasted, his hair was shaven at the door of the tabernacle (the temple), and burnt in the fire of the altar as an offering. The vow therefore could only be consummated at Jerusalem. The preceding period of separation was of indefinite duration and was not necessarily spent at Jerusalem, though it often was so: Josephus mentions thirty days as a common period of separation.¹ As the conditions of the vow forbade intercourse for a time with Gentile Christians, Paul deferred its commencement till he had left Corinth and was about to embark.

"That the Jews took upon themselves a modified form of the Nazirite vow, when they were afflicted with disease or other distress, is proved from Josephus.¹ Possibly, therefore, the vow followed upon St. Paul's deliverance from an attack of sickness; and the warm praise bestowed upon Phœbe, the deaconess of the church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1), for her personal aid to himself may be taken as some confirmation of this. But if we thus place St. Paul's vow here under the category of the vows mentioned by Josephus, the journey to Jerusalem must be immediately connected with it, as the description given by the Jewish historian plainly shows that the vows in question were modified forms of the regular Nazirite vow. It is a very reasonable conjecture that the vow may be connected with St. Paul's danger at Corinth, and with his safe deliverance from it."²

Another reason for taking this particular vow is suggested by Rendall. Paul wished to show that although he had broken with the synagogue

at Corinth, yet he was a true Jew and a faithful disciple of Moses, by paying homage to the law and submitting to its rules. "For next after the freedom of the Gentile churches the crying need of the church at this time was unity between its two sections. He was even now foremost in the struggle for Christian freedom; but the greater his success, the more solicitous did he become to maintain intact the brotherhood between the uncircumcision and the circumcision."³

THE RETURN TO ANTIOCH OF SYRIA,

vers. 19-22.

19. Came to Ephesus, a voyage of two or three days according to the wind. Cicero relates that he and his brother were two weeks on the voyage from Ephesus to Athens.⁴ And left them there, Aquila and Priscilla, who probably went there for reasons connected with their business. For "Ephesus was celebrated for its manufacture of tents, so much so that the luxurious Alcibiades, the Athenian general, thought his furniture not complete unless he had a tent from Ephesus."⁵

But he himself entered into the synagogue. This implies that the vessel was detained over the sabbath.

20. They desired him to tarry. He could not at this time, but later he spent a longer time there than in any other city.

21. I must by all means keep this feast. This clause is omitted in many manuscripts, "but critics are nearly equally divided in their opinions."

"If we accept the longer reading of ver. 21 (which appears in the Bezan Text and elsewhere) it is certain that Paul was hurrying to Jerusalem for the coming feast, which may be confidently understood as the Passover. But even with the shorter reading of the great manuscripts it would be highly probable that the reason why he postponed accepting the invitation to work in Ephesus and hurried on to Cæsarea could lie only in his desire to be present at Jerusalem on some great occasion."⁶ He had been absent for some time from the home church at Antioch, and he would

¹ Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 2: 15, 1.

² Knowling.

³ Rendall.

⁴ *Epistle to Atticus*, 6: 8, 9; 3: 9.

⁵ Lewin.

⁶ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 263. Hackett, Alford, and others think the feast was Pentecost; Lewin, that it was Tabernacles.

22 And when he had landed at Cæs-ä-rē'ä, ^{and gone} ^{he} ^{and} ^{went} up and saluted the church, ^{he} ^{went} down to Än'ti-öch.

23 And ^{after he had} ^{having} spent some time *there*, he departed, and ^k ^{went} ^{over} ^{all} ^{the} ^{country} ^{region} of Gä-lä'tiä and Phryg'i-ä in order, ^{strengthening} ^{stabilishing} all the disciples.

24 ^{And} ^{Now} a certain Jew named ^m Ä-pöl'lös, ^{born at Al-ex-an'gri-a, an eloquent} ^{an Alexandrian by race, a learned} ^{man,} ^{and mighty} ^{came to} ^{in the scriptures, came to Eph'e-sus,} ^{Ephesus; and he was} ^{a mighty in the scriptures.}

j ch. 11. 2 & 21. 15. k ch. 16. 6. l See ch. 14. 22.
j. 13. n Cp. Ezra 7. 6.

m ch. 19. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 12 & 3. 5, 6 & 4. 6 & 16. 12. Tit.

report and consult with them before he extended his missionary labors longer.

I will return, as he did, not long after.

22. Had landed, *κατελθὼν*, came down, from the high seas to the coast.

And gone up, *ἀναβὰς*, it was always up to Jerusalem, and this was "the usual expression for a journey to the capital."

And saluted, *ἀσπασάμενος*, from *ἀ*, intensive, and *σπᾶω*, to draw (cognate with the English *spasm*); hence, to draw to one's self, to greet, to salute, to pay respects to as to a distinguished person.

The church at Jerusalem. Here he would remain long enough to complete his vow, the apostle to the Gentiles in loving accord with the mother church of all.

Went down. It is always down from Jerusalem, as it is from London.

To Antioch. The home church, where he was always welcome. This was his last visit there, so far as we know.

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGUN, vers. 23-28. A. D. 53-57.

23. And after he had spent some time there. "The phrase implies that he made only a brief stay." It was probably at this time that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Galatians. Ramsay argues that Timothy, after remaining with Paul at Corinth, sailed with him to Ephesus, and from there went to pay a visit to his friends at Lystra and vicinity; and learning the deplorable state of affairs in the Galatian churches, brought the report to Paul at Antioch, which drew forth an epistle to correct the errors of those churches.¹

Went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia. Ramsay thinks Paul reached Derbe in July and spent about two months in strengthening all the disciples in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, the chief cities of South Galatia, and the regions around them. Strengthening, *ἐπιστηροῦν*, establishing more (*ἐν*) firmly, rendering more firm and strong, as one would a building whose foundations were settling, or a person whose health was failing. The directions in

which they needed strengthening are indicated in Gal. 3: 1; 4: 9, 10; 5: 1, 13, 15; 6: 7, 8. The disciples were strengthened in their Christian faith and life (1) by more thorough instruction, (2) by the courage which came from the wonderful progress of the gospel, (3) by the presence and example of such a noble and self-denying worker as Paul, (4) by training in methods of work learned by Paul in his long experience since he last saw them, (5) by Paul's own experience of the gospel and its sustaining power, (6) by being led back into the true life and doctrine, wherever they may have departed from it. Every church should use all means possible in training and confirming its young converts. They should be trained in all the work and worship of the church. They should be taught to speak and pray. They should be instructed in the Word of God, and in the best ways of studying it. They should be interested in the home and foreign missionary work. They should be trained in giving, in helping the poor, in inviting others to church and Sabbath-school, and in every good word and work. We learn to work by working.

24. While Paul is in Antioch and Galatia, the historian turns to the preparation at Ephesus for Paul's long work in that city, through Aquila, Priscilla, and Apollos.

A certain Jew named Apollos. Nothing more is known of him beyond what is recorded here; though some think he was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Born at Alexandria, a celebrated town of Egypt, 12 miles from the Nile, built by Alexander the Great, B. C. 332, and named after him. After the decline of intellectual culture in Greece, Alexandria became the home and centre of science and literature in the ancient world for four centuries. Great attention was paid to the study of languages; correctness, purity, and elegance of expression were specially cultivated. To its grammarians it is mainly due that we now possess the masterpieces of Greek literature at all. Its immense museum was somewhat like a modern university, and within its walls learned scholars both lived and taught. Here and in the Sera-

¹ St. Paul, 190, 263, 264.

25 This man ^{was} [°]instructed in [°]the way of the Lord; and [°]being fervent in ^{the} spirit, he spake and taught ^{diligently} ^{carefully} the things ^{of the Lord,} ^{concerning Jesus,} knowing only [°]the baptism of John:

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: ^{whom} ^{But} when [°]A[°]qui-la [°]Pris-cl[°]la [°]had heard, [°]they took him unto ^{them,} ^{them,} and expounded unto him the [°]way of God more ^{perfectly,} ^{carefully;}

27 And when he was ^{disposed} ^{minded} to pass ^{over} into [°]Ā-chā'īā, "the brethren ^{wrote,} ^{encouraged} him, and ^{exhorting} ^{he} wrote to ^{who} the disciples to receive him: ^{and} when he was come, he [°]wrote [°]helped them much which had [°]believed through grace:

o Luke 1. 4 (& mg. for mg.). p See ch. 9. 2. q Rom. 12. 11. r ch. 19. 3. Luke 7. 29. d ver. 2. s Matt. 22. 16. Cp. ver. 25. t Cp. ch. 19. 1. u ver. 18. v Cp. 2 Cor. 3. 1. w 1 Cor. 3. 6. x Cp. ch. 11. 21, 23 & 15. 11 & Eph. 2. 8.

peum was gathered a library of 500,000 to 600,000 volumes. Books in foreign languages were brought to Alexandria and translated for the purpose of being placed in the library, and the Septuagint version of the Old Testament is said to have been made in this way.¹

The population in its flourishing period amounted to about 800,000 souls. The chief subjects of study were grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, geography.² These statements enable us to understand the influences under which Apollos was trained.

An eloquent man, λόγιος, "As λόγος means either reason or speech, so this derivative may signify either one who has thought much and has much to say, or one who can say it well;" either (1) an eloquent person, an epithet of Hermes or Mercury, as the god of speech and eloquence; or (2) a learned person generally. "There seems hardly sufficient reason for changing the rendering of the A. V. (Rev., *learned*), especially as the scripture-learning of Apollos is specified in the words *mighty in the scriptures*, and his superior eloquence appears to have been the reason why some of the Corinthians preferred him to Paul. See 1 Cor. 1: 12; 2: 4; 2 Cor. 10: 10."³ The word is "applied to those who wrote history with fulness and insight."⁴

Mighty in the scriptures, in the Old Testament. He knew them thoroughly, he had insight into their meaning, and could expound them with power.

25. This man was instructed, κατηχημένος, poured down upon, i. e., instructed orally, by hearsay, by verbal reports; though Blass maintains that this meaning is not always strictly kept. In the way of the Lord, Jesus. He knew the prophecies and symbols of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and he knew enough

about the life and teachings of Jesus to understand that the prophecies and symbols were fulfilled in him, and that therefore he was the Messiah.

On the other hand, Blass thinks that Apollos had had access to one of the earlier written Gospels (of which Luke says there were many, Luke 1: 1), presumably the Gospel of Mark "in its mutilated form" ending with 16: 8, which tells us nothing of Christian baptism.⁵

Being fervent in the spirit, ζέων, boiling, as our word "fervent" is from the Latin ferreo, to boil, to ferment. Taught diligently, ἀκριβῶς, from ἀκρος, at the point, hence, accurately to the last point, carefully. Knowing only the baptism of John, the baptism of repentance, the baptism that pointed to Jesus (19: 4), without the knowledge of the fulness and freedom and inspiration of his personal, intimate love. His emphasis was more on repentance than on faith. He knew about the earthly life of Jesus, but did not know him as his risen and ascended Lord, nor the power and knowledge which had come with the baptism of the Spirit on Pentecost, and the teaching of the Spirit through the church during the past quarter of a century.

26. When Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they understood his needs, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly, ἀκριβέστερον, the comparative of ἀκριβῶς, in ver. 25. We see the providence of God in leading these Christian helpers of Paul to Ephesus.

27. He was disposed to pass into Achaia, i. e., the province equivalent to modern Greece, of which Corinth was the capital. It was to Corinth that he intended to go. Comp. Acts 19: 1; 1 Cor. 1: 12; 3: 4. Doubtless he had heard from Priscilla and Aquila, who were at Corinth with Paul, about the founding of the

¹ From Harper's Classical Dictionary.

² Hastings' Bib. Dic. See Edersheim, *History of the Jewish People*, pp. 67, 186, 405, 409. Schürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. II. p. 226.

³ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

⁴ Herodotus, 1: 1; 2: 3, 77.

⁵ See Wright's article on Apollos in the *Expository Times*, Oct., 1897; and Blass' *Philology of the Gospels*, 31.

28 For he mightily convinced, powerfully confuted the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the scriptures ^y that Jesus was the Christ.

y See ver. 5.

church there, the need of help, and the hopefulness of the field. **The brethren wrote exhorting.** They gave him letters of recommendation. A Christian travelling with such a letter from any church was certain to find a welcome in any other. They guaranteed at once his soundness in the faith and his personal character, and served to give a reality to the belief in the "communion of saints," as the necessary sequel to the recognition of a catholic or universal church.¹ Others with the R. V., read "encouraged him" to go there as a good field for such a man, and wrote to the disciples to receive him. Aquila and Priscilla were well acquainted with Corinth, the disposition of the people, and the needs of the church. Here was just the man for the occasion. **Helped,** *συνεβόλητο*, to bring or throw together, to contribute (*contribuere*), to bring or grant together with others. He brought whatever of knowledge

or experience or talent he had, *together* with theirs, *added it to* theirs, and thus *helped* them. **Helped them much which had believed through grace.** The two last words admit, in the Greek as in the English, of being taken either with "helped" or "believed." The former construction seems preferable. It was through the grace of God, co-operating with the gift of wisdom, that Apollos was able to lead men to a higher stage of thought.² It is not meant that he confirmed them in their faith as Christians, but that he coöperated with them in their promulgation and defence of the truth. The next verse explains the remark.³ Both meanings are true.

28. He mightily convinced the Jews, *διακατηλέγγχετο*, *he confuted, did, thoroughly, κατά, against*, the arguments the Jews presented. "The two prepositions lay stress on the thoroughness with which he argued out the whole question."⁴

¹ Schaff. So Alford, Wendt, Hackett, etc.

² Plumptre.

³ Hackett.

⁴ Rendall.

ACTS 19.

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (*continued*).

PAUL'S LABORS
AT
EPHESUS
NEARLY THREE YEARS.
A. D. 53-56.

Ephesian disciples receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, vers. 1-7.
Paul's work among the Jews, vers. 8, 9.
Two years preaching at the school of Tyrannus, vers. 9-12.
The demoniac, and the seven sons of Sceva, vers. 13-17.
Burning the books of magic, vers. 18-20.
Timothy and Erastus sent in advance to Macedonia, vers. 21, 22.
Shrines of Diana, vers. 23, 24.
The mob and uproar, vers. 25-41.
Two epistles to the Corinthians.
Epistle to the Romans.

1 AND it came to pass, that, while ^z Ἄ-pōl'lōs was at Cōr'inth, Paul having passed ^a through the upper ^{coasts} country came to Ēph'ē-sūs; and ^{finding} ^{found} certain disciples;

^z See ch. 18. 24.

^a Cp. ch. 18. 23.

EPHESIAN DISCIPLES RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, vers. 1-7.

1. In the last chapter we left Paul among the Galatian churches, while Apollos was at Corinth. Paul continued his journey westward, having passed through the upper coasts, rather

districts, or country lying up from the sea, *ἀνω-τερικῶς*, as "the expedition of Cyrus from the sea-coast toward Central Asia was called *Anabasis*, a going up."¹ "The land route through the interior of Asia Minor is specified by way of distinction from the sea route which he had before

¹ M. R. Vincent.

2 ^{He} And he said unto them, ^b Have ye received the Holy Ghost ^{since} ye believed? And they ^{said} unto him, ^c We have ^{Did} ye receive ^{when} whether ^{there be any} the Holy Ghost ^{was given.}

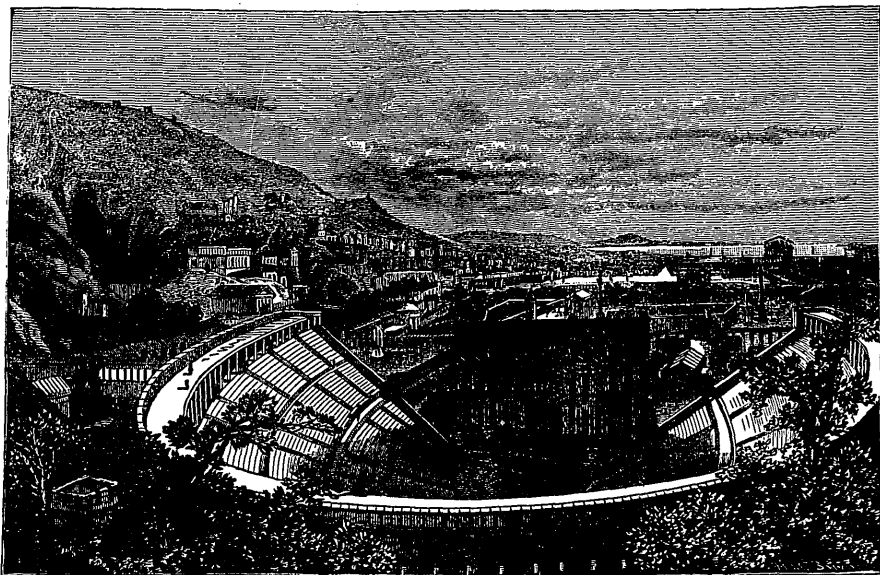
^b Cp. ch. 11. 16, 17. ^c Cp. ch. 8. 16 & John 7. 39.

pursued on his way from Ephesus to Jerusalem."¹ Came to Ephesus, where he spent two years or more, and made it the centre of widespread missionary work.

Ephesus was not only the capital of the province, but was the city of the greatest importance in all Asia Minor, and the principal emporium of

trade in the East. It was called one of the eyes of Asia, Smyrna, forty miles to the north, being the other. The city stood on the south of a plain about five miles long from east to west, and three miles broad, washed on the west by the Icarian Sea, an arm of the Ægean.

The Colosseum, or Amphitheatre, was the



ANCIENT EPHEBUS.

Amphitheatre in the foreground.

largest ever built by Greeks, and the temple of Diana was its crowning glory, and one of the seven wonders of the world. See below on vers. 24 and 29.

"Ephesus held no contemptible position in letters, and in sculpture it rivalled, and in painting excelled, the parent city (Athens). Apelles and Parrhasius, the two matchless masters of the pencil, were both of them natives of Ephesus. The inhabitants of Ephesus were of course Greek."² The deputy of the whole province resided here. They were under the Roman government, but Ephesus was a "free city,"

governed by its own magistrates and popular assembly.

"In Christian story it was famous not only for the long residence of Paul and Timothy, but subsequently it was known as the abode of the Virgin Mary, and the home of the old age of the apostle John. The graves of Mary and of John were here."³ This church was one of the most influential churches of the early days. "In the next century, Asia Minor was the stronghold of Christianity; the heathen temples were deserted, the animals of sacrifice remained unsold, and it seemed that all the people were turned Christian.

¹ Rendall.

² Lewin. See his *St. Paul*, ch. 13, for a full description.

³ Schaff.

3 And he said, ^{unto them, Unto} ^{d into} what then were ye baptized? And they said, ^{Unto} ^{into} John's baptism.

4 ^{Then said Paul, e} ^{And Paul said,} John ^{verily} baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, ^f that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on ^{Christ} Jesus.

5 ^{When} ^{And when} they heard ^{this,} ^g they were baptized ⁱⁿ ^{into} the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And ^h when Paul had laid ^{his} ^{his} hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and ⁱ they spake with tongues, and ^j prophesied.

^d See ch. 8. 16. ^e ch. 18. 25. Cp. Heb. 6. 2. See ch. 13. 24, 25. ^f John 1. 7. ^g See ch. 8. 12, 16. ^h See ch. 8. 17. ⁱ ch. 10. 46. See Mark 16. 17. ^j See ch. 13. 1.

That such progress was possible was due to the labors of Paul and his companions, with Ephesus for their headquarters."¹

And finding certain disciples. Christians, though ignorant of the higher truths of Christianity. For "disciples" here and "believed" of ver. 2 are used only of Christians.² These men were not mere disciples of John the Baptist, or baptized by John, but they were in the same position as Apollos, ignorant of all that had been done since the resurrection. How they came to be disciples, and yet knew so little of Christianity, is difficult to answer; but probably in the same way as Apollos, in the last chapter. There had been some brief teachings of Christianity, — Paul had been there a day or two, Apollos, Priscilla, and Aquila were there; but if these disciples had learned of Christ directly from them, they would have advanced further than they had. Either they had come to Ephesus from some remote country after Apollos left, or they had heard of Christianity only by rumor, and had not come in contact with the few obscure disciples in the great city.

"They were a small and distinct community about twelve in number, still preparing, after the manner of the Baptist, for the coming of the Lord. Something there was which drew the attention of the apostle immediately on his arrival. They lacked, apparently, some of the tokens of the higher life that pervaded the nascent church; they were devout, rigorous, austere, but were wanting in the joy, the radiance, the enthusiasm which were conspicuous in others."³

PAUL FINDING THE DISCIPLES. "All the Christianity of the place gravitated toward Paul. Like draws to like. The apostle in Ephesus was like a magnetic bar thrust into a great heap of rubbish: forthwith all the filings of real steel that existed in the miscellaneous mass were found adhering to its sides. The attraction and cohesion

of kindred spirits is a beautiful and beneficent law of the new kingdom."⁴

2. Have ye received? The aorist tense requires the R. V. translation, "*Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when (at the time) ye believed?*" Paul then of course explained what he meant by receiving the Holy Spirit, and they replied **We have not**, etc. The aorist requires the R. V. translation, "*We did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given.*" It cannot mean that they had never heard of the Holy Spirit or known of his existence, for the Old Testament has many references to his work, and the Baptist pointed to the baptism of the Spirit to be conferred by the Messiah. What they had not heard was that the promised outpouring of the Spirit by the Messiah (Joel) had been bestowed, and the gifts and powers of the Spirit, both visible and spiritual, manifested at Pentecost and in the subsequent experience of the church.

3. Unto John's baptism, that is, unto "the profession and purpose John used in baptizing." See on 18: 25.

4. John verily, as they well knew, **baptized with the baptism of repentance**. It was a confession of repentance, of their hope of a Messiah, of their determination to lead a new life, but without the aid of a present Christ and the special gifts of the Spirit.

That is, on Christ Jesus. They knew that John said that the Messiah was about to come; and Paul made clear to them that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

5. They were baptized in, better "into," **the name of the Lord Jesus**. "Into" expresses the close union with Jesus and the Father and the Holy Spirit, into which men are brought by the covenant of baptism.

6. Paul had laid his hands upon them, the symbol of spiritual gifts bestowed through the one

¹ Prof. Oliver Thatcher.

² So Blas, etc.

³ Plumptre, *St. Paul in Asia Minor*.

⁴ William Arnot.

7 And ^{all the men were about twelve.}
they were in all about twelve men.

8 And he ^{entered} into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, ^{disputing reasoning} and persuading ^{as to} the things 'concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But ^{when} ^{divers some} were hardened and ^{believed not, but spake} ^{n disobedient, speaking} evil of ^{that way} ^{the Way} before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, ^{disputing reasoning} in the school of ^{one} Ty-răn'nūs.

k See ch. 13. 5. l ch. 1. 3 & 28. 23. m Cp. ch. 13. 45, 46 & 1 Cor. 16. 9. n See ch. 14. 2. o ver. 23. See ch. 9. 2.

who laid his hands on another. God sent the gift through Paul.¹

The Holy Ghost came on them. They received the spiritual transforming power, the new inspiration of love, and joy, and peace, such as they had never felt before.

Then came the outward signs as proof to themselves and to others of the reality of the inward grace; as on the day of Pentecost. (See on 2: 1-12.)

They spake with tongues and prophesied, the imperfect tense denoting continued action. **Prophesied,** as usual, means speaking under the inspiration of God.

7. And all the men, etc. "The expression in the original is somewhat unusual, and may be designed to prevent the notion that the Ephesian believers were, as a rule, in this condition of ignorance."²

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. We learn from this account, and from Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, probably written at Ephesus, that the Pentecostal gifts continued in the church.

2. There is a vastly higher and nobler life than merely hating sin, and leaving off evil practices.

"T is life whereof our nerves are scant;
Oh, Life, not Death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that we want."

3. The two ways of living represented by the baptism of John and the baptism of the Holy Spirit may be illustrated (1) by a boat rowed with great toil against wind and tide, compared with the same boat sweeping over the waves, with sails filled with a favoring wind; (2) by the efforts to remove the snow and ice of winter by shovels and dynamite, and their removal by the warm breath of spring; (3) by our experience with house plants in an unfavorable exposure. By constant care, by destroying the insects, by picking off the dead leaves, something can be done; but what gives them good health and bloom is fresh air and plenty of sunshine, pouring into them new life.

4. There are those whose experience "recalls

the story of the missing child Jesus, and how it is said that 'they supposing him to be in the company, went forward a day's journey.' They journey on for years, saying prayers, reciting creeds, giving alms, doing duties, imagining all the time that because of these things Christ is with them. Happy for these if some weary day the blessed Paraclete, the invisible Christ, shall say to them, 'Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me?'³

PAUL'S WORK AMONG THE JEWS; IN THE SYNAGOGUE, vers. 8, 9.

8. And he went into the synagogue. This statement does not imply that Paul did not go into the synagogue till after his interview with the twelve disciples just mentioned. That was told first because of its close connection with the story of Apollos. Now we enter upon Paul's regular work with the Jews.

And spake boldly. It required no little courage to enter upon a course with the Jews, which had so often made them his bitter enemies and brought trouble and persecution upon him. Such occasions come to every preacher, when he must take his life, his comfort, his reputation in his hand, and speak boldly.

Disputing, διαλεγόμενος, reasoning, arguing, conversing, and persuading, **πειθων,** inducing to do something by persuasion. The two words "may mean discoursing, and thus persuading, or it may refer to two kinds of preaching, — discoursing and urging, — the former doctrinal, and the latter practical and hortatory."² The kingdom of God. That kingdom of God which all the Jews throughout the world were expecting, and which had now begun.

9. But when divers, some, were hardened, ἐσκληρύνοντο, from σκληρός, an epithet given to ground that is at once dry and hard; hence, made hard, stubborn, obstinate, upon which no argument or appeal can make an impression; like hardened soil in which no seed of truth can take root. To be hardened is to become less sensitive to moral

¹ See "Laying on of Hands" in Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

² Prof. M. B. Riddle.

³ A. J. Gordon, D. D.

10 And this continued ^{for} the space of "two years; so that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, ^{Jesus}, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

p Cp. ver. 8 & ch. 20. 31.

q Cp. 2 Tim. 1. 15.

r Cp. ch. 5. 15. See ch. 5. 12.

influences, to all that can move or persuade to a better life. The soul becomes dead to every impression from without, the reproofs of conscience are less clearly heard, the invitations and the warnings of God are to the soul but as sunshine and wind upon a rock. Compare the hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

And believed not, *ἠπειθουν*, the exact opposite of *πειθων*, above; they would not be persuaded, they refused belief and obedience. This was at once the result of their hardening their hearts, and the explanation of the process of hardening, by resisting good influences, by disobeying known duty, by trampling on their convictions, by refusing to believe what was true. Simple neglect of known duty will always harden the heart.

But spake evil of that way. The common and natural result of hardening the heart. If men will not change their lives, they will try to oppose the teaching that commands them to change. They try to make it out as bad, so that it may not reprove them, or disturb their consciences. They will not see what is good in it; and they will do all they can to make others think it to be evil, so as to be kept in countenance by numbers.

That way, "the Way," with a capital, for this became one of the names by which the Christian religion was designated. It was a Way of worship, a Way of salvation, a Way of true living, a Way to heaven; distinct from that of the Jews and of the heathen (John 14: 6).

He departed from them. He no longer took part in the synagogue services, or made the synagogue the meeting place of the disciples. He transferred his headquarters. Separated the disciples, from the unbelieving Jews, and took them to another place of meeting.

Disputing, discoursing, arguing, daily and not merely on the Sabbath, in the school of one Tyrannus. Nothing is known positively about this man. This school "was probably a lecture-room, which, as the private property of the owner, was lent or let to the Apostle."¹ It is possible that the expression was the standing name of the hall, so called from its original owner.² Ramsay suggests that it was the lecture-room used by the professors of rhetoric and philosophy a part of the day, and Paul at other hours. "According to the Bezan Text, Paul taught after the usual work

of the lecture-room was concluded, *i. e.*, 'after business hours.' Doubtless he began to work (Acts 20: 34; 1 Cor. 4: 12) before sunrise, and continued at his trade till closing time, an hour before noon. His hours of work are defined by himself (1 Thess. 2: 9): 'Ye remember our labor and toil, working day and night' . . . His rule at Thessalonica may be extended to Ephesus. Public life in the Ionian cities ended regularly at the fifth hour. . . . Thus Paul himself would be free, and the lecture-room would be disengaged after the fifth hour (eleven o'clock); and the time which was devoted generally to home-life and rest was applied by him to mission work."³

10. Continued . . . two years, in addition to the three months in the synagogue. All they which dwelt in Asia, the Roman province of Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital. This was the richest, and in many ways the leading province of the East.

Heard the word. "Paul had with him a number of helpers, as Timothy, Erastus, Titus, etc." "Churches arose in three cities of the Lycus Valley, — Laodicea, Colossai, and Hierapolis, though Paul himself did not go there. All the seven churches of Asia, mentioned in the Revelation, were probably founded during this period, for all these cities were within easy reach of Ephesus, and all were great centres of trade."⁴

11. And God wrought special miracles, *ὁδὲ τὰς τυχεύουσας*, not those which came by chance, not ordinary, uncommon, extraordinary, with which the deeds of the Jewish exorcists could not be compared, by the hands of, the instrumentality of, Paul. In Ephesus, the centre of magic and witchcraft, special power was given Paul to work miracles that conquered them in their own stronghold. He actually did what the sorcerers only pretended to do. The Ephesians were so bound up in belief in magic that it seemed necessary to show that the gospel was mightier than these other powers, which came from Satan, the father of deceit.

So the healing power of the gospel in modern days is exactly adapted to overcome the peculiar opposition of modern days. It brings a higher philanthropy, develops a truer science, does purer, greater, nobler, and more numerous deeds of help for men than all the opponents of Christianity can do. (1) The gospel multiplies friends, and

¹ Plumptre.

² Overbeck.

³ St. Paul, 270, 271.

⁴ Ramsay, 274.

12 ^{So} ^{Inasmuch} ^{that} ^{from his body} ^{were} ^{brought unto the sick} ^{handkerchiefs or aprons,} ^{and the diseases departed from them,} ^{and the} ^{evil spirits went out,} ^{of them.}

13 ^{Then} ^{But} ^{certain} ^{also} ^{of the} ^{vagabond} ^{Jews,} ^{'exorcists,'} ^{took upon them to} ^{call} ^{name} ^{over} ^{them which had} ^{the} ^{evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying,} ^{"We} ^{adjure} ^{you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.}

14 And there were seven sons of ^{one} ^{one} ^{Scē'vā,} ^{a Jew,} ^{and} ^{chief} ^{of the priests,} ^{which} ^{did} ^{so,} ^{this.}

^τ Cp. ch. 5. 15. See ch. 5. 12.
^v Matt. 26. 63. Mark 5. 7.

^s See Mark 16. 17.

^t Cp. Matt. 12. 27 & Luke 11. 19.

^u See Mark 9. 38.

sympathy, and aid for the sick. (2) It inspires the spirit which builds hospitals and asylums, and every possible means for relieving distress, especially of the poor and friendless. (3) It cultivates, encourages, and makes possible the science which is discovering the nature of disease, and the true remedies, skill in nursing and surgery, and the triumphs of modern medical investigation. (4) The gospel conquers disease by giving victory to the soul. God makes all things work together for good to those that love him. He manifests his own especial presence. He gives larger and sweeter spiritual life. He gives new experiences and revelations of his goodness. God may sometimes now work wonders of healing. And whenever in answer to prayer he guides to the right physicians and the right means of cure, he as really heals men as if he worked a miracle of healing. The tree that grows from the seed is as truly a work of God as if created at once by a word.

12. So that, even to the sick who were unable to come to Paul, from his body were brought . . . handkerchiefs or aprons. The word "or" suggests that it made no difference what the article of dress was. "Aprons" means workman's aprons, such as Paul himself might have worn when at manual labor.¹ "The touch of Christ's garment was once effectual to heal, but it is clear that the garment had no virtue in itself apart from his conscious agency: and here it may be presumed that some direct exertion of Paul's will was put forth to heal."² Diseases . . . evil spirits. Here, as everywhere, the two are distinguished. One example of casting out evil spirits is related in vers. 13-17. The reasons for miracles at this juncture were much the same as in the time of Christ. (1) To make visible and real the invisible power and presence of God; (2) to call attention to this power; (3) to endorse Paul as an apostle of the Lord Jesus; (4) to prove the resurrection of Jesus, and his existence in heaven as King Messiah, and his presence on earth with his disciples.

THE EFFORTS OF THE EXORCISTS TO COUNTERACT THE EFFECT OF PAUL'S MIRACLES, vers. 13-17.

13. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, *περιερχομένων, wandering, strolling, Jews.* "There were, as heathen writers tell us, numbers of these Jews in various parts of the world, who wandered about trading on the credulity of men, professing to be magicians, and practising the exorcism of evil spirits. Among the Hebrew race there seems always to have existed a strange hankering after these dark arts, and the Pentateuch contains repeated laws against sorcerers, witches, and dealers in enchantments. At the time of our Lord many of the Jewish exorcists pretended to possess a power of casting out evil spirits by some occult art, which they professed was derived from King Solomon."³ We read in Josephus that "God gave Solomon skill against demons for the help and cure of men. And he arranged certain incantations whereby diseases are assuaged, and left behind him forms of exorcism, wherewith they so put to flight the overpowered evil spirits that they never return. And this method of curing is very prevalent among us up to the present time."⁴ "The Jews, indeed, were everywhere celebrated at this period for their skill in magical incantations; while, as is well known from references in the classical writers, the Jews at Rome were famous for the same practices."⁵ Exorcists, *ἑξορκιστῶν*, of which our exorcist is a transliteration, means originally those who administer an oath (*ὄρκος*), hence, those who adjure by certain formulas demons to come out of a man.

To call over them, etc. They would use the name of Jesus as a charm.

Jesus whom Paul preacheth, to distinguish him from other persons of the same name, which was not uncommon.

14. Seven sons of one Sceva . . . and chief of the priests, not high priest, but a leading priest among those at Ephesus.

Which did so, that is, attempted to practise exorcism by the name of Jesus.

¹ Prof. Riddle.

² Rendall.

³ Schaff.

⁴ *Antiquities*, 8: 2, 5. A book called the *Testament of*

Solomon still exists. See M. R. James' paper in *Guardian*, 15th March, 1899, *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

⁵ Prof. Stokes.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said: ^{unto them,} "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and ^{overcame} mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house ^{and} naked and wounded.

17 And this ^{was} became known to all, ^{the} both Jews and Greeks, ^{also dwelling} that dwell at Ephesus; and fear fell ^{on} upon them all, and the ^{name} of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 ^{And many} Many also of them that had believed came, ^{and confessed,} ^z confessing, and ^{shewed} declaring their deeds.

^w See James 2. 19.
James 5. 16.

^x Cp. 2 Macc. 11. 12.

^y Cp. 2 Thess. 1. 12.

^z Matt. 3. 6.

Mark 1. 5.

Rom. 14. 11.

15. The evil spirit, which on some occasion they were attempting to exorcise.

Jesus I know, *γινώσκω*, I recognize, I know personally.

And Paul I know, *ἐπίσταμαι*, I know about, as a historical person, as a fact.¹ But who are ye? But you, who are you? spoken in scorn of them as pretenders, as without the character of real disciples.²

16. And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them. With that power, more than natural, so often displayed by madmen.³ The demoniacal possession brought with it, as in the case of the Gadarene, the preternatural strength of frenzy, and the seven impostors (men of that class being commonly more or less cowards) fled in dismay before the violent paroxysms of the man's passionate rage.⁴ Naked and wounded. The first word does not necessarily imply more than that the outer garment or cloak was torn off from them, and that they were left with nothing but the short tunic.⁴

17. And fear fell on them all. Fear, a religious awe. They were afraid to misuse the name of Jesus.⁵

The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, as a real power for healing and salvation, not a charm or magical power. The real glory of Jesus shone in clearer light. "It was important that the divine power which accompanied the gospel should, in some striking manner, exhibit its superiority to the magic which prevailed so extensively at Ephesus, and which, by its apparent great effects, deceived and captivated so many."⁶

THE GOSPEL OVERCOMING OPPOSING POWERS. Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh proved that their God was above all heathen gods by doing real wonders where they did pretended ones, and greater wonders than they ever dreamed of doing.

Aaron's rod swallowed up all the rods of the magicians. So the religion of Christ is proving its superiority over all forms of infidelity and heathenism to-day by the greater and more blessed works it does. The map of the world to-day is the proof of the beneficent power of Christianity.

BURNING OF THE BOOKS OF MAGIC,

vers. 18-20.

The effect on those outside of the church has been described, and now we see one effect upon the disciples themselves.

18. Many that believed came, convinced more than before of the preëminence of Jesus, and filled with reverential awe.

And confessed their magical practices which they had not wholly renounced when they became disciples. But now instead of continuing secretly the practice of magic, they shewed their deeds by public confession and renunciation. The "deeds" were those courses of action connected with witchcraft, sorcery, and exorcism that were inconsistent with the Christian life. It was a humiliating confession that so many retained these relics of their old life, but the practices were so common, so much a part of their lives, that they probably did not at first realize their evil nature, or how contrary they were to the gospel. As soon as their eyes were opened by the incident described in the previous verses, they renounced their evil practices, even at great sacrifices to themselves of pride and of property. Every generation of Christians has some of the evils of the age clinging to it at first. Blessed are they whose eyes are opened, and who confess and renounce. Rendall gives a very different meaning. "Confessing," *ἐξομολογούμενοι*, being used absolutely, denotes giving thanks to God for

¹ See Lightfoot on a *Fresh Revision of the New Testament*, p. 60.

² See Dr. Nevins on *Demon Possession*.

³ *Cambridge Bible*.

⁴ Plumptre.

⁵ "The marked contrast between the New Testament in its description of the demonized and their healing, and the notions and practices which meet us in the Jewish Rabbi, may be seen in Edersheim's valuable appendix, *Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 770 ff."

⁶ Neander.

19. ^{Many} And not a few of them ^{also which used} that practised curious arts brought their books together, and ^{burned them} before all men ^{in the sight of all}; and they counted the price of them, and found ^{fifty thousand} ^{a pieces} ^{pieces} of silver.

a Luke 15. 8 (& mg.).

this manifestation of his goodness and power, and "showing," ἀναγγέλλοντες, declaring, announcing, denotes a report of what they had seen, not confession of what they had done.

19. Many of them, referring to those who had been magicians previous to their conversion, "as the former verse refers to their dupes."

Which used curious arts, πεπλεγτα. The adjective means busy about trifles and neglectful of important matters; hence, superfluous things, things better left alone, applied to magical arts.¹

"Some no doubt by way of trade and commerce, others because they shrank from giving up their old belief in incantation, love philtres, and other dark and superstitious arts. The 'curious arts' were magic, jugglery, and all such practices as make pretence to supernatural agency. Among them were the famous *Ephesian letters*. These 'Ephesian letters' were small slips of parchment in silk bags, on which were written strange cabalistic words and sentences, mysterious and often apparently meaningless. These, men and women were in the habit of carrying about on their persons as charms or amulets to shield them from danger and from harm, or to procure them good fortune in their undertakings. We read how Cæsar, when on his funeral pile, repeated these 'Ephesian spells.' Again we are told, how once in the Olympian games an Ephesian wrestler struggled successfully with his opponent from Miletus, because he had wound round his ankle some of these 'Ephesian charms,' but that being deprived of them he was twice overthrown (Eustathius)."²

Brought their books together. These books were, no doubt, parchment or papyrus volumes, filled with these partly Jewish, partly heathenish incantations, recipes for love philtres, formulas more or less ancient to be used in casting out evil spirits, and the like.²

"There has been a marvellous discovery of ancient documents in Egypt within the last twelve or fifteen years, which were purchased by the Austrian government and duly transferred to Vienna, where they have been investigated. They are usually called the Fayûm Manuscripts. They contain some of the oldest documents now existing, one of them being dated so long ago as 1200 B. C., and embrace among them large quan-

ties of magical writings, with the Hebrew formulæ used by the Jewish sorcerers when working their pretended miracles. So wondrously does



SPECIMEN OF THE SPELLS OR CHARMS in common use at Ephesus for the purposes of magic, and called 'Εφέσια γράμματα. From *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*.

The original is preserved in the Museum at Syracuse. It is not of metal, but in terra-cotta. The date, to judge from the style of the letters, must have preceded the Christian era. The figure in the centre is unquestionably that of Diana of Ephesus, but the inscription cannot and was never intended to be deciphered. Here and there, however, a glimmering of sense appears. Thus in the first line may be read something like Ἀρεμ. φως ἱερὸν (Holy Light of Diana), and the last letters are Ἀρχ., the abbreviation of Ἀρχιερεὺς, or High-priest. It must have been brought from Ephesus to Syracuse by some devoted worshipper of the goddess, and used perhaps as an amulet to secure the wearer against the assaults of demons or evil spirits.

modern discovery confirm the statements and details of the New Testament!"³

And burned them. "The student of the history of Florence cannot help recalling the analogous scene in that city, when men and women, artists and musicians, brought the things in which they most delighted—pictures, ornaments, costly dresses—and burnt them in the Piazza of St. Mark at the bidding of Savonarola. The

¹ See "Curious" in *Hastings' Bib. Dic.*; and *Bacon's Essays*, 35.

² Schaff.

³ Prof. Stokes in *Expositor's Bible*.

20 So ^o mightily grew the word of ^{God} the Lord and prevailed.

b ch. 6. 7 & 12. 24.

tense of the verb implies that the 'burning' was continuous, but leaves it uncertain whether it was an oft-repeated act or one that lasted for some hours."¹ The imperfect "describes them as throwing book after book in the fire."²

The price . . . fifty thousand pieces of silver. A piece of silver was the standard coin of the realm, the Greek drachma, the Roman denarius (like the mark in Germany, the franc in France, the lira in Italy), worth 15 to 17 cents; or in all about \$800. But as a denarius (penny in the A. V.) was the prevalent day's wages, the sum was equivalent to \$50,000 to \$100,000 in our day. The sum is very large, "but probably such books were expensive, and we must take into account in estimating it the immense trade and rich commerce of Ephesus," and that a considerable number of those who owned such books may have been in good circumstances. "Such books fetched what might be called 'fancy' prices, according to their supposed rareness, or the secrets to which they professed to introduce. Often, it may be, a book was sold as absolutely unique."³

20. So mightily grew (imp.), and continued to grow, the word of God, in the hearts of men, both as to intensity of power and increase of numbers. And prevailed, ἰσχυρὴν, had strength to overcome all obstacles; and there were many in Ephesus.

EPISTLES. The two Epistles to the Corinthians and the Epistle to the Romans were written during Paul's abode in Ephesus, probably toward the latter part. They are elements in the great growth of the word of God, and "exhibit the far-reaching design which Paul had conceived. It embraced first the union of the Pauline churches in a joint scheme for the relief of Christian poverty in Palestine, then a mission to the farthest western bounds of the Roman Empire together with Rome itself."⁴

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE POOR IN JERUSALEM, which Paul speaks of in his letter from Ephesus to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16: 1-4), were another proof of the growth of the word of God. "Having in the previous year sounded the Corinthian and Galatian groups, and received a favorable answer, he gradually expanded his design into a general contribution and representative deputa- tion from all the churches he had planted in

Greece and Asia Minor. The combination of these four important groups, Galatia and Asia, Macedonia and Achaia, in one joint manifestation of brotherly fellowship with the church of the circumcision, was the climax of his apostolic labors in the East. It not only sealed the success of the gospel amidst the Greeks, but paved the way for a federation of all the churches, and gave promise of realizing at last that magnificent conception of Christian unity which found expression in his Epistle to the Ephesians."⁴

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Among the worst things in the world are bad books. The sooner they are burned the better.

2. When any one is converted to Christ he must leave behind him all bad business and bad habits, whatever the cost may be. If he is not willing to do this, he proves himself to be no Christian. The only question will be, *What is right?* not, *What will it cost?*

3. "We are to remember that the great cost was not the *intrinsic* value of these books, but only their value *as* books of incantation. In themselves they might have been of very little worth. *The universal prevalence of Christianity would make much that is now esteemed valuable property utterly worthless*, as, for example, all that is used in gambling, in fraud, in counterfeiting, in distilling ardent spirits for drink, in the slave-trade, and in attempts to impose on and defraud mankind."⁵

4. "By actually destroying the books, they not only acknowledged the sinfulness of the practices taught therein, but also cut off at once and absolutely the possibility of relapse on their own part, or of leaving a temptation or stumbling-block in the way of others."⁶ "Confession is cheap, but reformation is often costly. A false penitence would have sold these books, and kept both the money and the credit for piety."⁷ "Those that are recovered from sin themselves will do all they can to keep others from falling into it, and are much more afraid of laying an occasion of sin in the way of others."⁸

5. Sacrifice for Christ is one of the strongest proofs of faith in him; and one of the most influential means of spreading his religion. After this the word of God "grew mightily and prevailed."

¹ Plumptre. See the Tract, *Captain Ball's Experience*.

² Hackett. ³ So Blass.

³ Plumptre.

⁴ It may no doubt be maintained that their measuring all things by money value indicates the Oriental popular tale (Ramsay), but may we not see in the statement the

knowledge of a writer who thus hits off the Oriental standard of worth, especially in a chapter otherwise so rich and exact in its description of Ephesian localities and life?" Knowing.

⁴ Rendall. ⁵ Albert Barnes. ⁶ W. Jacobson.

⁷ Whedon. ⁸ Matthew Henry.

21 ^{After} ^{Now} after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, ^{when} he had passed through [“]Μάϋ-ḗ-dō-nĩ-ā and Ἀ-χά’iā, [“]to go to Ἰῆ-rú’sā-lēm, saying, After I have been there, [“]I must also see Rome.

22 ^{So he} ^{And having} sent into Μάϋ-ḗ-dō-nĩ-ā two of them that [“]ministered unto him, [“]and [“]Ἐ-rās’tūs; [“]but he himself stayed in Asia [“]for a season.¹

23 And ^{the same} ^{about that} time [“]there arose no small stir [“]concerning [“]the Way.

24 For a certain ^{man} ^{man} named Δε-mē’tri-ūs, a silversmith, which made silver shrines ^{of} Δι-ἄ-n’ā, [“]brought no ^{small gain} ^{little business} unto the craftsmen;

c 1 Cor. 16. 5. Cp. ch. 20. 1.

d Rom. 15. 26. 1 Thess. 1. 7, 8.

e ch. 20. 16, 22. Rom. 15. 25. 2 Cor. 1. 16.

Cp. 1 Cor. 16. 3, 4.

f Rom. 15. 24, 28. Cp. ch. 23. 11 & Rom. 1. 13.

g Col. 4. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 18 & 4. 11. Philem.

13. Cp. ver. 29 & ch. 13. 5.

h See ch. 16. 1.

i Rom. 16. 23 (?).

2 Tim. 4. 20 (?).

j Cp. 1 Cor. 16. 8, 9.

k Cp. 2 Cor. 1. 8.

l ver. 9. m Cp. ch. 16. 16, 19.

TIMOTHY AND ERASTUS SENT TO MACEDONIA, vers. 21, 22.

21. After these things were ended. The laying of the foundations of the church during two years and three months (vers. 8, 10), including the events just described.

Paul purposed in the spirit, planned in his mind, but the plan was not carried out in the way he first proposed. When he had passed through Macedonia, going by sea to Philippi, thence by land to Thessalonica, Berea, and to Corinth in Achaia; from which city he proposed to sail to Syria on his way to Jerusalem. See on 20: 16.

I must also see Rome, the political capital of the world, and the great centre of power and influence. The gospel there would be like the golden milestone in the forum, from which radiated all the roads, and were measured all distances in the empire. "Paley notices an undesigned coincidence between this verse and Rom. 1: 13 and 15: 23-28. 'The conformity,' he observes, 'between the history and the epistle is perfect.'"¹

Paul's object was partly the collection for the poor in Jerusalem, referred to above. "The most immediate call, however, upon the apostle came from the Corinthian and Macedonian churches; for the disorders in the church of Corinth had reached a height which seriously needed apostolic intervention, and his previous visit to Macedonia had been so quickly broken off everywhere by the violence of his adversaries that he had been unable to do more in person than open the gospel campaign, leaving to others the duty of following up and extending his work."²

22. So he sent . . . two . . . Timotheus and Erastus. But what connection is there between the apostle's sending Timothy into Macedonia and his own purpose to proceed to Achaia? We obtain an answer to that question from 1 Cor. 4: 17-19. We learn there that Timothy was not to stop in

Macedonia, but to pass on to Corinth, the capital city of Achaia, and prepare the church for the approaching visit of the apostle. Thus the narrative agrees with the Epistle, and the agreement is attended with very little appearance of design.³

Erastus. "Here, as in 2 Tim. 4: 20, the person bearing this name appears as an itinerant companion of St. Paul, and it therefore seems difficult to identify him with the Erastus of Rom. 16: 23, who is described as 'treasurer' of the city, i. e., Corinth, since the tenure of such an office seems to presuppose a fixed residence."⁴

Stayed in Asia for a season. Apparently for several weeks or months. From the fact that Asia is mentioned rather than Ephesus, its capital, it has been inferred that he did not remain in the city all the time, but labored in the outlying districts.

SHRINES OF DIANA. PAUL'S PREACHING INTERFERES WITH THE BUSINESS OF THE CITY, vers. 24-27.

Just before we have seen how Christians voluntarily gave up a bad business for Christ's sake. Now we see how the gospel lessened the gains of wickedness in the case of those who opposed it.

23. No small stir, *τάραχος*, from *ταράσσω*, to agitate or trouble, as the sea in a storm; hence, a popular commotion or disturbance. About that way, with a capital, Way. See on ver. 9.

24. A certain man named Demetrius. Probably the head of the whole guild of shrine makers. There has lately been discovered at Ephesus a stone, now in the British Museum, on which is engraved an inscription concerning a certain Demetrius belonging to about the same date as the events here described, A. D. 50-60, presumably an influential and wealthy man.⁵ Professor Ramsay thinks that although it would be "almost as difficult to prove an identity between two persons named John Smith in our own country as between

¹ Gloag.

² Rendall.

⁵ Canon Hicks' *Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum*, vol. iii.

³ Hackett.

⁴ Knowling.

two persons named Demetrius on the west coast of Asia Minor," yet there is a probability in Canon Hicks' identification of Demetrius the silversmith with the Demetrius of the inscription.¹

Again, a Demetrius of Ephesus or vicinity is



MODEL OF TEMPLE OF DIANA,

with her image, and the legend *εφεσιων*,
"Of the Ephesians."

From a Roman coin in the British Museum.

Oxford Bible Helps, by per.

This seems to be rather a copy of a shrine, than of the temple itself.

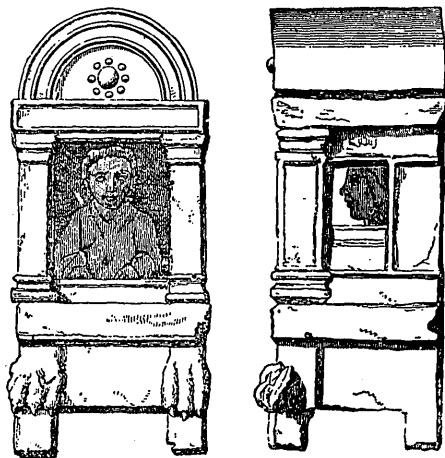
commended by St. John (3 John, ver. 12) as a Christian of good report; and it is quite possible that he refers to the same person as Demetrius the silversmith, the ringleader of the riot, having become a disciple as active as a Christian as he was formerly in the service of Diana.²

Silver shrines, *ναοὶς*, temples. "That part of the temple in which the image of the god was placed." The technical name for the shrines. For, of, Diana. These shrines were small models of the temple of Diana, containing the image of the goddess.³ They were made of terra-cotta or marble for the use of the poorer classes, of bronze and silver for the rich. No silver shrines of the Ephesian Diana are known to be in existence, probably because in the destruction of the city and temple these would be taken and melted up

for coin. But marble shrines abound in the neighborhood of Ephesus; and there are many terracotta shrines, but they are not so numerous as the marble ones, probably on account of their perishable character.

These shrines were of different sizes, some of them so small that they could be carried about on the person.

The shrines were often set up in their homes as objects of worship, and when carried about upon the person, were looked on as charms or amulets which had the power to avert diseases and other dangers from the bearers.⁴ They were used as dedicatory offerings to the goddess, and placed in her temple, as now in many places in Europe such offerings are placed around the image of the Virgin



TERRA-COTTA SHRINE.

An *œdicula*, or miniature shrine, of Cybele, in illustration of the silver shrines of Diana of Ephesus. The above *œdicula* was found at Athens, and is of terra-cotta, the more common material. From *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*. Little images of the Paphian Venus, a span high, were also made, and were used as amulets and charms. See an instance of one purchased as a safeguard from shipwreck, Athenæus, 15: 18.

From Lewin.

Mary as thank offerings for favors, or peace offerings in hopes of answer to petitions. "They were purchased by pilgrims to the temple, just as rosaries and images of the Virgin are bought by pilgrims to Lourdes, or bronze models of Trajan's

¹ *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 118.

² See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, and Ramsay's *St. Paul*, 277, etc.

³ It is said that the idolaters thought it a wonderful invention when they thought of the plan of making small shrines of Diana and her temple, which they called *Dianeans*, little *Diannas*, so that they could have their goddess always with them, at home, in their business, on

their travels, and were no longer restricted in their worship to the temple at Ephesus. So Christians have been called little Christs, representatives on a small scale and of inferior magnificence, of the character, life, and teachings of Jesus the Christ. So that wherever there are Christians, men may get some idea of the Saviour, and be led to love and worship him.

⁴ Schaff.

25 Whom ^{he called} ^{gathered} together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this ^{craft} ^{business} we have our wealth.

m Cp. ch. 16. 16, 19.

column or of the Colonne Vendôme by tourists to Rome or Paris.”¹ They were placed in graves



DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS.

From the *Oxford Bible Helps*, by per.

beside the corpse, as a sign that the dead had gone back to the mother who bore them.²

Diana. The Ephesian Diana was a distinct goddess from the Greek Diana (the Latinized form of Artemis), who was a virgin, a huntress, and personification of the moon as Apollo was of the sun. The Ephesian goddess was represented as a standing idol, the upper part of the body in front being

covered with rows of breasts, symbolizing her as the universal mother of all life. The lower part is merely an upright block rudely representing robes, covered with symbols and figures of animals. “She was the impersonation of the vitality and power of nature, of the reproductive power which keeps up the race of man and animals in an unbroken series of offspring, and of the nourishing power by which the earth tenders to the use of man and animals all that they require to keep them in life.” “There can be no doubt that the ritual was of the orgiastic type, and accompanied with ceremonial prostitution and other abominations.”³ “Many a time must Paul have heard from the Jewish quarter the piercing shrillness of their flutes, and the harsh jangling of their timbrels; many a time have caught glimpses of their detestable dances and Corybantic processions, as, with streaming hair, and wild cries, and shaken torches of pine, they strove to madden the multitudes into sympathy with that orgiastic worship, which was but too closely connected with the vilest debaucheries.”⁴

Brought no small gain unto the craftsmen. The worship and influence of Diana was widespread; her temple was known throughout the world; and vast numbers of pilgrims came from considerable distances to visit her shrine, so that a large business was done in the manufacture and sale of shrines.

25. Called together, first the artisans in silver shrines, the manufacture of which was the most lucrative, and required the more skilled workmen (*τεχνίταις* of ver. 24); then the workmen (*ἐργάταις*) of like occupation, those who made shrines of marble and terra-cotta. Demetrius is regarded as the president of the whole guild.

By this craft we have our wealth. “The first way in which Christianity excited popular enmity, outside the Jewish community, was by disturbing the existing state of society and trade, and not by making innovations in religion.” It was so at Philippi. It was so at Ephesus. The central idea and motive of the Jews was Religion, and therefore they were intolerant of whatever seemed to destroy it; but the ordinary pagans held a tolerant, easy-going indifference to religion, and “did not care two straws whether their neighbor worshipped twenty gods or twenty-

¹ Vincent.

² The best description and discussion of these shrines, and the worship of Diana, is found in Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. 8, “St. Paul in Ephesus.”

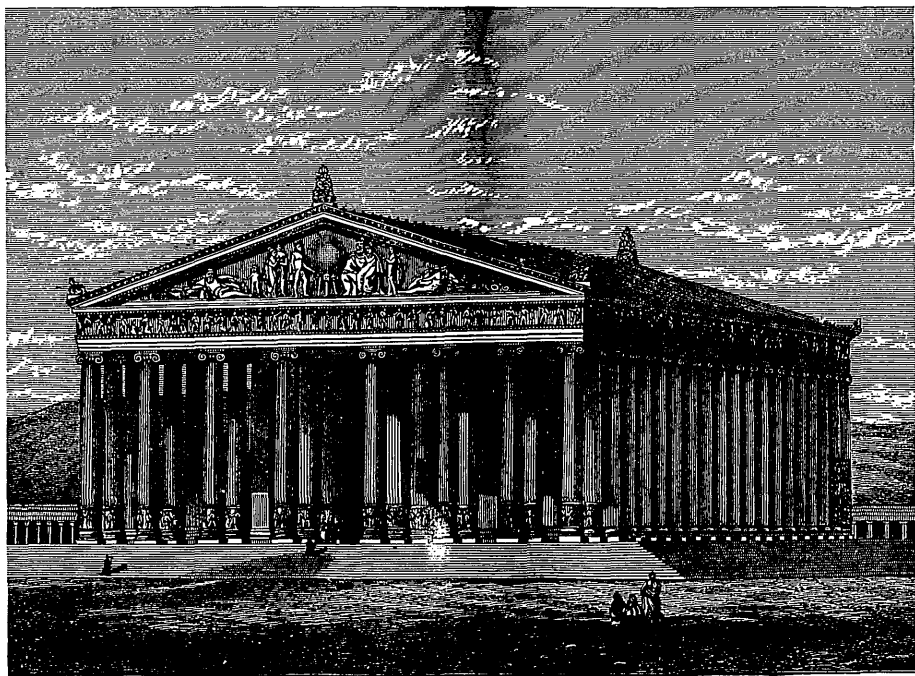
³ Hastings' *Bib. Dic.* See, also, Harper's *Classical Dictionary*.

⁴ Farrar, *St. Paul*.

26 ^{Moreover} ^{And} ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, "saying that [°] they be no gods, which are made with hands :

27 ^{So that} ^{And} not only ^{this our craft} ^{is} ⁱⁿ ^{there} ^{danger} ^{that this our trade come into disrepute ;} ^{to be set at nought ;} but also that the temple of the [°] great goddess DI-ā'n'ā ^{should be} ^{despised,} ^{made of no account,} and ^{her magnificence should be destroyed,} ^{that she should even be deposed from her magnificence,} whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

n ch. 14. 15 & 17. 29. 1 Cor. 8. 4. o Deut. 4. 28. 2 Kin. 19. 18. Ps. 115. 4. Isai. 44. 10-20. Jer. 10. 3-6. Rev. 9. 20. p Cp. ch. 8. 10.



TEMPLE OF DIANA, RESTORED.
From Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

one." The discovery that Christianity meant a social revolution "was made in a homely way familiar to us all—through the pocket and the money market."¹

Lewin thinks that this mob arose in May, the month of the Ephesian games, the harvest time for the gain from shrines. "The whole month was one unbroken scene of festivity. There were processions, supplications, and sacrifices in the temple, scenic representations in the theatre, athletic exercises and beast fights in the stadium,

and horse-races in the hippodrome without the walls. Ephesus was the great mart or mercantile resort of Asia, and the annual fête of Diana was in fact a fair to which buyers and sellers flocked together from all quarters for the interchange of their commodities."²

26. Almost throughout all Asia, the Roman province of Asia. Here is a strong testimony to Paul's success.

27. Our craft . . . set at nought. Come into ἀπελεγμὸν, contempt, disrepute, the repudiation of

¹ See Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, 130, 131.

² Lewin, *St. Paul*, chap. 13.

28 And when they heard ^{these sayings, this,} they were ^{full of} filled with wrath, and cried out, saying, ^p Great is Di-ān'ā of the Ē-phē'si-āns.

29 And the ^{whole} city was filled with the confusion: and ^{having caught Gai'us and they rushed with one} Ar-is-tar'chus, men of Mac-e-dō-ni-a, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre, having seized ^r Gai'us and Ar-is-tar'chus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel.

p Cp. ch. 8. 10. q ch. 20. 4 (?). Rom. 16. 23 (?). 1 Cor. 1. 14 (?). 3 John 1 (?). r ch. 20. 4 & 27. 2. Col. 4. 10. Philem. 24. s 2 Cor. 8. 19. Cp. ver. 22 & ch. 20. 34.

a thing shown to be worthless; there was no regard for the lives made better, the purer homes, the higher ideals, the sick restored, but only for their own gains.¹

But also that the temple . . . be despised, become a laughing-stock. This was the motive to be presented to the mob.

Temple of the great goddess Diana. "The crowning glory of Ephesus was the great temple of Artemis or Diana, one of the seven great wonders of the world, and whose magnificence has been a marvel ever since. It glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and it was said that the sun saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple. Made of the purest marble, upon substantial foundations, which in that marshy ground were at once costly and essential, it confronted the mariner immediately at the landing-place. It was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, and two hundred and twenty broad; its columns of Parian marble were sixty feet high, and thirty-six of them were magnificently carved. The porticos in front and rear consisted each of thirty-two columns, eight abreast and four deep, and around the sides were two rows, the entire number of columns, one hundred and twenty-seven, being given each one by a king. The hall was adorned with the most wonderful statuary and paintings."²

Whom all Asia, the Roman province, and the world, the inhabited world. "The temple at Ephesus had been built at the common expense of all the Greek cities of Asia. Pilgrims repaired thither from all nations and countries."³

THE MOB AND UPROAR, vers. 28-41.

28. Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Just as the English say, Long live the King. The cry was "Great Diana," repeated over and over, as in the chorus of her festivals. Similar was the cry, "O Baal, hear us," by the priests of Baal on Carmel in Elijah's time. It was "the civic cry of a populace so proud of their temple that they refused to inscribe on it the name of Alexander

the Great, though he offered them the whole spoil of his eastern campaign if they would do it."⁴

29. The whole city was filled with (the) confusion, *συγχύσεις*, from *συγχέω*, to pour together, like waters over a cascade; hence, confusion, a mingling of crowds together like the waters in a flood, without order or plan, and in great excitement. "The illiterate artisans, soured by reduced wages or want of employment, were roused into a state of frenzy, and full of rage they sallied forth into the streets to wreak vengeance on the object of their blind fury. The living mass rolled along, and the thousands of idlers, whom the games had attracted to Ephesus, swelled their numbers at every step, and the whole city was soon in a state of confusion."⁵ Having caught, *συναρπάσαντες*, having seized and carried along with the rush, Gaius and Aristarchus. "The mob of Ephesus made for the house of Aquila, with whom Paul was lodging. They missed their prey; but as Paul tells us that Aquila and Priscilla had for his life laid down their own necks (Rom. 16: 4), it is likely that these faithful friends, in shielding the apostle, brought themselves into the most imminent peril. The mob, though baffled of their principal aim, seized on Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's associates, and dragged them away as criminals."⁶ "This Gaius is not identical with any other of the same name met with in Acts 20: 4, and Rom. 16: 23, 1 Cor. 1: 14. Of Aristarchus we hear again in 20: 4 and 27: 2, for he accompanied St. Paul in his voyage to Rome, and is mentioned in the epistles written at that time (Col. 4: 10; Phil. 24)."⁶

Rushed with one accord into the theatre, the Colosseum, capable of holding 56,000 people.⁷ "It was constructed chiefly for gladiatorial combats with wild beasts and the like, but was also used for dramatic entertainments. The theatre of a Greek city, with its wide open area, was a favorite spot for public meetings of all kinds, just as Hyde Park is in London, or as the Champs

¹ The modern world contains many of the descendants of the Ephesian silversmiths, opposing every reform that interferes with trade and money-making. See Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, and his autobiography, *The Making of an American*; Gen. Booth's *Darkest England*, and many such books.

² Lyman Abbott. See Lewin, and Conybeare and How-

son, for full descriptions. Wood's *Discoveries at Ephesus*.

³ Hackett.

⁴ So Strabo.

⁵ Lewin, *St. Paul*.

⁶ Cambridge Bible.

⁷ Wood, *Discoveries at Ephesus*, says 25,000.

30 And when Paul ^{would have entered} ^{was minded to enter} in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain ^{also} of the chief officers of Asia, ^{which were} ^{being} his friends, sent unto him, ^{desiring him that he would not} ^{and besought him not to} adventure himself into the theatre.

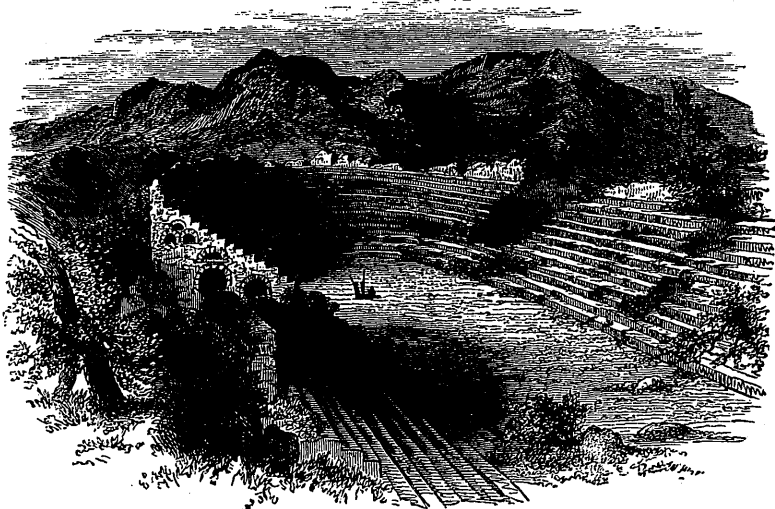
32 Some ^{therefore} cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was ^{confused;} ^{in confusion;} and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

† ch. 21. 34.

de Mars was in the French Revolution. So Vespasian addressed the people in the theatre of Antioch."¹

30. When Paul would have entered. Paul was unwilling to allow his friends to suffer in his stead. He would always stand in the fore-

front of danger. He probably hoped to be able to influence the mob and quell the riot by his appeal. The disciples suffered, permitted, him not. They knew the Ephesian mobs too well. Then his life was too precious to be risked. Many an army has done the same for its beloved



RUINS OF THE THEATRE AT EPHESUS.

From Dr. Davis' *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

leader. He refers probably to this when he speaks of having, as far as man was concerned, "fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15: 32), the multitude in its rage being compared to wild beasts.

31. Certain of the chief of Asia. "A board of ten commissioners entitled 'Asiarchs' was elected annually by the cities of Asia to defray the expense and superintend the management of the religious festivals and public games in honor of the emperor and the gods throughout the province. Eusebius, in relating the martyrdom of Polycarp,

mentions one of them as presiding in the theatre."² "These were very wealthy men, upon whom fell the expense of providing these costly games—the hiring of gladiators, the importing of wild beasts, and many other smaller expenses."³ This gave the highest honor, an honor greatly coveted, "and when robed with mantles of purple and crowned with garlands, they assumed the duty of regulating the great gymnastic contests and controlling the tumultuary crowd in the theatre, they might literally be called the 'chief of Asia.'"⁴

¹ Plumptre. See Tacitus, *History*, 2: 80; and Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 7: 3, 3.

² Rendall. See Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, 4: 15.

³ Schaff.

⁴ Conybeare and Howson.

33 And they ^{drew brought} Ἄ-ἑ-ἄ-ν'δ'ēr out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander "beckoned with the hand, and would have made ^{hⁱ} defence unto the people.

34 But when they ^{knew perceived} that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, "Great *is* Δι-ἄ-ν'ᾱ of the Ἐ-φ'ε'siāng.

35 And when the townclerk had ^{appeased quieted} the ^{people,} multitude, he ^{said, ἦ} saith, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there ^{that who} knoweth not how that the city of the Ἐ-φ'ε'siāng is ^{a worshipper} of the great ^{goddess} Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from *ῶ* Ἰᾱ'pī-tēr?

u See ch. 12. 17.

v ver. 28.

w Cp. ch. 14. 12.

Which were his friends. Either Christians, or open-minded men, who had observed the character of Paul and his teachings for almost three years. Paul more than once attracted such men.¹

32. Therefore is resumptive of the story. Some . . . cried one thing, etc. This is a picture of a mob taken from life.

33. And they drew, προεβίβασαν, urged forward (πρό), induced by persuasion. Alexander. It has been conjectured by many that this is the Alexander the coppersmith of 2 Tim. 4: 14, of whom Paul writes to Timothy in Ephesus that he did him much harm. "Coppersmith" may be taken in the wider sense of metal-worker, and he may have been a fellow craftsman of Demetrius; which would give him some influence with the artisans.

The Jews putting him forward, in order that he might speak to the mob and disclaim all sympathy with Paul and his teachings, on the part of the Jews, and declare that they had nothing to do with the diminution of the shrine-makers' business. For there was danger that Jews and Christians would be confounded together, and both be attacked by the mob. Gloag thinks "he had been long known in Ephesus as a fluent mob-orator, and as an enemy of Paul."

Alexander beckoned with the hand, to quiet the mob so that he might speak to them.

34. When they knew, recognized, that he was a Jew. This shows the feeling of the mob against the Jews, and that they were as really, though not so actively, as the Christians opposed to idols.

About the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana. "The whole scene is again painted vividly—the vain attempt to gain a hearing by signs and gestures, the fury of the people on recognizing his Jewish features and dress, their

ready assumption that all Jews were alike in abhorring idols."²

35. And when the townclerk, γραμματεὺς, secretary, recorder (the same word as scribe, frequently in the Gospels). "He was the most influential person in Ephesus, for not only were the decrees to be proposed drafted by him and the Strategoi, and money left to the city was committed to his charge, but as the power of the Ecclesia, the public assembly, declined under imperial rule, the importance of the secretary's office was enhanced, because he was in closer touch with the court of the proconsul than the other city magistrates, and acted as a medium of communication between the imperial and municipal government."³

The city of the Ephesians is a worshipper, νεώκορον, temple-keeper, warden of the temple of Ephesus. The title is found on the inscriptions as belonging to Ephesus. They were proud to be possessors of the temple as one of the seven wonders of the world, and the centre of one of the widest religious cults.

The image which fell down from Jupiter. Διογενεὺς, the Jupiter fallen, that is, fallen from heaven, the home of Jupiter. The name was given to old prehistoric images. "Like the Palladium of Troy, like the more ancient Minerva of the Athenian Acropolis, like the Paphian Venns or Cybele of Pessinus, like the Ceres in Sicily mentioned in Cicero, it was believed to have fallen down from the sky."⁴

Some think these were meteoric stones, carved into the form of the idol. "This, however, was not the case with the image of the Ephesian Diana, as we are expressly informed that it was of wood."⁵ "In all probability, it was the image which the Greeks found as the object of worship when they colonized Ionia, and to which they attached a mysterious significance."⁶

¹ See Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, for the attitude of the Asiarchs and priests to the new religion, ch. 8: 6.

² Plumptre.

³ Knowling. See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "Ephesus," by Ramsay; Ramsay's *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*,

i. 66; *St. Paul*, pp. 281, 304; Hicks' *Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum*, iii. p. 154, and Wood's *Ephesus*, App., p. 49.

⁴ Conybeare and Howson.

⁵ Plin., xvi. 79; Xen., *Anab.* v. 3.

⁶ Gloag.

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be ^{spoken against} ^{rashly,} ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing ^{rashly,} ^{rashly,}

37 For ye have brought ^{hither} ^{hither} these men, which are neither ^{your} ^{your} robbers of churches, ^{nor} ^{nor} yet blasphemers of ^{your} ^{your} goddess.

38 Wherefore if ^{therefore} ^{therefore} Dē-mē'trī-ūs, and the craftsmen ^{which} ^{which} are with him, have a matter against any man, the ^{law} ^{law} courts are open, and there are ^{deputies:} ^{deputies:} ^{implied} ^{implied} ^{accuse} ^{accuse} let them one another.

39 But if ye ^{enquire any thing concerning} ^{enquire any thing concerning} other matters, it shall be ^{determined} ^{determined} in ^{a lawful} ^{a lawful} assembly.

40 For ^{indeed} ^{indeed} we are in danger to be ^{called in question for} ^{called in question for} ^{accused concerning} ^{accused concerning} this day's ^{uproar,} ^{uproar,} ^{riot,} ^{riot,} there being no cause ^{for it:} ^{for it:} and as touching it ^{we} ^{we} shall not be able to give ^{an} ^{an} account of this course.

α ver. 29. γ Rom. 2. 22. ζ See ch. 13. 7.

36. Seeing then, etc. This is the conclusion of the recorder's first argument. It is useless to be excited about that which no attacks can harm, — a dog barking at the moon, a castle bombarded with snowballs.

37. His second argument is that Paul and his companions have not done that with which they have been charged. Are neither robbers of churches, temples. In the age when our A. V. was made the word "churches" was often applied to heathen temples. Nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. They have done nothing by actions or by words which should arouse your indignation. This statement throws light on Paul's method of preaching against error, more by positive truths than by direct attack.

38. His third argument was that a better and legal way of redress was open to Demetrius and the craftsmen, provided they had any grievance. The law is open, rather the law courts, ἀγοραί, the court days of the forum are being kept, are transacting business, and there are deputies, proconsuls, governors; as we would say, "There are assizes and judges." Let them implead, ἐγκαλεῖσθαι, bring a charge, come forward as accusers.

39. If ye enquire any thing concerning other matters. That is, if the public welfare, not private interests, are threatened, so that it cannot be left to a lawsuit. It shall be determined in a lawful assembly. Which this was not. It was neither regularly called, nor legally organized, and was quite incompetent for the legal transaction of business. "Such assemblies, answering somewhat to an American town-meeting, were either regular or special, the former being held at stated times, the latter on special occasions of extreme importance, by special call. The former were entitled, as here, lawful assemblies, and to these regular meetings of the people for

the transaction of local business, the secretary here alludes. If Demetrius has a private grievance, he can lay it before the courts — the conventus even now in session; if the matter concerns the public, it should be brought before one of the stated assemblages of the people; in neither case is there any justification for a mob — this is the alternative put by the speaker to the people."¹ "An inscription found in this very theatre in which the words were uttered illustrates this technical sense of 'lawful.' It provides that a certain silver image of Athene shall be brought and 'set at every lawful (regular) assembly above the bench where the boys sit.'"²

40. This verse introduces the fourth argument of the recorder, that there was danger they might find themselves in court on trial, and much more harm come upon them than from anything the Christians could do.

For we are in danger to be called in question, to be accused by the Roman government.

For this day's uproar. Accused of uproar or riot, for this day's assembly. "Assembly" being supplied after "this day." Στάσις, uproar, riot, is connected with the verb. The Greek order is "accused of riot concerning this day." The recorder did not say that there had been a riot, but he warned them that there was danger of such an accusation, if they did not quietly disperse; for death was the penalty those who raised a riot must pay;³ and the city might be deprived of its prized liberty.

There being no cause, no excuse, no sufficient reason. The Greek, μηδὲνς αἰτίου, may be either masculine or neuter. Rendall regards it as masculine, — "there being no guilty person upon whom the responsibility could be laid."

Give an account of this concourse, συστροφῆς, a twisting up together, a concourse of disorderly

¹ Lyman Abbott.

² Dr. Alvah Hovey.

³ Seneca, *Controversiæ* 3: 8.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

persons. "The town-clerk uses the most contemptuous word he can find, this *mob meeting*." Taking the law into its own hands was not an offence which the proconsuls were likely to pass over lightly. It would hardly be thought a legitimate excuse that they had got hold of two Jews, and wanted to "lynch" them.¹

41. He dismissed the assembly, ἐκκλησίαν. He gives a noble name here to the assembly, that of a recognized meeting in the amphitheatre, to shield them from any evil report of the meeting to the Roman government.

¹ Plumptre.

CHAPTER 20.

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (*concluded*).

MACEDONIA AND GREECE, vers. 1-3.	{ Paul leaves Ephesus. Revisits the churches of Macedonia and Greece. Three months at Corinth. From Corinth to Philippi, by land.	Dec., 56. Jan., Feb., 57.
TROAS, vers. 4-12.	{ Paul on his way to Palestine. Paul's companions on the journey. Luke rejoins Paul at Philippi. A week at Troas. The accident to Eutychus.	A. D. 57.
MILETUS, vers. 13-38.	{ Paul continues his homeward journey. Assos, Mitylene, Samos, Trogyllium. Arrival at Miletus, near Ephesus. Paul's address to the elders of Ephesus. The parting.	A. D. 57.

1 AND after the uproar was ceased, Paul ^{called unto him} ^{having sent for} the disciples and ^{embraced} ^{exhorted} them, took ^{them} leave of them, and "departed to go into Măç-ē-dō'nī-ă.

2 And when he had gone ^{over} ^{through} those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece:

3 And ^{there} ^{abode} ^{when he had spent} three months ^{And when the Jews} ^{there, and a plot was} ^{laid} ^{wait for him.} against him by the Jews, as he

a See ch. 19. 21. b ver. 19. Cp. ch. 13. 50. See ch. 9. 24.

PAUL VISITS THE CHURCHES OF MACEDONIA AND GREECE, vers. 1-3.

1. And after the uproar, *θόρυβον* (allied to *τύρβη*, Latin *turba*, a confusion, a crowd), the noise of an excited multitude, a tumult, was ceased, the same word that is used by Luke (8: 24) to describe the calming of the waters of the Sea of Galilee when Christ "rebuked the wind and the raging of the water." **Embraced them**, *ἀνασάμηνος*, bade farewell to, saluted, used both to welcome the coming, and to speed the parting guest. The Israelites used in both cases the formula,

Peace to thee. "The salutation was made not merely by a slight gesture and a few words, but generally by embracing and kissing."¹ And departed, probably by some trading vessel from Ephesus to Philippi.

2. When he had gone over those parts, the cities of Philippi, Berea, and Thessalonica, and the regions around them. From Rom. 15: 19 it would appear that his work continued some time, and that round about even unto Illyrienn (the country west of Macedonia and east of Italy, the modern Croatia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia) he

¹ Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.

was about to set sail ^{into} for Sŷr'î-ă, he ^{purposed} ^{determined} to return through Măç-ê-dô'nî-ă.

4 And there accompanied him ^{into} ^{as far as} Asia °Sô'pă-těr of ^{Be-re'a;} ^{Be-ro'a, the son of Pyrrhus;} and of the Thēs-să-lô'nî-ăns, °Ār-îs-tăr'chūs and Sē-cŭn'dūs; and °Gai'ūs of Děr'bē, and °^{Timothy;} ^{Timothy;} and of Asia, °Tŷch'î-cūs and °Trôph'î-mūs.

c Rom. 16. 21 (?). d ch. 14. 6, 21. See ch. 19. 29.
Tit. 3. 12. g ch. 21. 29. 2 Tim. 4. 20.

e See ch. 16. 1. f Eph. 6. 21. Col. 4. 7. 2 Tim. 4. 12.

fully preached the gospel. He came into Greece, Ἑλλάδα, the Roman province of Greece, including Greece proper and the Peloponnesus. In general it is synonymous with Achaia as used in the Acts.

3. And there abode three months, probably for the most part in Corinth. From 1 Corinthians we learn that many difficulties and errors had arisen there during his absence of four or five years; there were factions, immoralities, errors concerning the Lord's supper, spiritual gifts, and the resurrection. Paul had written three letters to them (Robertson¹ thinks that there may have been four or five). The first one is referred to in 1 Cor. 5: 9, and is lost unless McGiffert is right in his suggestion that 2 Cor. chaps. 10-13 is the lost epistle.² The other two are our 1st and 2d Corinthians. Some think that while here he wrote the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans. Others place these epistles during his years at Ephesus.

When the Jews laid wait for him, there being an ἐπιβουλῆς, a plan or plot against him by the Jews. We are not informed as to the nature or cause of this plot, but Paul was regarded by the Jews as the bitterest foe of their traditions; his success was drawing many away from their synagogues. It may be that "to this period of his life belongs the peculiar experience of sorrow and spiritual conflict described in 2 Cor. 12: 7-10."

As he was about to sail into Syria on his way to Jerusalem with the money collected for the poor there (1 Cor. 16: 1-5; Acts 24: 17), he purposed, he resolved, he altered his plans, and decided to return by land through Macedonia. "Paul's intention must have been to take a pilgrim ship carrying Achaian and Asian Jews to the Passover. With a shipload of hostile Jews, it would be easy to find opportunity to murder Paul."³

Going through Macedonia from Greece, he would come last to Philippi, whence he would go by sea to Asia.

PAUL AT TROAS, vers. 4-12.

4. And there accompanied him into, ἔχρι, as far as Asia, that is, to Troas. Not that they went no further, but went as far as Asia to meet Tychicus and Trophimus; and then all proceeded together to Jerusalem.⁴ Certainly Aristarchus went there, as he was with Paul on his voyage to Rome (27: 2), and Trophimus (21: 29). Moreover, "as far as Asia" is omitted by the oldest manuscripts.

REASONS WHY THESE SEVEN ACCOMPANIED PAUL. 1. They were doubtless delegates from the leading churches (1 Cor. 16: 3) to aid Paul in carrying the large sums of money which had been collected, to the church at Jerusalem, with the salutations of the Gentile churches. This is confirmed by the distribution of the delegates among the provinces where the collection was taken up: the first three from Macedonia; Gaius and Timothy from Galatia; Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia, probably from Ephesus, its capital, and the chief source of the gifts. See Paul's statement in Acts 24: 17, "I came to bring alms to my nation;" and his letter to the Romans (15: 25, 26) written from Corinth just before the party left for Jerusalem, "I go unto Jerusalem, acting as administrator of relief to the saints."⁵

2. In carrying so large a sum in trust these acted, as it were, as auditors of his accounts, and would be witnesses that all was right. Paul sought to avoid even the suspicion of the malversations which the tongues of slanderers were so ready to impute to him (2 Cor. 8: 20, 21).⁶

3. They would act as a bodyguard through the more dangerous part of the journey, and the money distributed among so many carriers would be safer.

Sopater. Nothing further is known of him. The best texts add, "the son of Pyrrhus." Blass thinks "Pyrrhus" was mentioned because Sopater was of a noble house. Possibly he is the same as Paul's relative, Sosipater (Rom. 16: 21).

Aristarchus, has been mentioned before (19: 29), was on the ship with Paul on the way to

¹ Hastings' Bib. Dic., "Corinthians."

² Apostolic Age, 311-314.

³ Ramsay, St. Paul, 287.

⁴ So Rendall, Acts. See, also, Asquith, Epistle to the Galatians (1899).

⁵ See Rendall, Expositor, Nov., 1893, for a description of the scheme of this general contribution; Ramsay's St. Paul, 287.

⁶ Plumptre.

5 ^{These going} But these had gone before, ^{tarried} and were waiting for us at Trō'ās.

6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we ^{abode} ^{tarried} seven days.

7 And ^{upon} the first ^{day} of the week, when ^{the disciples came} ^{we were gathered} together to break bread, Paul ^{preached unto} ^{discussed with} them, ^{ready} ^{intending} to depart on the morrow; and ^{continued} ^{prolonged} his speech until midnight.

h vers. 6-8, 13-15. i ch. 16. 8-11. j ch. 12. 3. Ex. 12. 14, 15 & 23. 15. k 1 Cor. 16. 2. Cp. Mark 16. 9 & John 20. 19 & Rev. 1. 10. l ver. 11. 1 Cor. 10. 16 & 11. 23, 24. See ch. 2. 42.

Rome (27: 2), and in the Epistle to Colossians (4: 10) Paul calls him his fellow prisoner.

Secundus is mentioned only here.

Gaius of Derbe, probably a friend of Timothy from the neighboring city of Lystra. Both these represented the South Galatian churches founded during Paul's first missionary tour.

And of Asia, the Roman province in Asia Minor, Tychicus, who is mentioned four times in Paul's epistles during his imprisonment at Rome: "A beloved brother" (Eph. 6: 21); Paul's messenger (Col. 4: 7 and Titus 3: 12); his delegate to Ephesus (2 Tim. 4: 12).

Trophimus we hear of in Jerusalem, as the occasion of a mob against Paul in the temple (21: 29). He is again mentioned in Paul's last epistle: "Trophimus have I left at Miletum, sick" (2 Tim. 4: 20).

5. These going before. Referring probably to only the last two. "The European delegates were to sail from Corinth, the Asian from Ephesus, where doubtless the pilgrim ship would call. When the plan was changed, word was sent to the Asian delegates; and they went as far as Troas to meet the others."¹

Tarried for us at Troas. The return to the first person in the narrative shows that Luke had rejoined Paul at Philippi, where we left him in chapter 16.

TROAS was a seaport on the Ægean Sea, in the Troad, "the country around Troy," in the north-western part of Asia Minor. It was situated some distance south of Homer's Troy.

6. We sailed away from Philippi, to which city they had come by land. This was while the Asian delegates were waiting at Troas. After the days of unleavened bread,² the Passover, showing that the journey was in the latter half of April, for the Passover of A. D. 57 fell on Thursday, April 7, and lasted till the 14th. As he wished to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost (ver. 16), 50 days after the Passover, he probably sailed from Philippi as soon as possible after the Passover festival was ended.

Came . . . to Troas in five days. As he had made the journey before in two or three days (16: 11, 12), the wind must have been adverse, and the weather stormy. "It was about the time of the equinox, and northeast winds, directly in their face in going from Philippi to Troas, frequently prevail in the archipelago in the spring."³ The five days, moreover, included the 16 miles from Philippi to its seaport, Neapolis.

7. Upon the first day of the week. This and the counsel given in 1 Cor. 16: 2 are distinct proofs that the church had already begun to observe the weekly festival of the Resurrection, our Sabbath, in place of, or where the disciples were Jews, in addition to, their weekly Sabbath.⁴ "If Luke reckons so here, as many commentators suppose, the apostle then waited for the expiration of the Jewish Sabbath, and held his last religious service with the brethren at Troas at the beginning of the Christian Sabbath — i. e., on Saturday evening — and consequently resumed his journey on Sunday morning. But as Luke had mingled so much with foreign nations and was writing for Gentile readers, he would be very apt to designate the time in accordance with their practice; so that his evening or night of the first day of the week would be the end of the Christian Sabbath, and the morning of his departure that of Monday."⁵

Came together to break bread, the half-technical name for the Lord's supper. This was an evening service, for the slaves and those who worked for heathen masters could not control their time so as to avoid labor on the Sabbath; but they met in the evening after sunset. First there was a preaching service. This was followed by the Agapè or love feast, and later on in the evening, toward midnight or after, was celebrated the breaking of bread in the Lord's supper. "That this was so in the regions of Troas and Asia we see from Pliny's letter to Trajan,⁶ in which he describes the Christians as meeting on 'a fixed day,' for what he calls a *sacramentum* at break of day, and again in the evening to par-

¹ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 287.

² See Ramsay's article in *The Expositor*, May, 1896, "A Fixed Date in the Life of St. Paul;" and a criticism by Dr. Robertson in *Hastings' Bib. Dic.*, "1 Corinthians."

³ Lewin.

⁴ Plumptre. See Milligan, *The Resurrection*, pp. 67-69; Maclear in *Present Day Tracts*, "Evidential Value of the Lord's Day." ⁵ Hackett. ⁶ *Epistles*, 10: 96.

8 And there were many lights in ^m the upper chamber, where ^{they} ^{we} were gathered together.

9 And there sat in ^a the window a certain young man named Eū'ty'-chūs, ^{being borne} fallen into a deep sleep; and as Paul ^{was long preaching, he sunk} ^{discoursed yet longer, being borne} down ^{with} by his sleep ^{and} he ⁿ fell down from the third ^{loft,} story, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and ^o fell on him, and embracing ^{him} ^{said,} ^p Trouble not ^{Make ye no} yourselves; ^{ado;} for his life is in him.

11 And when ^{he} ^{therefore} was ^{come} ^{up,} ^{again,} and ^q had broken the bread, and eaten, and ^{had} talked with them a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

^m ch. 1. 13 & 9. 37, 39.
39. ^q ver. 7.

ⁿ 2 Kin. 1. 2.

^o Cp. 1 Kin. 17. 21 & 2 Kin. 4. 34.

^p Cp. Matt. 9. 23, 24 & Mark 5.

take of a 'simple and innocent' repast. At Troas we have the connecting link between the evening communion of the church of Corinth and the morning celebration which has been for many centuries the universal practice of the church."¹

Paul preached, διελέγeto, *discoursed, conversed* with others. The thought is prominent of arguing with others, of a questioner, in person or understood. Our word "dialogue" is a transliteration of the corresponding noun. The preaching was often more nearly like a Bible-class exercise than a formal written sermon.

8. And there were many lights. The Jews were accustomed, on their festal days, brilliantly to light their rooms for any great solemnity.² It is uncertain why this fact is mentioned. "It was a graphic and minute touch of an eye-witness." "Nothing was done in darkness, but everything in plain sight." "The accident was not due to darkness." "The bright light and closeness of the room account for the young man's drowsiness."

In the upper chamber. "We learn from verse 9 that it was on the third floor of the house. In the high narrow streets of Eastern towns the upper story is often chosen for social or devotional purposes, partly as more removed from the noise of the street, partly as giving access to the roof of the house. Such a room in a good-sized house might well hold two or three hundred people."¹

9. And there sat in a window. "It should be observed that the windows of such places in general reached nearly to the floor; they would correspond well to what our word 'window' signified originally, viz., *windore, wind-door, i. e., a door for the admission of wind or air.*"³ The windows had no glass, but were of lattice-work. The window was probably open on account of the heat from the lamps, and the closeness of the air from the crowd. The fact that Eutychus sat in the window implies that the room was crowded.

A certain young man named Eutychus, *Fortunate*, a common name.

Being fallen, καταφερόμενος, *being borne down, being gradually oppressed* (present participle) with a deep sleep, . . . he sunk down with sleep, κατενεχθείς ἀπὸ (aorist of same verb), *having been borne down, overpowered by sleep.* "The present participle describes the increasing oppression of heavy sleep during the discourse, ending in the final catastrophe, which is expressed by the aorist."⁴

The place was hot and crowded, the services were long, "the topics were probably beyond his comprehension," the young man was doubtless very weary, the hour was late. Few in modern churches have so good an excuse for sleeping.

Fell down from the third loft, story, probably into the court into which usually the windows opened.

And was taken up dead. "The author vouches that Eutychus was dead, implying apparently that as a physician he had satisfied himself on that point."⁵

"This is obviously related as a miraculous resuscitation; but it may be questioned, looking to St. Paul's words, 'his life is in him,' whether more than apparent death is meant. He was to all appearance dead, would have died but for the prayer of the apostle; but there had been no fracture of limb or skull, and the cause of death, or of the state that looked like death, was the shock given to the brain and nerves by the violence of the fall."¹

10. And Paul went down, by the outside stairs, common in Eastern houses.

Fell on him, and embracing him, as Elijah in the case of the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17: 21), and Elisha, in that of the Shunammite's son. Doubtless Paul prayed as earnestly as those prophets, "and the close contact,

¹ Plumptre.

² Schaff.

⁵ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 290, 291.

³ Hackett.

⁴ Rendall.

12 And they brought the ^{young man} ^{lad} alive, and were not a little comforted.

13 ^{And} we, ^{went} ^{before} to the ship, ^{and sailed unto} ^{set sail for} Ās'sōs, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, ^{minding} ^{intending} himself to go ^{afoot,} ^{by land.}

14 And when he met ^{with} us at Ās'sōs, we took him in, and came to Mit-ŷ-lē'nē.

15 And ^{we sailed} ^{sailing from} thence, ^{and} ^{we} came the ^{next day} ^{following day} over against Chī'ōs; and the next ^{day} ^{we arrived} ^{touched} at Sā'mōs; ^{and tarried at} ^{Tro-gyl'il-um;} and the ^{next day} ^{day after} we came to Mī-lē'tūs.

the clasp of warm affection, gave new intensity to the prayer of faith."

For his life is in him. He does not say that Eutychus had not been dead, but that after his efforts life was there.

11. Had broken bread, administered the Lord's supper, Holy Communion, and eaten, a separate ordinary meal as in 10:10.

And talked a long while, *δμιλήσας*, had much companionship, conversed with. The preaching was over, and the social converse followed.

12. And they brought the young man alive to the assembly room. The Bezan Text reads, "And while they were bidding farewell they brought the young man," in order to show him alive to Paul and the company. "The word 'brought,' not 'carried,' implies that Eutychus was able to come with some help."

Were not a little comforted, by finding that the accident did not result in death, for the company must have received a severe shock; and by the witness to the gospel and to the power of the prayer of faith afforded by this notable miracle.

MEETING OF PAUL WITH THE ELDERS OF EPHESUS, vers. 13-38.

13. And we, leaving Paul behind, perhaps to be assured of the full recovery of Eutychus, perhaps for further instructions to the disciples at Troas, sailed unto Assos. "The ship evidently stopped every evening. The reason lies in the wind, which in the Ægean during the summer generally blows from the north, beginning at a very early hour in the morning; in the late afternoon it dies away; at sunset there is a dead calm." ¹ Therefore those who would go on the vessel must go aboard very early, "soon after midnight," and it is quite possible that Paul was not through with the meeting in time to take the vessel.

Minding, *μέλλων*, intending, having in mind to go afoot, by land. This was about 20 miles,

and a much shorter route than the sea voyage around Cape Lectum.

14. And when he met with us, *συνέβαλλεν*, was meeting us. Both Rendall and Ramsay suggest that the imperfect indicates that Paul did not actually enter Assos, but was descried and taken in by boat as he was nearing the city.

Came to Mitylene, one day's further sail, 30 miles, Monday, April 25, according to Ramsay. Mitylene was the capital of the island of Lesbos, and celebrated for the beauty of its situation and the magnificence of its buildings. It was famous as the birthplace of Sappho and the poet Alcæus.²

15. And came, *κατηντήσαμεν*, denoting "the arrival at the day's destination."

Chios. "Among the seven rivals for the honor of being the birthplace of Homer, the claims of Chios are most strongly supported by tradition."³

The next day we arrived at Samos, *παρεβόλομεν*, to throw beside. "The regular nautical phrase for bringing to alongside a landing-place: it does not necessarily imply landing."⁴

Samos was at this time a very populous island off the coast of Lydia, from which it was separated by a narrow channel. It was celebrated for its fertility and numerous products. The ship did not remain over night at Samos, but at Trogyllium, a mile further across the channel. The words "tarried at Trogyllium" are not in the best manuscripts.⁵

All these stations are situated on the west coast of Asia Minor. Each of them "has legendary and historical associations of its own, full of interest for the classical student; but these, we may well believe, — the revolt of Mitylene in the Peloponnesian War (Thuc., Book III.), the brilliant tyranny of Polyrates at Samos (Herod., III. 39-56), even 'the blind old man of Scio's rocky isle,' — were nothing to the apostle and his companions."⁶ I, for one, cannot well believe that Paul had no interest in these associations. He could say,

¹ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 293.

² Strabo, 13: 2, 2.

³ Rendall.

⁴ Knowling.

⁵ "An interesting comparison with the voyage of St.

Paul may be found in Herod's voyage by Rhodes, Cos, Chios, and Mitylene towards the Black Sea. (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 16: 2, 2.)" — Knowling.

⁶ Plumptre.

16 For Paul had determined to sail ^{by} ^{past} Ēph'ē-sūs, ^{because} ^{that} he would not have to spend the time in Asia; for he ^{hasted,} ^{was hastening,} if it were possible for him, "to be at Jerusalem "the day of Pēn'tē-cōst.

17 And from Mī-lē'tūs he sent to Ephesus, and called ^{to him} "the elders of the church.

† ver. 22. ch. 24. 11. Cp. ver. 6 & ch. 19. 21 & 1 Cor. 16. 8. s ch. 2. 1. † Cp. ver. 28 & 1 Tim. 4. 14 (for mg.). See ch. 11. 30.

"Homo sum, et mihi humani nihil alienum puto."

The next day we came to Miletus. This was practically the port of Ephesus. For the harbor of Ephesus was gradually filling up with the silt from the river Cayster, and in spite of every effort the harbor became a mere marsh. Even in Paul's time it was with great difficulty that a vessel could ascend the channel to the docks of the city.¹ In like manner the river Meander has filled up the ancient harbor of Miletus with sand, so that the modern Palatia, which marks the site of Miletus, is 5 or 6 miles from the coast. It has been "the mother of 80 colonies." Here Thales, one of the seven sages, was born (B. C. 636); and Anaximander, the philosopher, inventor of the sun-dial, and constructor of a celestial globe (B. C. 611). Miletus was famous for its dyes and woollen manufactures.²

16. Paul had determined to sail by, past, Ephesus without stopping there. Paul had no control of the vessels or their stopping places, but he had the choice of vessels in which he would sail. So he chose the one which touched at Miletus, and did not take the slower and more difficult way to Ephesus, which might easily have made a delay of some days.

Because he would not spend the time in Asia, that is, in Ephesus. It would be difficult to tear himself away quickly from the many friends and various interests which would claim his attention in that church; and his departure might be impeded by hostilities aroused by his presence.

Spend the time, *χρονοτριβῆσαι*, from *χρόνος*, time, and *τριβω*, to rub, to wear out by rubbing; hence, to wear away time, to fritter it away, that is, to spend it unnecessarily.

For he hasted, was hastening, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. The great objects of his visit would best be accomplished at some great feast, when large numbers of people from all parts of the world would be present. "Pentecost was most crowded, most attended by foreigners;" and the next great feast, Tabernacles, did not occur till the autumn, while to delay at Jeru-

salem would put off his proposed journey to Rome for a year, on account of the winter weather (compare 27 : 9).

THE REASONS for going to Jerusalem at this time were: (1) That he might deliver to the elders the funds he had collected for the poor. (2) That he might refute the calumnies circulated against him and his work (21 : 21). (3) That he might report the progress of the gospel during his third journey. (4) He would meet prominent Christians not only of Jerusalem, but from distant churches. (5) He knew such a mark of respect for the Hebrew custom would be pleasing to the Jewish Christians. (6) "Nothing could more clearly show the immense importance which St. Paul attached to this contribution for the poor saints than the fact that he was ready to present in person at Jerusalem the members of the deputation and their joint offerings, and that too at a time when his presence in the capital was full of danger, and after he had been expressly warned of the peril, cf. Acts 24 : 17; Rom. 15 : 25. Such a scheme would not only unite all the Gentile churches in one holy bond of faith and charity, but it would mark their solidarity with the Mother Church at Jerusalem; it would be a splendid fulfilment by their own generous and loyal effort of the truth that if one member of the body suffered all the members suffered with it. We know how this vision which St. Paul had before his eyes of a universal brotherhood throughout the Christian world seemed to tarry; and we may understand something of the joy which filled his heart, even amidst his farewell to the elders at Miletus, as he anticipated without misgiving the accomplishment of this *διακονία* (ministry) to the saints, a 'ministry' which he had received from the Lord Jesus, Acts 20 : 24."³

17. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus. He did not make the journey himself, for the reasons given above, and because if he went he might not be able to be present when the ship sailed, the time being uncertain; while if he remained at Miletus he could embark at any moment. Moreover, Paul was weary with his journey and incessant labors, and the hard journey would be for

¹ Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

² See Lewin's *St. Paul*. Herodotus, 5 : 28-36. Pliny,

Natural History, 5 : 31. Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, 480.

³ Knowling. See Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 287.

18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, "Ye ^{yourselves} know, ^{from the first day that I came into Asia,} " after what manner I ^{have been} with you ^{at all seasons, the time,}

19 Serving ^{the Lord} ^{with all humility} of mind, and with ^{many} tears, and ^{temptations, with trials} which befell me by ^{the lying in wait plots} of the Jews:

20 ^{And how} ^{How that} I ^{kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, a shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable,} and ^{have taught} ^{teaching} you publicly, and from house to house,

^a 1 Thess. 1. 5. ^{Cp. vers. 31, 34.} ^v ch. 18. 19 & 19. 1, 10. ^w Cp. Rom. 12. 11 & Col. 3. 24. ^z Cp. 1 Thess. 2. 6, 7. ^{See Eph. 4. 2.} ^y Cp. ver. 31 & 2 Cor. 2. 4 & Phil. 3. 18. ^z See ver. 3. ^a ver. 27. ^b Cp. ver. 31.

him difficult and slow, while some young and fleet messenger would gladly take the message for him.

Called the elders of the church. "Originally among the Jews the elders were either the heads of tribes or the oldest and most judicious of the people. Hence the name came to be applied to office, and was the title of the rulers of the synagogue on whom devolved the conduct of religious affairs, — the prayer, reading, and exposition which constituted the service. The name was transferred to the corresponding officers of the Christian church."¹ Elders in this verse are called bishops in ver. 28. "Bishop" is Greek, and always found on Greek ground. "Those who in Palestinian churches were called presbyters (elders) were in Greek churches spoken of at first as bishops, and then indifferently as presbyters, or as bishops."² While there is a general equivalence between the two offices, the difference of name points to minor differences in function, though the same person may perform the duties of both, just as the same man may be a pastor and preacher, and teacher. The duties of the elders were the administration of the affairs of the church, conducting public worship, doing pastoral work, and preaching.³

18. And when they were come, probably on the third day of Paul's stay at Miletus. He said unto them, "The address of Paul to the elders has not perhaps the excellence of style and plan which belong to the speech on the Areopagus, but for tenderness and wisdom it can hardly be surpassed."⁴ Luke was probably present at the meeting, so that he could report the substance of what Paul said. Ye know. "Ye" is emphatic, ye yourselves know. His whole past life in Ephesus gave emphasis and power to the words he was to speak. After what manner. "In all patience," 2 Cor. 12: 12; 'holily, justly, and unblameably,' 1 Thess. 2: 10. St. Paul was magnifying his office, not himself."⁵

19. Serving the Lord, δουλεύων, rendering service as a δούλος, a servant, one who gives himself up to another's will. The minister of a church serves the church indeed as a fellow servant of Jesus, but he is the servant of the Lord. With all humility of mind, ταπεινοφροσύνης, lowliness of mind, usually, in pagan ethics, in a bad sense.⁶ "The noun occurs in Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 4: 9, 2, but in the sense of pusillanimity, and also in Epictetus, *Discourses*, iii. 24, 56, but in a bad sense (Grimm-Thayer). But for St. Paul as for St. Peter the life of Christ had conferred a divine honor upon all forms of lowliness and service, and every Christian was bidden to an imitation of One who had said: 'I am meek and lowly (ταπεινός) in heart.'⁷ Paul showed his humility by "neither refusing minor and seemingly insignificant work, e. g., in personal conversation as at Athens (chap. 17: 17), nor hesitating to engage in manual labor for his own support and that of others (ver. 34), nor arrogating to himself to be a lord over God's heritage (1 Pet. 5: 3)."⁸ Paul set Christ forward and kept himself in the background. Steam when visible as a cloud has little power. The steam that drives the engine and does the work is invisible.

With many tears. Omit "many." The tears were not for himself, but for others; tears of anxiety for the salvation of souls, tears of affection, friendship, and sympathy. So Christ wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19: 41-44), and with Mary and Martha at the grave of Lazarus (John 11: 35). And temptations, πειρασμῶν, trials, tests of fidelity, constancy, virtue, patience, which became temptations to temper, anger, hot words; to giving up efforts to save men, to yielding somewhat of the truth. By the lying in wait, plots, of the Jews. "There is no special mention of a plot against the life and liberty of the apostle during the Ephesian residence; their hostility is, however, alluded to in Acts 19: 9. No doubt at Ephesus, as at Corinth, Thessalonica, Antioch

¹ Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*.

² *Encyclopædia Biblica*, "Bishops;" see the whole article.

³ See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "Bishops and Elders;" see the whole article.

⁴ President Woolsey.

⁵ *Speaker's Commentary*.

⁶ See Trench's *Synonyms*.

⁷ Knowing.

⁸ Lyman Abbott.

21 Testifying ^c both to ^{the} Jews and ^{also} to ^{the} Greeks, ^d repentance toward God, and ^e faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, I go bound ^f in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

23 Save that ^g the Holy Ghost ^{witnesseth} ^{testifieth} unto me in every city, saying that ^h bonds and ⁱ afflictions abide me.

24 But ^j none of these things move me, neither count I my life ^k dear unto myself, so that ^l I might ^m accomplish my course, ⁿ with joy, and ^o the ministry ^p which I ^q have received ^r of from the Lord Jesus, ^s to testify ^t of the gospel of ^u the grace of God.

^c ver. 24. ^{ch.} 18. 5. ^d Mark 1. 15. Heb. 6. 1. See ^{ch.} 2. 38. ^e Cp. Eph. 1. 15 & Col. 1. 4 & 1 Tim. 3. 13. ^f Cp. ^{ch.} 17. 16. ^g Cp. ^{ch.} 21. 4, 11. See ^{ch.} 8. 29 & 9. 16. ^h ^{ch.} 21. 33. ⁱ ^{ch.} 14. 22. 1 Thess. 3. 3. ^j See ^{ch.} 21. 13. ^k 2 Tim. 4. 7. ^l ^{ch.} 1. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 12. ^m Gal. 1. 1. 1 Thess. 2. 4. Cp. ^{ch.} 26. 16 & Tit. 1. 3. ⁿ ver. 21. ^o ^{ch.} 15. 7. ^p Cp. ver. 32 & 1 Tim. 1. 14. See ^{ch.} 11. 23.

in Pisidia, and Jerusalem, the same sleepless, relentless hostility on the part of a section of his countrymen marred and hindered his work."¹

20. I kept back, *ἡπιστείλαμην*. "A picturesque word. Originally, to draw in or contract. Used of furling sails, and of closing the fingers; of drawing back for shelter; of keeping back one's real thoughts; by physicians, of withholding food from patients. It is rather straining a point to say, as Canon Farrar, that Paul is using a nautical metaphor suggested by his constantly hearing the word for furling sail used during his voyage."²

Nothing that was profitable. "Neither fear nor favor had deterred him from preaching the whole gospel of repentance and faith, though beset with dangers, and now doomed to bonds." It was still more difficult and dangerous not to keep back, in speaking to Jews, the truth about the freedom of the Gentiles from Jewish law.

"It is n't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
That gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun."³

Have taught you publicly, first in the synagogue, and then in the lecture room of Tyrannus. And from house to house, smaller meetings in private houses, like that with "the upper chamber," and the house of Mary, mother of Mark, in Jerusalem. Paul's work was not all in meetings. No doubt he visited many people personally at their homes wherever he learned of one who was

inquiring, or so interested or even opposed as to be willing to converse on religion.

21. Repentance. The Greek has the article, — "the repentance" which is due to God; the repentance which turns the heart from sin and sets the face toward our Heavenly Father. It is the beginning of the new heavenly, godly life.

And faith, literally, "the faith" which trusts in our Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Teacher, and King; which is the means and inspiration and power of the heavenly life.

22. And now, behold, I go bound, *δεδεμένος*, bound as with chains, constrained in the spirit, in his own spirit, not by the Holy Spirit which is referred to in the next verse. He felt impelled by a sense of duty, by strong impressions that this was what he ought to do, and must do, although not knowing the things that should befall him there. He was facing a dark future the details of which he could not see; but in reality, as we learn from the succeeding history, there were many bright things, and the fulfilment of his dearest hopes, beyond the dark shadows of the nearer future.

23. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth, by inward revelation, by past experience, and by the voice of inspired prophets (21: 4, 11; Rom. 15: 30, 31).

"I know not the way I am going
But well do I know my Guide,"⁴

24. None of these things move me from the path of duty.⁵ So that I might finish my

¹ Schaff.

² M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

³ Margaret Sangster's *Poems*.

⁴ See whole poem, by Mrs. M. S. Schindler. In the second volume of Foster's *Cyclopædia of Poetical Illustrations* (No. 3619) is a little poem, in which we are compared to an engineer on a steamship down deep in the vessel, where he cannot see the way, but obeys the orders of the pilot, who is above and who does see. So we, igno-

rant of the future and its dangers, may yet follow him who knows all and guides safely.

⁵ Compare Luther, who when pressed to stay away from the Diet at Worms, where he was to be tried for heresy, said to the messenger, "Go, tell your master that, though there should be as many devils as there are tiles on its roofs, I would enter it." And, again, of his mortal enemy, Duke George, "If I had business at Leipzig, I would ride into Leipzig, though it rained Duke Georges for nine days running."

25 And now, behold, ^q I know that ye all, among whom I ^{have gone} ^{went about} ^r preaching the kingdom, ^{of God,} shall see my face no more.

26 Wherefore ^s I ^{take} testify unto you ^{to record} this day, that ^t 'I ^{am} pure from the blood of all ^{men.} ^{men.}

27 For ^u 'I ^{have} ^{shrunk} not ^{shunned to declare} ^{from declaring} unto you ^v all ^{the} ^{whole} counsel of God.

^q Cp. Phil. 1. 25. ^r See ch. 28. 31. ^s Deut. 8. 19. ^t See ch. 18. 6. ^u ver. 20. Cp. Jer. 26. 2 & Ezek. 33. 8. ^v ch. 13. 36. Luke 7. 30. Cp. ch. 2. 23 & Eph. 1. 11 & Heb. 6. 17.

course. He speaks of his life under the figure of a race-course, in which as an athlete he is pressing toward the goal and the reward. Four years later, A. D. 62, he expresses the same thought more fully in glowing words. "This one thing I do," etc. (Phil. 3: 13, 14.) And seven or eight years later, A. D. 65 or 66, he is able to triumphantly exclaim, "I have fought a good fight," etc. (2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.) With joy. Of an accomplished work, of successful service; the joy of gaining the victory and winning the crown. And the ministry. The service of God in bringing in his kingdom and leading men to Christ. Which I have received of the Lord Jesus. Jesus chose him as his apostle, as he repeatedly asserts. Indeed, our true life work we ever receive from him. To testify. Paul did not originate the gospel, he did not make his own doctrines; he only bore witness to what God had taught him. The gospel of the grace of God. The good news of God's favor and forgiving love to man, that God is our Father, that he desires with his whole nature our salvation, that he has sent his Son to make atonement for us and to bring to us the good news of life and love from God.

25. And now, behold, I know. A personal conviction based on probabilities, not a revelation from God expressing divine and infallible knowledge. Shall see my face no more, *οὐκέτι, no longer*, as well as *no more*. The A. V., "no more" conveys a false impression that he was to return no more; but the real statement of the apostle is that he was to remain no longer in these regions of Greece and Asia Minor, where he had spent the greater part of his last ten years."¹ "It is not certain that he ever did revisit Ephesus, or if he did that he met these elders. But it is *almost* certain that after his liberation from the Roman imprisonment (Acts 28) he did revisit the Asian churches (see the notices and greetings in 2 Tim. 4 and Tit. 1: 5, especially the words 'Trophimus I left at Miletus sick,' 2 Tim. 4: 20)."²

26. Wherefore I take you to record, *μαρτύρομαι, I summon you to witness, I call you to bear witness*, that I am pure from the blood of all men. "The thought and language here was one familiar to Paul. He derived it from the well-

known words of the prophet Ezekiel, 'When I say unto the wicked, They shall surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand' (Ezek. 3: 18). He, Paul, as they well knew, was innocent of all neglect."² "The form of expression is striking and memorable. It is borrowed from the crime of murder, and the method by which guilt is ordinarily brought home to the criminal. In many cases conviction depends on blood being found on the clothes of the murderer."³ Thus in effect he invites the elders to look at his hands and garments to make sure that there is no blood on them. "If any of you fail of salvation it is not my fault."

"Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly, — angels could no more."

27. For I have not shunned, *ὑπεστειλάμην*, the same verb that is translated, "I kept back nothing" in ver. 20.

All the counsel of God, all that God had revealed to him concerning Christ, salvation, and the kingdom of God, and its relations to men.

"No Epistle excels that to the Ephesians in the richness of its thoughts, and in its conception of a divine purpose running through the ages; no Epistle dwells more fully upon the conception of the Church as the Body of Christ, or exhorts more touchingly to diligence in keeping the unity of the Spirit, or insists more practically upon the sanctifying power of the One Spirit, and the sense of a divine membership in every sphere of human life. The rich and full teaching of the Epistle is addressed to men who are able to understand the Apostle's knowledge of the mystery of Christ; in other words, to those to whom he had announced more fully than to others the counsel of God. The Ephesian Epistle may have been an encyclical letter, but it was addressed principally to the Ephesians as the representatives of the leading church of the province of Asia."⁴

"God does not bid us convert men; he bids us declare all his counsel, leaving the result with him. Our first concern is not to be successful in winning souls, but to be faithful to God's truth."⁵

¹ Rendall,² Schaff,³ William Arnot,⁴ Knowling,⁵ Prof. M. B. Riddle,

28 Take ^w heed ^{therefore} unto yourselves, and to all ^x the flock, ^{over} in the which ^y the Holy Ghost hath made you ^{overseers, bishops,} ^a to feed ^b the church of ^c God, which he ^{hath} ^d purchased ^e with his own blood.

^w Cp. 1 Tim. 4. 16. ^x ver. 29. Cp. Eph. 4. 11. See Luke 12. 32. ^y Cp. ch. 13. 2 & 1 Cor. 12. 8-11. ^z Phil. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 2. Tit. 1. 7. 1 Pet. 2. 25 (& mg. for mg.). Cp. ver. 17. ^a See John 21. 16. ^b 1 Cor. 1. 2 & 10. 32 & 11. 16 & 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13, *al.* ^c Cp. Matt. 16. 18 & Rom. 16. 16 (for mg.). ^d Cp. 2 Pet. 2. 1. ^e Heb. 9. 12, 14. Cp. Eph. 1. 7 & 1 John 1. 7. See 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19 & Rev. 5. 9.

But being faithful to God's truth is the way to win souls, and the only way. God knows what will bring the best success in saving men. To neglect some of God's truth is to declare ourselves wiser than God.

KEEPING BACK THE TRUTH. This may be done (1) by avoiding some truths altogether; (2) by a wrong emphasis, giving some more prominence than the Bible does, and others less; (3) by entangling the truth with such philosophical speculations as make the speculations a substitute for the truth itself; (4) by dwelling so much on the incidentals, the grammar, the history, the geography, that the truth itself is obscured or neglected.

28. Take heed therefore. For the responsibility lies with you, and it is very great. **Unto yourselves.** That you be right and true, a good example, filled with the Spirit, taught of God, a fit and willing instrument for his work. Take heed to body and to soul, to thought and to life. What you are is of the utmost importance. This is not contrary to, but a part of, the highest altruism, for, as Calvin says, "No one can successfully care for the salvation of others, who neglects his own; since he himself is a part of the flock." He who neglects his own vineyard can do little for the vineyards of others. **And to all the flock.** The church, the disciples, who are like a flock of sheep to be guarded from danger, folded and fed, guided into green pastures by still waters. Note the word **ALL**, to the poorest, the weakest, the erring, the neglected, the disagreeable; and especially to the lambs of the flock. That church accomplishes most which looks best after the children. **Over the which,** better as R. V., *in the which*, for in the Christian church the leaders are part of the flock, not rulers over it. **The Holy Ghost hath made you.** Because he directed the church to choose you; he endowed you with the needful talents; he gave you the needful spiritual grace. **Overseers,** ἐπισκόπους, from ἐπὶ, upon, and σκοπέω, to look at, to observe; hence, an overseer, a superintendent, one charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly. Usually translated "bishop," which is derived from this Greek word. "The Greek term *episcopos* denoted a superintendent

in the widest sense of the word. It cannot here denote an ecclesiastical title as it did a few years later in Phil. 1: 1; for the context is referring not to the title of an office, but to the duties incumbent on the elders. But this passage makes a considerable step towards the ecclesiastical usage by applying the term to the spiritual functions with which the Spirit had invested these elders."¹

To feed the church, ποιμαίνειν, to shepherd, to do all that is necessary in caring for a flock; a word of wider meaning than "feed," βόσκειν. Both words are used by Jesus in his final commands to Peter (John 21: 16), when Peter declared that he loved him. ((1) Feed, (2) Shepherd, (3) Feed.) To shepherd the flock, to do for it spiritually what the shepherd does for his sheep—feed, care for, defend, guide. This gives no authority over the church except that which comes from greater piety, wisdom, and experience. The flock is to be fed with the Word of God, guarded from false teachers and errors of doctrines, to be led into rich pastures of the highest Christian experience, and into fields of usefulness. Mr. Ruskin in his *Sesame and Lilies*, commenting on the strange phrase, "blind mouths," in Milton's *Lycidas*, says those two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character in the two great offices of the church,—those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who sees; a pastor means one who feeds. The most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind; the most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed. Nearly all the evils in the church have arisen from bishops desiring power more than light. They want authority, not outlook. It is the King's (Christ is our King) office to rule. The bishop's office is to oversee the flock, to number it sheep by sheep, to be ready always to give full account of it.²

The church of God. Belonging to God, devoted to God. **Which he hath purchased.** Acquired, made his own at great cost to himself. **With his own blood,** διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος. This difficult expression has received several explanations. (1) That Jesus is called God, and the phrase is really equivalent to "the blood of Jesus." (2) Rendall, seemingly from an ancient text,

¹ Rendall.

² Condensed from *Sesame and Lilies*. See his very

forcible statements in full, and Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, 282.

29 For ^dI know ^{this}, that after my departing ^{shall grievous wolves} ^{grievous wolves shall} enter in among you, ^enot sparing the flock;

30 And ^{Also of} ^{from among} your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

31 Therefore ^{and remember} ^{ye, remembering} ^{warn} watch that ^fby the space of three years I ceased not ^{to admonish} every one night and day ^{with tears}.

d Cp. 2 Pet. 2. 1. f See Matt. 7. 15. g John 10. 12. Cp. Col. 2. 8. h Cp. 1 Cor. 11. 19 & 2 Cor. 11. 18 & 1 Tim. 1. 19, 20 & 1 John 2. 18, 19. i Cp. Heb. 13. 17. See Matt. 24. 42. j Cp. ch. 19. 8, 10 & 24. 17. k Col. 1. 28. l Cp. Heb. 13. 17. See ver. 19.

changes the order, διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου, through the blood of his own, i. e., his own Son, to avoid the "intolerable confusion between the divine and human nature of the God-man." (3) Hort thinks it by no means impossible that υἱοῦ, son, was accidentally dropped out after ἰδίου, his own, and the expression would read "through the blood of his own Son." This is the real meaning in any case. It was at the cost of the life of the Son of God that the church came into being, and was nourished into full life (see Matt. 20 : 28; Rom. 3 : 24; Eph. 1 : 7; 1 Tim. 2 : 6; Heb. 9 : 12; 13 : 12, etc.). Nothing can so show the intensity of God's love for his people as does this fact of the infinite cost to him of their redemption. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." There is a motive here, too, for the church itself to be obedient, loving, helpful, and zealous in bringing all the world under our Lord's benign sway.

29. For I know, both from observation and experience, and from the insight given by the Holy Spirit. After my departing, from Ephesus. Shall grievous, rapacious, wolves. The avowed enemies of the flock. The imagery is taken from the flocks in the broad pasture lands, exposed to wild animals which are ever watching for opportunities to destroy the sheep. They may come in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7 : 15) under the guise of friends and teachers. They were those who taught false doctrines, evil principles, and bad morals, and brought worldliness and contentions. Not sparing the flock. Seeking their own selfish interests, no matter how many were lost or injured by it.

30. Also of your own selves. The wolves were enemies from without; but there were equal or greater dangers lurking within the fold, perhaps as yet like seeds planted beneath the soil, which favorable circumstances would cause to spring up as thorns choking the good plants, or as upas trees, poisoning the atmosphere. The greatest dangers often arise from those within the church, as the tallest and rankest weeds grow in the richest gardens. Speaking perverse things, διε-

στραμμένα, turned aside, distorted, from διὰ, throughout, and στρέφω, to twist, hence, twisted, distorted throughout. Truths distorted from their true meaning, as objects are in an imperfect or curved mirror; caricatures of truth. The most dangerous errors are truths distorted and perverted; truth enough to make some believe them, and error enough to injure or ruin those who do believe. Few are caught with the bare hook of error or falsehood.

31. Therefore watch, γρηγορεῖτε, derived from the perfect of ἐγείρω (to wake up), and hence, to have been aroused from sleep, to be awake, alert, as a soldier on picket duty.¹ It expresses not a mere act, but a state of wakefulness and watching; the wakefulness and diligence that overlooks no duty, indulges no indolence. The metaphor of the flock is continued, and the picture is of shepherds ever watching each sheep in the flock lest it go astray, and day and night keeping watch over the fold against every attack of robber or ravening wolf. They should watch against dangers, seen and unseen, against wolves in sheep's clothing, against the perversions of the truth. But they should watch still more alertly for the good to be cherished, for opportunities of doing good, for unnoticed qualities that might be developed.

By the space of three years, in round numbers. The exact length of Paul's stay in Ephesus is uncertain. Two years and three or six or nine months would be called three years by Jewish reckoning, indeed by any one speaking under the circumstances of Paul. It would have been out of place in such an appeal to give the exact time in years and months or weeks.

Warn . . . night and day with tears. The dangers must have been very great, and the blessings to be attained exceedingly valuable, to make Paul so earnest. "The approving words to the angel of the church at Ephesus (Rev. 2 : 1-7) tell us that the earnest wishes and the affectionate pleadings of the apostle were not in vain."²

¹ See the tract, *Parley the Porter*, and *Bunyan's Capture of Mansoul*.

² Schaff.

32 And now¹ brethren, ^m I commend you to God, and to ⁿ the word of his grace, which is able to ^o build ^{you} up, and to give ^{you} ^p ^{an} the inheritance among all them ^{which} ^{that} are sanctified.

33 I ^{have} ^q coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34 ^{Ye} ^{ye} yourselves know that ^s these hands ^{have} ministered unto my necessities, and ^t to them that were with me.

35 ^I ^{have} ^{shewed} ^{you} ^{all} ^{things}, how that ^v so labouring ye ought ^w to ^{support} ^{help} the weak, and ^x to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he ^{himself} said, It is more blessed ^y to give than to receive.

^m ch. 14. 23. ⁿ ch. 14. 3. ^o See Col. 2. 7. ^p ch. 26. 18. Eph. 1. 14, 18 & 5. 5. Col. 1. 12 & 3. 24. Heb. 9. 15. ^q 1 Pet. 1. 4. See Matt. 25. 34 & Rom. 8. 17. ^r 1 Cor. 9. 12. 2 Cor. 7. 2 & 11. 9 & 12. 17. ^s Cp. 1 Sam. 12. 3 & Matt. 10. 8 & 1 Thess. 2. 5. ^t Cp. ver. 18. ^u See ch. 18. 3. ^v ch. 19. 22, 29. ^w 2 Thess. 3. 7. ^x Eph. 4. 28. ^y 1 Thess. 5. 14. ^z Cp. 1 Cor. 12. 28. ^{aa} ch. 11. 16. ^{ab} Matt. 10. 8.

32. And now . . . I commend, *παρὰθεμαι*, to place beside, hence, to commit to one's care. To the word of his grace. The precious truths and promises which God has sent to us in his Word and by his Word Jesus Christ (John 1 : 1-14). Able to build you up. The Christian is to be built up upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, like a temple, costly, beautiful, lighted, filled with worship and love. The whole church was to be built up in numbers and in graces, in truth and in good works, till they became fitting temples of the Holy Ghost. Some people live as unfinished temples. Some spend their lives almost entirely in the basement, and leave the best and sunniest rooms for special occasions.¹

And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. Made holy. Without holiness no man can see God. As the Jews who came out of the wilderness, and the Gentiles who wished to become true worshippers of God, could have a portion and inheritance in the land of promise, so God will give all who become disciples of Christ an inheritance among his people. Nor is this a selfish hope. It is right, it is noble, it fits for larger usefulness, it draws the soul nearer to God. In this promised land, God's people inherit from God his character, his home, his fatherly love, his care, his joy. It is present and future. It is an eternal possession. It is not earned, but is the gift of God, because we are his children. It is doubly blessed, because it is shared with others. Thus we are "heirs of all the ages" of the saints; heirs of all the truths they have received from God, and wrought out in their experience; heirs of all their good deeds,

their noble words, their victories over sin, their triumphs in the spread of the gospel. Thus we obey the famous advice of the philosopher, "Hitch your wagon to a star."

33. I have coveted, etc. I have sought you, and not yours. I have not even coveted what you possess, or envied the rich for having more than I.

34. And I have shown it as ye yourselves know, by supporting myself by the labor of my hands at tent-making, as at Corinth (Acts 18 : 3). In his letter to the Corinthians, written at Ephesus, he refers to his labors with his hands (1 Cor. 4 : 12).

35. I have shewed you as to all things. He taught by word, and he set the Ephesians a good example of religion in daily life, supporting himself, helping others, showing that he was not self-seeking, exalting daily toil, at the same time making known the gospel, through those with whom he dealt.

Ye ought to support, *ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι*, from *ἀντί*, over against, on the other side, and *λαμβάνω*, to take hold of with the hands; hence, to take hold of the burdens of the poor and weak, on the other side, and help them to bear them. The weak. That is, those unable, in consequence of physical infirmity, to labor for their own support. No Christian should labor chiefly for himself, but that he may support those dependent on him, and may give to the poor, and spread the gospel of our Lord. It is this which transfigures daily toil, as the sun transfigures fogs into sunset glories. It makes the commonest work noble.

¹ See capital remarks in Prof. A. P. Peabody's Introduction to *Plutarch on the Delay of the Divine Justice*, pp. 27, 28.

We are like the Cologne Cathedral, which was begun about 1250, according to plans of M. Gerard. After a time the building stopped, on account of wars and political changes. For several centuries the plans were lost.

But in 1830 they were discovered, and the building is completed according to them. God has a plan for the temple of our souls. We sometimes lose sight of it, but if we are his children, every day, every experience, every opportunity, will aid in the building till we become perfect temples, wherein God shall dwell by his Spirit,

36 And when he had thus spoken, ^a he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

37 And ^a they all wept sore, and ^b fell on Paul's neck, and ^b kissed him,

38 Sorrowing most of all for ^c the ^{words} which he ^{spoke} had spoken, that they should ^{see} behold his face no more. And ^d they ^{accompanied} brought him ^{on his way} unto the ship.

^a See ch. 7. 60.

^a Cp. 2 Tim. 1. 4.

^b See Luke 15. 20.

^c ver. 25.

^d See ch. 15. 3.

"Who sweeps a room, as for this cause
Makes that and the action fine."

And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus. The words are not in our Gospels. John says (John 21 : 25) that a great number of Christ's sayings are not there. Schaff says that "outside the inspired memories of the Gospels we possess the record of some twenty sayings of Jesus Christ which have floated down to us." From what source Paul obtained these words is unknown, but his calling on the elders to remember them shows that they were familiar words. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Here we have a word of Christ rescued from sinking into oblivion; a word of Christ with a word of Paul wrapped around it; the jewel and its setting; the kernel and its shell. The Lord Jesus speaks from experience when he explains how pleasant it is to give.

It is blessed to receive, to be loved, to be ministered unto. This blessedness is so great that it is the chief object of many lives. But the blessedness of giving is much greater and higher, for (1) It brings greater happiness, more intense. (2) It produces a higher quality of happiness. (3) It is the mark of a nobler character. (4) It is the blessedness of God, who is the Great Giver. (5) It is the blessedness of Christ, who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." (6) It is the blessedness of heaven, where the inhabitants are ministering spirits. (7) It is the blessedness of the Christian religion, which is founded on love, and lives in loving and giving. (8) It is a blessedness that endures, not like a glass of water, but like a fountain; not like a tune, but like the instrument that sends forth music.

Hence the most blessed part of life is the giving forth of what we have, — not merely money, but

knowledge, sympathy, help, character, hope, faith, love.

"Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving; all its wealth is living grain.

Seeds which mildew in the garner, scattered, fill with gold the plain." ¹

36. He kneeled down, the most appropriate attitude for praying. A natural attitude of the body is an aid to the spirit of prayer. President Hopkins said to his students that the refusal to use the proper forms naturally led to the loss of the spirit.

37. They all wept sore. "Tears are often a relief in sorrow, and when people who are in affliction cannot weep, we fear for the results of their grief. We may therefore thank God for tears in a world of sorrow; they relieve the overstrained mind, and soothe the troubled spirit; and we can be yet more thankful for that coming day when sorrows shall be ended, and when God shall wipe away tears from all faces."

And kissed him, *κατεφίλου.* From *κατά*, emphatic, or *down upon*, and *φιλέω*, to *kiss*; they showered kisses upon him, they kissed him over and over again. The word is used for the betrayal kisses of Judas (Matt. 26 : 49), the father's embrace of the returning prodigal (Luke 15 : 20), and of the tender caressing of the Lord's feet in the Pharisee's house (Luke 7 : 38).

38. That they should see his face no more.

"Say not Good Night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning."

Compare the parting of Brutus and Cassius on the eve of the battle at Philippi.

¹ Mrs. Charles, *Poems*, "Is thy cruse of comfort failing." See Longfellow's *Poems*, "The Legend Beautiful." Hood's *Poems*, "The Lady's Dream." Mr. Great-heart's care for Mr. Feeble-mind in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Charles Lamb, in his "Confessions of a Drunkard," in *Essays of Elia*, speaks of some men of robust constitutions and iron insides that laugh at a weak brother, who, trying his strength with them, come off foiled in the contest.

CHAPTER 21.

RETURN FROM THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY, AND RECEPTION AT JERUSALEM.

		Ramsay.	Lewin.
THE VOYAGE, vers. 1-15.	THE PASSOVER	Thurs., April 7, A. D. 57.	Mar. 27, A. D. 58.
	Left Philippi.	Fri., Apr. 15.	
	Arrived } Miletus.	{ Thurs., April 28.	{ Fri., Apr. 21.
	Left	{ Sun. morn., May 1.	{ Mon., Apr. 24.
	Arrived at Coos.	Sun. eve., May 1.	Mon., Apr. 24.
	Arrived at Rhodes.	Mon., May 2.	Tues., Apr. 25.
	Arrived at Patara.	Tues., May 3.	Wed., Apr. 26.
	Arrived } Tyre.	{ Sat., May 7.	{ Sun., Apr. 30.
	Departed }	{ Fri., May 13.	{ Sun., May 7.
	Arrived at Ptolemais.	Fri., May 13.	Mon., May 8.
	Arrived } Cæsarea.	{ Sat., May 14.	{ Wed., May 10.
	Departed }	{ Wed., May 25.	{ Mon., May 15.
	By land to Jerusalem.	Fri., May 27.	Wed., May 17.
	FEAST OF PENTECOST.	Sat., May 28.	Wed., May 17.

Note. The difference is in the year. Otherwise the calculations are nearly the same.

A WEEK AT TYRE, vers. 3-7. { Arrival, Sat., May 7.
 { A warning to Paul.
 { The parting scene, Fri., May 13.

SEVERAL DAYS AT CÆSAREA, vers. 8-14. { Philip, and his daughters.
 { Agabus the prophet.
 { Warning to Paul.

JERUSALEM, vers. 15-40. { Arrival from Cæsarea, at Pentecost.
 { Reception of Paul and his delegation.
 { Meeting with James and the elders.
 { Plan to vindicate Paul before Jewish Christians,
 { Yet not to compromise his position as to the Gentiles.
 { The attack on Paul in the temple.
 { Rescue by Roman soldiers.
 { Paul gains permission to speak from the stairs.

1 AND when it came to pass that ^{after e} we were ^{gotten} parted from them, and had ^{launched} set sail, we ^f came with a straight course unto ^{Co'os,} Cös, and the ^{day following} next day unto Rhödes, and from thence unto Pät'ä-rä:

e See ch. 16. 10.

f ch. 16. 11.

THE VOYAGE FROM MILETUS TO PALESTINE, vers. 1-7.

1. After we were gotten from them, ἀποπαραθέντας, having torn ourselves away from them, the participle expressing the grief and reluctance of the parting. From them, the elders of the Ephesians at Miletus. The scene is full of pathos, and reveals the deep affection these men felt for Paul.

And had launched, ἀναχθῆναι, set sail, the usual nautical expression. We, the company named in 20: 4. Certainly Luke, Aristarchus

(27: 2), and Trophimus (21: 29); and probably the others.

Came with a straight course. The northwest winds which prevailed along that coast carried them speedily. The forty miles southward, unto Coos, Greek Cös, a small island of great commercial importance, and a financial centre, off the coast of Caria. It was of especial interest to Luke, because it was the seat of one of the great medical schools of the ancient world traditionally connected with Esculapius; and because it was

2 And ^{finding} having found a ship ^{sailing} crossing over unto ^{Phe-ni'cia,} ^{Pho-ni'cia,} we went aboard, and set ^{forth.} sail.
 3 ^{Now} And when we had ^{discovered} come in sight of Cŷprŷs, ^{we left} it on the left hand, ^{and} we sailed ^{into} unto Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden.

4 And ^{finding} having found the disciples, we tarried there seven days: ^{who} and these said to Paul ^{through} the Spirit, that he should not ^{go up to} set foot in Jerusalem.

g ver. 11. ch. 20. 23.

the birthplace of Hippocrates, a famous Greek physician, and "founder of the school of a scientific art of healing," whose works no doubt Luke had read, for some are still extant. Some ancient writers think it was also the birthplace of Apelles, the most celebrated of Grecian painters.¹

And the day following. Apparently the ship stopped every evening, as in the voyage from Philippi (20: 13-15), because the wind died away in the late afternoon.

Unto Rhodes. An island and a city 50 miles southeast of Coos, off the coast of Caria. "According to the proverb the sun shone every day on Rhodes, and it might well be called the sunny island of roses. Her coins, stamped on one side with Apollo's head radiated, and on the other with the rose-flower, bear their witness to the brightness and fertility of the island."² "From its unrivalled situation, lying, as it does, on the verge of two of the basins of the Mediterranean Sea, it has always been an emporium for the Eastern and Western trades. It possessed a great temple to the sun, and was famous as the site of the Colossus, one of the seven wonders of the world, a colossal figure of brass at the head of the harbor, and over one hundred feet high, so that vessels sailed between its legs."³ But at the time of Paul's visit it lay in ruins, having been destroyed by an earthquake.⁴

From thence unto Patara. "Patara was a seaport of Lycia, situated near the mouth of the river Xanthus, and opposite to the island of Rhodes. It may be considered as the port of the city Xanthus, the capital of Lycia, from which it was ten miles distant. Here was a famous oracle of Apollo, which was regarded as scarcely inferior to the oracle at Delphi."⁵ "The voyage may be taken as typical of the course which hundreds of ships took every year, along a route familiar from time immemorial."⁶ At Patara the coasting vessel in which Paul had been sailing came to the end of her voyage, at least in the direction Paul

wished to go. But here they were on the main track of vessels sailing from the west to Phenicia.

2. Finding a ship. "The traders in that ship little thought that the freight which their Jewish fellow-traveller brought on board was more precious than the purple of Tyre, the spices of Arabia, and the amber of the Hyperboreans, — the precious pearl of the gospel that saves men."⁷

Phenicia. A province of Syria, a narrow strip of country, extending along the coast north of Palestine, of which the chief cities were Tyre and Sidon.

3. When we had discovered Cyprus, ἀναφά-
 ναντες, lit., held up to view, i. e., came so near as to render Cyprus visible, sighted it, but did not land there.

And landed at Tyre, the commercial emporium of Phenicia. Tyre was about 350 miles from Patara, and could be reached in three or four days. Tyre had been "one of the greatest and most famous cities of the ancient world." Long before Paul's time its old site on the mainland had been abandoned, and a new city built on a small island half a mile from the shore, and a mile in length. Alexander the Great united it to the mainland by an enormous artificial mole.⁸ There were many Jewish associations with Tyre. Hiram, the king of Tyre, aided Solomon in building the temple (1 Kings 9), B. C. 1000.

Ahab, king of Israel, married Jezebel, daughter of a king of Tyre (1 Kings 16: 31).

Several prophets prophesied about Tyre (Amos 1: 9, 10; Isa. 23; Ezek. 26-28).

Tyrian purple, extracted from shell-fish, was widely celebrated.

Christ visited Tyre or vicinity (Matt. 15: 21; Mark 7: 24).

It was conquered by the Christians in the Crusades, June, 1144.

4. And finding (the) disciples, ἀνευρόντες, finding by search (ἀντ), from bottom upwards, by looking up the disciples. The article in the Greek im-

¹ See Farrar, *St. Paul*, 2: 284; Lewin, 2: 96. Compare Strabo, 14: 2; Horace, *Odes*, 4: 13, 13; Tacitus, *Annals*, 12: 61.

² Knowling.

³ Schaff.

⁴ Pliny, *Natural History*, 34: 18; Strabo, 14: 2.

⁵ Gloag.

⁶ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 297.

⁷ Lange.

⁸ See Harper's *Classical Dictionary*. For longer description of Tyre, see Conybeare and Howson, Lewin, Farrar, Ezekiel 28: 2-12; Jeremiah 25: 22. When Alexander besieged Tyre, B. C. 332, he scraped the very dust of Tyre bare to the rock in order to make the great mole to the mainland, as was prophesied by Ezekiel (26: 3, 4, 12, 21) 250 years before.

5 And when it came to pass that we had accomplished ^{those} days, we departed and went on our ^{way} journey; and they all ^h brought us on our way, with wives and children, ^{we were} till we were out of the city: and ^{we kneeled} down on the ^{shore, and} beach, we ^{prayed};

6 And ^{when we had taken our leave one of another, we took} bade each other farewell; and we went on board the ship; ^{and} but they returned home again.

7 And when we had finished ^{our course} the voyage from Tyre, we ^{came to} arrived at Ptōl-ē-mā'is; and we saluted ^j the brethren, and abode with them one day.

h ch. 20. 38.

i ch. 20. 36.

j See John 21. 23.

plies that they knew disciples were there. "The gospel had been carried as far as Phenice after the death of Stephen (11: 19), and Paul and Barnabas passed through that district (15: 3)." Therefore, when they landed in the crowded streets of this busy port, they inquired where they could be found. The apostle's example may well be followed by those who go from place to place in these modern days. Instead of waiting in silent obscurity till some Christian finds them out, let them search for the disciples, and seek to do Christian work, speak to Christians, take part in meetings, go to the Sabbath-school, and then many a complaint will be removed, and many a dark day among strangers will be made light.

We tarried there seven days. The time spent at Tyre in unloading the vessel, and probably taking in a new cargo.¹ In verse 5 we see something more of this church which attracts us to them.

Who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. There were not only disciples at Tyre, but prophets. There is no contradiction between this statement, also repeated at Caesarea, and St. Paul's assertion that he was going to Jerusalem under divine guidance. These disciples emphasized what Paul himself knew through the same Spirit (20: 22, 23). It was revealed to them, not that Paul should not go, but that if he went, he would go into bonds, prison, sufferings. The prophets inferred from this foreknowledge that Paul should not go on. This is clearly shown in verses 11 and 12. But Paul recognized more clearly the voice of the Spirit, and his duty to proceed in spite of warnings and remonstrances.

For he had a clear vision of the great and glorious work to be accomplished by his visit. (1) He would unite the two great branches of the church, the Jewish and the Gentile, between whom there seemed to be growing up an incurable schism, more to be dreaded than death. He had new revelations through his experience; he was bringing a peace-offering in the form of a collection for the poor among the Jews; he would correct the false rumors and misrepresentations

as to his teachings and work; he would show the approval of the Holy Spirit in the gifts and graces bestowed upon the Gentiles. (2) In Romans, written shortly before this time, Paul expresses his intense desire for the salvation of his countrymen. Now he would make one last effort for them. It was his one opportunity remaining. Might not the aged and weary missionary, wonderfully blessed of God in the hardest of heathen fields, come home and persuade his friends to accept the gospel, and be saved from the destruction which he saw overhanging the nation (and which came within twelve years), as well as from individual eternal ruin. (3) Going to Jerusalem was to lead through a thorny way to Rome; but it was the best possible way, far better than he had planned for himself.

5. When we had accomplished those days, *ἐξαπλώρα*, from *ἐκ*, from, unfolding, as a roll, completely; and *ἄριος*, perfect, complete, with reference to "special aptitude for given uses;" hence, completed, as a roll unfolded from beginning to end; or furnished completely, as if the days had fulfilled their purpose, and that which they were to accomplish had been completed.²

Went our way. "Literally, and were going on our way, the tense bringing before us something like a procession wending its way from the city to the shore."³

Brought us on our way. The expressions of sympathy and love must have cheered the apostle in these times of deepest anxiety.⁴ The women, and children even, join in these manifestations of affection.

And children. Here we find the first direct mention of children.

We kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. A fitting posture for prayer, because so natural. The natural attitude of devotion aids the spirit of devotion. The "we" implies that others prayed besides Paul.

Praying together is a great uniter of hearts, and comfort to parting friends.

6. We took ship. The article in the Greek "indicates that it was the same ship."⁵

¹ See Ramsay's *St. Paul*, 300.

² See different construction of the Greek in Rendall, 125.

³ Plumptre.

⁴ See Margaret Preston's *Poems*, "Ante Mortem."

⁵ Knowling.

8 And ^{the next day} ^{on the morrow} we ^{that were of Paul's company} departed, and came unto Cæs-ä-rë-ä: and ^{we entered entering} into the house of ^{Phil'ip} ^{the evangelist,} ^{which} ^{who} ^{was} ^{one} ^{of} ^{the} ^{seven;} ^{and} ^{we} ^{abode} with him.

9 ^{And the same} ^{Now this} man had four daughters, virgins, ^m which did prophesy.

k ch. 6. 5 & 8. 5, &c. l Eph. 4. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 5. m ch. 2. 17, 18. Luke 2. 36. 1 Cor. 11. 5. See ch. 13. 1.

7. And when we had finished our course, *πλοῦν, voyage*. Wendt connects from Tyre with the following words: Having finished our voyage (the whole voyage from Macedonia, this being the end of the journey by sea), we came from Tyre to Ptolemais, a distance of about 30 miles.

Ptolemais, the ancient Accho (Judges 1:31), the modern Acre, just north of Mt. Carmel, one of the oldest cities in the world. It was then a large town, and now has a population of ten to fifteen thousand. It was named after Ptolemy Soter, king of Egypt. And saluted the brethren. The church here may have been founded by Philip the evangelist, or some of the others who were driven from Jerusalem by the persecution twenty years before (11: 19).

PAUL AT CÆSAREA, vers. 8-14.

8. And the next day we . . . departed, probably by land. The journey was thirty or forty miles. That were of Paul's company. This is not in the best manuscripts. It is thought to have been inserted because a church reading began here, and it was needed as an explanation.

Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, and the official residence of the Herodian kings and the governors of Judea. It was built by Herod the Great, and named after Cæsar. It is seventy miles from Jerusalem.¹

Here lived the Roman centurion who was led to Christ by Peter.

Here were the headquarters of Philip the evangelist for this region.

"This was the third visit Paul had paid to this city, the first having been made on his journey from Jerusalem to Tarsus (9: 30), and the second on his return to Antioch from his second missionary tour (18: 22)."² Not long after this he was sent here for trial, and remained for two years in prison before he was sent to Rome.

Philip . . . one of the seven deacons appointed at the same time with Stephen. He is to be distinguished from Philip the apostle. The evangelist. The word "evangelist," which comes from the same root as *gospel, εὐαγγέλιον, good news*, means a "herald of good tidings." It describes the work of those who went about the

neighboring communities preaching the word and communicating the facts of the Gospels to those unchristianized, in distinction on the one hand from the local and more systematic work of pastors and teachers, and on the other from the more extended missionary work of apostles, and the peculiar work of prophets. Thus in Ephesians, 4: 11, "the evangelists are placed between the apostles and prophets on the one hand, and the pastors and teachers on the other. The latter two offices suggested those who were attached to a settled community, whilst the apostles and prophets were non-local. Between the two pairs stood the evangelists, whose work, like that of Philip, was to preach the word. But it is to be carefully noted that as the title is used of the work of Philip, 'one of the Seven,' and of that of Timothy, an apostolic delegate, 2 Tim. 4: 5, it may have denoted an employment rather than an office, 'a work rather than an order.'"³

9. Had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy, *προφητεύουσαι*. The word means *those who speak forth, or in behalf of God*. It is the technical term for the interpreters of a divine message. It does not necessarily imply a revelation of future events, but a consciousness of having some truth or message from God, which the prophet is impelled to utter. "The English word 'prophesy' has come to have, since about the beginning of the seventeenth century, only the one sense of 'to predict what is yet to come.' In the time of Queen Elizabeth 'prophesyings' meant 'preachings,' and Jeremy Taylor's famous work on the *Liberty of Prophesying* was written to uphold the freedom of preaching."⁴ Where they preached, whether in private houses, or to women only, or to public assemblies, we do not know. The records of the New Testament simply show the fact that God inspires women as well as men, and when he sends them forth they have a mission to proclaim the gospel in their own womanly way. (See Acts 2: 17; 18: 26; Joel 2: 28, 29; 1 Cor. 11: 5; 14: 24.) Such statements as these should always be taken into account in discussing the question of woman's work in the church.⁵

Virgins. These four daughters, being un-

¹ For description of Cæsarea, see Conybeare and Howson, Lewin, Farrar, and Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*

² Schaff.

³ Knowing. See article "Evangelists" in Hastings' *Bib. Dic., and Encyc. Biblica.*

⁴ Cambridge Bible.

⁵ See Luckock, *Footprints of the Apostles*, 2: 214.

10 And as we tarried ^{there} many days, there came down from Jû-dæ'ă a certain prophet, named "Āg'ă-būs.

11 And ^{when he was come unto} us, ^{he took} Paul's girdle, ^{and} ^{he} bound his own ^{hands and} ^{feet and} and said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and "shall deliver ^{him} into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place "besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

ⁿ ch. 11. 28. ^o Cp. 1 Sam. 15. 27, 28 & 1 Kin. 11. 30 & Isai. 20. 3 & Jer. 13. 1-11 & 27. 2. ^p See ch. 20. 23.
^q Cp. ver. 33. See ch. 9. 16. ^r Cp. vers. 31-33 & Matt. 20. 19. ^s Cp. Matt. 16. 21-23.

married, could devote their whole time to the service of the church in the exercise of their gifts. There is nothing to denote that they had taken upon themselves any vow of virginity, or that they did not share the home life of their father. But Plumptre thinks that "the word then, as afterwards, probably indicated not merely the bare fact that they were as yet unmarried, but that they had devoted themselves, if not by irrevocable vows, yet by a steadfast purpose, to that form of service."¹ "St. Jerome,"² in relating the story of Paula, mentions how she saw at Cæsarea the house of Cornelius now turned into a Christian church, and the humble abode of Philip, and the chambers of his daughters, the four virgins, 'which did prophesy.'³

10. As we tarried there many days. The Greek word for "many," *πολλοὺς*, is in the comparative degree, and either means "some," "several," or "more" than they first intended. As they did not wish to be in Jerusalem till Pentecost, there were several days at their disposal. Ramsay makes their stay about ten days; Lewin, five.

From Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. Probably the same who in Antioch foretold the coming famine (Acts 11: 28) A. D. 43 or 44, fourteen or fifteen years before. Coming lately from Jerusalem, he knew the feelings of the Jews toward Paul.

11. He took Paul's girdle, like those used to bind the loose flowing robes worn in Eastern countries. Girdles were of considerable size and

made of leather or linen, and frequently were richly embroidered with threads of silk or gold. Bound his own (Agabus') hands and feet. His revelation was made in that dramatic form which impresses the mind with a stronger sense of reality than mere words can do, and which was made familiar to the Jews of old by the practice of the Hebrew prophets.⁴ Thus saith the Holy Ghost. Through whom the revelations to the prophets of old were given (Acts 18: 25), though to them the language was, "Thus saith the Lord;" for they knew the Lord, but the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit was revealed later. "It is to be observed that in the same city where Paul's imprisonment was so plainly revealed to him, he was afterwards bound for two years."⁵ So shall the Jews . . . bind. By instigating the Romans to do this act. The Jews were the real source of the persecution.⁶

12. Besought him not to go. Inferring that this was the intention of the prophecy. This inference, here distinctly stated, explains verse 4.

Note "the parallel between Paul and Paul's Master, who had to listen to his disciple Peter, endeavoring to persuade him to turn aside from the way of suffering on which he had entered, with the words, 'Be it far from thee, Lord' (Matt. 16: 22)."⁷ "This suggests the case of Luther when on his journey to the Diet of Worms; and the story of Regulus the Roman, who, being permitted to return to Rome with an embassy from the Carthaginians, urged his country to reject the terms of peace, and to continue the war; and then, against the remonstrances of his

¹ See, also, Felten, Knabenbauer, Conybeare and Howson.

² *Epistles*, 5: 8; 108: 8.

³ Knowling.

⁴ See Conybeare and Howson.

⁵ Gloag.

⁶ Object-lesson teaching is no modern invention, but one of the oldest and most effective ways of giving instruction.

⁷ Similar actions are common with the Old Testament prophets. Thus Isaiah (20: 3) walks naked and barefoot. Jeremiah (13: 5) hides his girdle by the river Euphrates,

and (19: 10, 11) breaks the potter's vessel in the Valley of Hinnom. Ezekiel (4: 1-3) draws on a tile a picture of the siege of Jerusalem, and (5: 1-4) cuts off his hair, and burns and destroys it as God commanded. So, too, Zedekiah, the son of Cheneanah, made horns of iron (1 Kings 22: 11).—*Cambridge Bible*. "So also our Saviour, when he taught his disciples humility and charity, had recourse to a similar method of teaching by symbols, when he washed the feet of his disciples, and wiped them with the towel wherewith he was girded (John 13: 5)."—Gloag.

⁷ Schaff.

13 Then Paul answered, "What ^{mean} ^{do} ye, ^{to weep} and ^{to break mine} heart? for 'I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem' for the name of the Lord Jesus.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, "we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done.

15 And after ^{those} ^{these} days we took up our ^{carriages,} ^{baggage,} and went up to Jerusalem.

16 And ^{There} ^{and} ^{there} went with us also ^{certain} of the disciples ^{from} Cæsarea, ^{and brought} ^{bringing with} ^{with them} ^{them} one Mnā'son of Cŷ'prūs, an ^{old} ^{early} disciple, with whom we should lodge.

s Cp. Matt. 16. 21-23.

t ch. 20. 24.

5. 41.

v Cp. Ruth 1. 18.

w See Matt. 6. 10.

friends, insisted on fulfilling his promise to the Carthaginians to return in the event of the failure of negotiations, and went back to certain torture and death."¹

13. What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?² "The intense sensitiveness of St. Paul's nature shows itself in every syllable. It was with no Stoic hardness that he resisted their entreaties. They were positively crushing to him. He adhered to his purpose, but it was as with a broken heart."³ For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die. "Paul's heroic firmness under such circumstances in directing his way toward Jerusalem was not obstinacy, but an absolute surrender of himself to duty, that is, *due-ty*, that which in the highest sense is *due* from man to God. There is no heroism so great as self-surrender to God's will, without regard to consequences."⁴

14. We ceased, because (1) to go on persuading was a vain labor; (2) it only added to Paul's burden, instead of saving him from it; (3) they began to realize that Paul was guided by the Spirit, and understood the message better than they.

"He saw a hand they could not see

Which beckoned him away,

He heard a voice they could not hear

Which would not let him stay."

PAUL'S RECEPTION BY THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM, vers. 15-26.

15. We took up our carriages, that is, baggage, or luggage. "The English word now used always

of the vehicle that carries, was in common use at the time of the Authorized Version, for the things carried—the luggage or *impedimenta* of a traveller."⁵ "Carriages," in the sense of things carried, bears the same relation to the verb 'carry' that 'luggage' does to the verb 'lug,' and 'baggage' to the verb 'bag.'"⁶ To Jerusalem, about 64 miles (Ramsay). This was the objective place of the whole journey.

16. There went with us also certain disciples. They would naturally go up to the Pentecost feast, together with multitudes who streamed to Jerusalem the last day before the feast began. They would also wish to be present at the reception of Paul by the Jerusalem church, and perhaps act as a bodyguard to him amid the dangers they knew were to surround him.

And brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old, rather, early, disciple. The word means not *aged*, but of *long standing*. "This man belonged to Cyprus, but had now his home in Jerusalem. Just as Barnabas and his sister Mary, the mother of John Mark, who were also Cypriotes, seem to have done."⁷ At his house Paul and his company were to make their home during the festival. He seemed to have joined the company at Cæsarea, on some return journey to Jerusalem. But Vincent, Rendall, and others render it that they were bringing them to the house of Mnason, an old friend who was already in Jerusalem, to introduce them to his hospitality.⁷

REASONS FOR THIS PLAN. (1) The arrangement seems to have been made as the best course

¹ M. R. Vincent.

² Compare the song:—

"A singer sang a song of tears,
And the great world heard and wept

And the world was sadder than ever before.

"A singer sang a song of cheer,
And the great world listened and smiled;

And the souls that before had forgotten to pray
Looked up and went singing along the way."

³ Plumptre.

⁴ Erastus Blakeslee. Compare the beautiful legend concerning Peter, centring about the little church *Dombe, Quo Vadis*, near Rome. Bunyan tells us how much Christian was discouraged by the report of Timorous and Mistrust about lions in the way.

⁵ The word carriage in this sense is found in Spenser, and in Shakespeare's *Tempest*, 5: 1, 3: "Time goes up-right with his carriage" (burden).

⁶ Cambridge Bible.

⁷ See Ramsay's remarks on this journey, *St. Paul*, 302, 303.

17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, ^xthe brethren received us gladly.

18 And the ^{day} following Paul went in with us unto ^yJames; and all ^zthe elders were present.

19 And when he had saluted them, ^ahe ^{declared particularly what rehearsed one by one the} things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ^cministry.

20 And they, when they heard ^{it, they} glorified ^{the Lord, and} they said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many ^dthousands ^{of Jews there are which believe; there are among the Jews of them which have} believed; and they are all ^fzealous ^{of} for the law:

21 And they ^{are} have been informed ^{of} concerning thee, that thou teachest all ^gthe Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, ^{saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.} ^htelling them ⁱnot to circumcise ^jtheir children, neither ^kto walk after ^lthe customs.

^x ver. 7. Cp. ch. 15. 4. ^y See ch. 12. 17. ^z See ch. 11. 30. ^a See ch. 14. 27. ^b Cp. Rom. 15. 18, 19. ^c See ch. 1. 17. ^d ch. 11. 18. ^e Luke 12. 1 (& mg. for mg.). ^f 1 Cor. 4. 15 (for mg.). ^g ch. 22. 3. Rom. 10. 2. Gal. 1. 14. ^h Cp. James 1. 1. ⁱ ver. 28. ^j Cp. Rom. 2. 28, 29 & 1 Cor. 7. 19. ^k Cp. Mark 7. 5 & Gal. 2. 14. ^l ch. 6. 14 & 15. 1.

that could be taken to minimize the inevitable danger to which the apostle was exposing himself. In that house, at least, he might be sure of personal safety, and the men from Cæsarea would form a kind of escort as he went to and fro in the city.¹ (2) Considering the disposition of the Hebrew Christians against Paul, it was prudent in him to fix his abode with one who was a Hellenist.² (3) The crowd at these gatherings was so immense that the ordinary strangers might well fail to find accommodation, and be driven to some temporary booth outside the walls. But the brethren had taken care to secure for Paul and his delegates a shelter in the house of Mnason.³

17. The brethren received us gladly. This probably refers to private and personal greetings.

18. Paul went in with us unto James, the brother of our Lord, and practically the head of the Jerusalem church. This refers to a more formal meeting of the officers and leaders. All the elders were present; but as nothing is said of the other apostles, they were probably away in various regions prosecuting their missionary work. Very probably the meeting was so public that other disciples could be informally present. It is probable that at this time the contributions of the Gentile churches were presented (24: 17).

19. He declared particularly, *καθ' ἑνὲς έκαστον*, according to each one, one by one in detail.

What things God had wrought. The power was from God, the glory belonged to God, but he worked through Paul.

SUMMARY OF WHAT GOD HAD WROUGHT BY PAUL. In the eight years since Paul had reported his work to the church at Jerusalem at the great conference (Acts 18: 21, 22), he had (1)

made two long missionary tours; (2) revisited and strengthened the churches in Asia Minor; (3) he had carried the gospel into Europe; (4) had founded large churches in Philippi, Corinth, Thessalonica, and Ephesus; (5) and had been the means of great numbers of conversions and the great extension of the gospel. (6) Some of the converts had been willing to endure much for the gospel; (7) they had sent large contributions by Paul to the poor at Jerusalem; (8) special miracles had been wrought by the hand of Paul.

20. Thou seest, implying that Paul knew the fact from his own observation and experience.

How many thousands, *μυριάδες*, ten thousands, used for a large indefinite number. Of Jews, "referring to the number of believers not only in Jerusalem but in Judea, present in large numbers for the Feast."⁴

Are all zealous of the law. "The extreme party of the Pharisees prided themselves on the title 'zealots of the law, zealots of God'; it was a title which St. Paul himself had claimed (Lightfoot, Gal. 1: 14)."⁵

21. They are, have been, informed, *κατηχηθησαν*. The verb means literally, to sound down upon, hence, to instruct orally and carefully. "This verb denotes a regular system of instruction: here it implies apparently the industrious circulation of reports to Paul's prejudice by Jews of Greece and Asia."⁶

That thou teachest all the Jews . . . to forsake Moses, *ἀποστασιν*, apostasy, from Moses (compare 2 Thess. 2: 3). They could recall the story of the bitter times "when the officers of Antiochus Epiphanes tried to compel the people of Modin to forsake the law, and to sacrifice upon the idol altar."⁶

¹ Plumptre.² Gloag.³ Farrar.⁴ Knowling.⁵ Rendall.⁶ 1 Maccabees, 2: 15.

22 What is it therefore? ^{the multitude must needs come together: for} they will certainly hear that thou art come.

23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men [']which have a vow on them,

24 ^{Then These} take, and ^m purify thyself with them, and be at charges ^{with for} them, [']that they may shave ^{their} heads: and all ^{may shall} know that there is ^{those} no truth in the things whereof they ^{were} have been informed concerning thee; ^{are nothing;} but ^{that} that thou thyself also walkest orderly, ^{and keepest keeping} the law.

l Cp. ch. 18. 18. m ver. 26. ch. 24. 18. Cp. John 11. 55.

Saying that they ought not to circumcise their children. This was an entire perversion of Paul's teaching, as was the statement that he taught them not to walk after the customs, *ἔθρα, usages prescribed by law*, at least so far as these were Mosaic, and not "traditions of the elders." It is easy to see how opposition to some of the Pharisaic interpretations of the law of Moses, as in the case of Christ himself, could be regarded as opposition to the law. The surgeon who cuts out a cancer may be thought to be aiming at the life of his patient. The earthquake which shook off the plastering which covered the beautiful paintings in the great church of Verona may well have seemed to be destroying the church. So also when Paul taught that circumcision was not essential to salvation (Gal. 5: 6; 6: 15; 1 Cor. 7: 18, 19), his teaching could easily be perverted, and the strict Jews felt that he was undermining the Jewish commonwealth, and striking a blow at the Bible and religion.¹

22. What is it therefore? What then? What shall be done about it? The multitude must needs, *πᾶντας, certainly, by all means, will come together*. "It is important to note that verses 21, 22 refer to the unconverted alone. The Jewish Christians were indeed all zealous for the law, but the false reports about Paul were circulated amongst the unbelieving only. They it was of whom James said they would certainly hear of Paul's coming. The brethren had already welcomed him with joy, but the events at Corinth and Ephesus had embittered the Jews more than ever against him."² Knowing thinks this sentence refers to an assembly of the Judaizing Christians. Critics are almost equally divided as to whether it belongs to the narrative. But in any case it was true to fact.

23. Do therefore this. They propose a plan by which Paul could prove by ocular demonstration that the slanders were false.

We have four men, who were of course Chris-

tian Jews, members of the church in Jerusalem. Which have a vow, a temporary Nazirite vow, as we learn from the next verse, on them, resting upon them as an unfulfilled obligation.

24. Then take, associate yourself with them, and purify thyself with them. It is uncertain whether Paul took upon himself the Nazirite vow, or whether he only paid the expenses of the four, and joined with them in the seven days of the purification ceremonies. "Dr. Hort suggests that the apostle may have been himself about to offer sacrifices in the temple in connection with some previous vow, or that in connection with the Gentile offerings which he had brought to Jerusalem and safely delivered (as it would seem) he may have proposed to offer a solemn peace-offering in the temple."³

"It is obvious that St. Paul's conduct on his last visit to Jerusalem had furnished a precedent for the line of action now recommended. He had then come as a Nazarite himself, had in that character burnt the hair which he had cut off at Cenchreae (see note on chap. 18: 18), and had offered the accustomed sacrifices. Why should he not repeat the process now? There was, however, this difficulty: the minimum period of the Nazarite-vow was for thirty days, and as St. Paul had not taken the vow previous to the advice, and probably wished to leave Jerusalem soon after the feast was over (chap. 19: 21), it was out of his power to fulfil it now in its completeness. Jewish usage, however, made an intermediate course feasible. A man might attach himself to a Nazarite, or company of Nazarites, join in the final process of purification, which lasted, probably, for seven days (Num. 6: 9), shaving his head, and offering sacrifices with them. This was considered in itself a devout act, especially if the newcomer defrayed the cost of the sacrifices. Agrippa I., for instance, had in this way gained credit with the Jews, as showing his reverence for the law."⁴

² Rendall.

¹ In Poe's *Works*, "The Sphinx," a death's-head moth crawling on a window-pane seemed like a terrible monster rushing down the mountain side. Compare the Spectre of Brocken, which is only the shadow of the spectator.

³ Knowling. See Hort's *Judaistic Christianity*, pp. 109, 110.

⁴ Plumptre. See Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 2: 15, 1; *Antiquities*, 19: 6, 1.

25 ^{AS} But ^{as} touching the Gentiles which ^{believe,} have believed, ["] we ^{have written and concluded that they} observe no such thing, ^{judgment} save only ^{that they} should keep themselves from ^{things offered} to idols, and from blood, and from ^{what is} strangled, and from fornication.

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day ["] purifying himself with them ^{entered} went into the temple, ^{to signify} declaring the ^{accomplishment} fulfillment of the days of purification, until ^{that an} the ^{offering} ^{should be} was offered for every one of them.

27 And when ["] the seven days were almost ^{ended,} completed, ["] the Jews ^{which were of} from Asia, ["] when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the ^{people,} multitude, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help : This is the man, that ["] teacheth all ^{men} men

ⁿ See ch. 15. 19, 20, 29.

^m ver. 26.

ch. 24. 18.

Cp. John 11. 55.

^o Cp. Num. 6. 13.

^p Cp. Num. 6. 9-12.

^q See ch. 13. 50.

^r ch. 24. 18 & 26. 21.

^s ver. 21.

"For a week, then, St. Paul, if he accepted the advice of James and the presbyters, would have to live with four paupers in the chamber of the temple which was set apart for this purpose; and then to pay for sixteen sacrificial animals and the accompanying meat-offerings; and to stand among these Nazarites while the priest took four sodden shoulders of rams, and four unleavened cakes out of the four baskets, and four unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and put them on the hands of the Nazarites, and waved them for a wave-offering before the Lord; and then to look on while the men's heads were being shaved, and while they took their hair to burn it under the boiling caldron of the peace-offerings; and during the remaining ceremonies in the temple."¹

That thou thyself walkest orderly, *σπουδαίως*, from *σπουδῆς*, a row, an orderly series; hence, to go in order, to direct one's steps. And keepest. This is a participle in the Greek; and the meaning of the sentence is "that thou so directest thy course of life as to keep the law."

25. As touching the Gentiles . . . we have written, as described in chapter 15. They would have Paul understand that they and the church at Jerusalem stood by the result of the Council, and endorsed Paul's position in relation to the Gentile converts. It was on account of the unbelieving Jews, and their attitude to the church and possible influence over some of its members, that the elders wished Paul to carry out their plan.

26. Then Paul took the men, . . . to signify. "Elsewhere this verb denotes publication (Luke 9: 60; Rom. 9: 17), and this seems to be its meaning here. He attended in the temple by way of giving public notice of the consummation of the vows within seven days. The present participle indicates a purpose."²

Paul entered upon the proposed plan, no doubt

with reluctance, but in entire accordance with his own principle stated in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 9: 20), and in accordance with his own action in taking upon himself a vow to be fulfilled in Jerusalem (18: 18). "It was not at all unnatural that he should desire to convince the Christians at Jerusalem of the fact, especially when he had come thither with the express purpose of conciliating them and winning their favor for himself and for his Gentile converts. He would have been very foolish under these circumstances to allow such a false impression touching his attitude toward the law to go uncontradicted."³ "It was a wise and noble act of Christian conciliation," and its failure does not brand it as unwise or wrong.

PAUL MOBBED BY THE JEWS IN THE TEMPLE, vers. 27-40.

27. When the seven days, not the whole period of the purification, which lasted thirty days,⁴ but probably the period of the partnership of Paul with the four men.

The Jews which were of Asia. The western province of Asia Minor, of which Ephesus was the capital. Paul was well known to them, having preached three years there, and been a powerful opponent. They were full of enmity against him, as shown by the mob there, and all the more because Paul escaped and his cause continued to prosper.

When they saw him in the temple. "In the court of the women, where was the apartment appropriated to the Nazirites. The entrance to this court was by the Beautiful Gate."⁵ And laid hands on him. Not a legal arrest, for they had no authority, but the beginning of the mob violence.

28. The man that teacheth all men, an unintentional assertion of the wide influence of Paul.

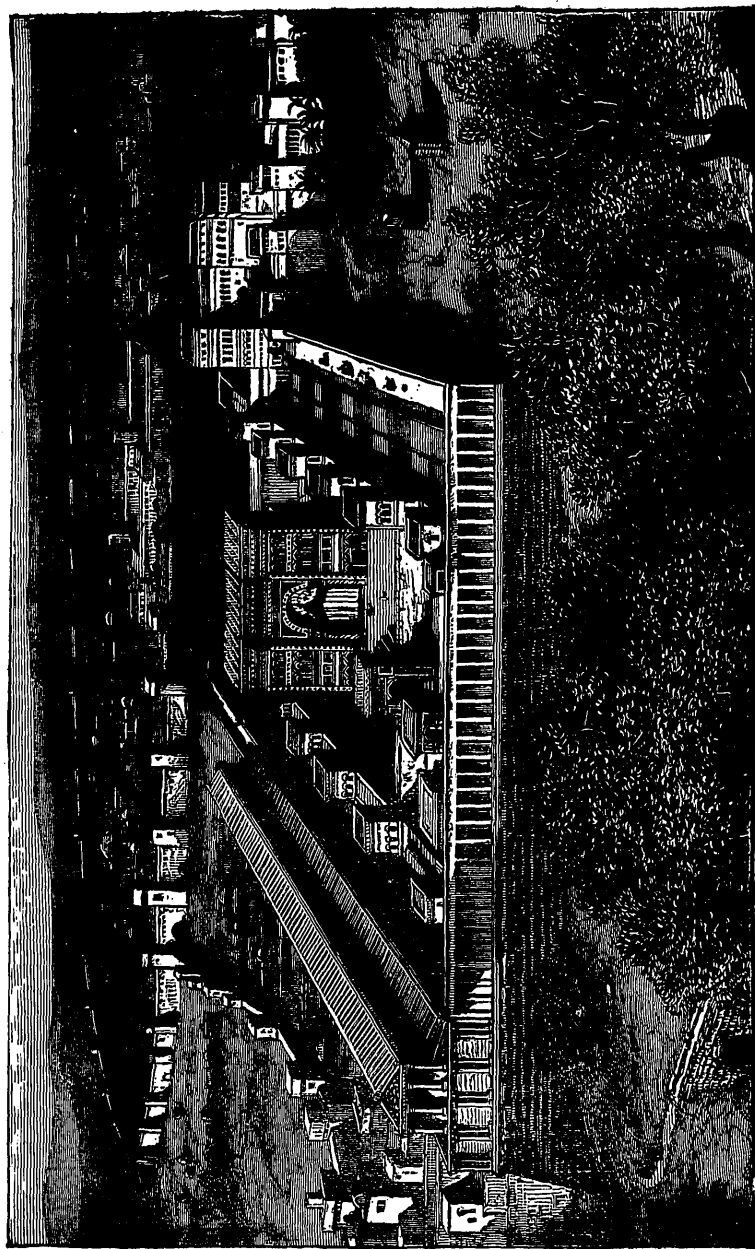
¹ Farrar, *Life of St. Paul*, ch. 40.

² Rendall.

³ McGiffert. See his whole discussion in his *Apostolic Age*, 340-345.

⁴ Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 2: 15.

⁵ Lewin.



THE TEMPLE OF HEROD, RESTORED BY FERGUSSON.

The temple faces the east. The large buildings at the northwest corner are the Castle of Antonia, with the barracks of the Roman guard. See, also, plan of the temple on page 38.

everywhere against the people, and 'the law, and 'this place: and ^{further moreover} he brought Greeks also into the temple, and "hath ^{polluted} ^{defiled} 'this holy place.

29 * (For they had ^{seen before} ^{before seen} with him in the city "Trôph'î-mûs ^{an} ^{the} Ê-phê'siân, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

† See ch. 6. 13. u ch. 24. 6. * This verse is not a parenthesis in the R. V. v ch. 20. 4.

Against the people, the Jews. And the law and this place. A false charge because it was a wrong inference from his real teaching. Compare the charge against Stephen (6: 13).

And further. He not only taught, but was actually putting his teaching into practice before their eyes.

Brought Greeks, Gentiles. They had only seen one, Trophimus, and inferred that there were others; another instance of the exaggeration of their charges.

Brought Greeks also into the temple. He had not done this, but they supposed he had (ver. 29). The temple refers to the inner courts. Any one could enter the outer Court of the Gentiles. Within this was a series of terraces, rising one above the other. "A balustrade of stone fenced off these more sacred enclosures. This was the middle wall of partition alluded to (Eph. 2: 14). This was four and a half feet high, with small obelisks at regular distances, bearing inscriptions in Greek and Latin that no Gentile might enter on pain of death,"¹ even though he were a Roman citizen.² The recent excavations of the Palestine Exploration Society³ have brought to light a slab with an inscription, discovered and deciphered by M. Clermont Ganneau, which must have formed part of the low wall just mentioned: "NO MAN OF ALIEN RACE IS TO ENTER WITHIN THE BALUSTRADE AND FENCE THAT GOES ROUND THE TEMPLE. IF ANY ONE IS TAKEN IN THE ACT, LET HIM KNOW THAT HE HAS HIMSELF TO BLAME FOR THE PENALTY OF DEATH THAT FOLLOWS." This, accordingly, was the punishment which the Jews of Asia were now seeking to bring on St. Paul and on his friends.⁴ And hath polluted this holy place. By bringing Greeks, i. e., uncircumcised Gentiles, into the Holy Place, i. e., beyond the middle wall of partition.

29. For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian. Trophimus was

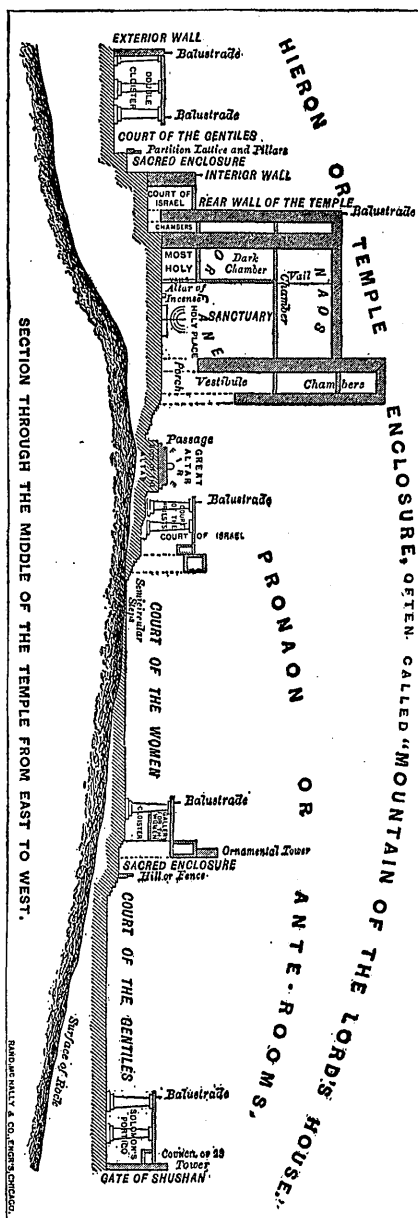
¹ Lewin.

² Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, 6: 2, 4.

³ Report for 1871, p. 132. See, also, Edersheim's *Temple and its Services*; Schürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. ii. p. 74; Div. 2, vol. i. p. 266.

⁴ Plumptre.

From Dr. Hurbit's *Manual of Bible Geography*, by permission of Rand, McNally & Co.



From this section of the temple can be seen the arrangement of the courts, and the place where Paul was mobbed.

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they ^{took} laid hold on Paul, and ^w drew ^{dragged} him out of the temple: and ^{forthwith} the doors were shut.

31 And ^w as they ^{went about} were seeking to kill him, tidings came ^{unto} up to the chief captain of ^{an uproar.} the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

υ ch. 26. 21. Cp. 2 Kin. 11. 15.

z See ch. 10. 1.

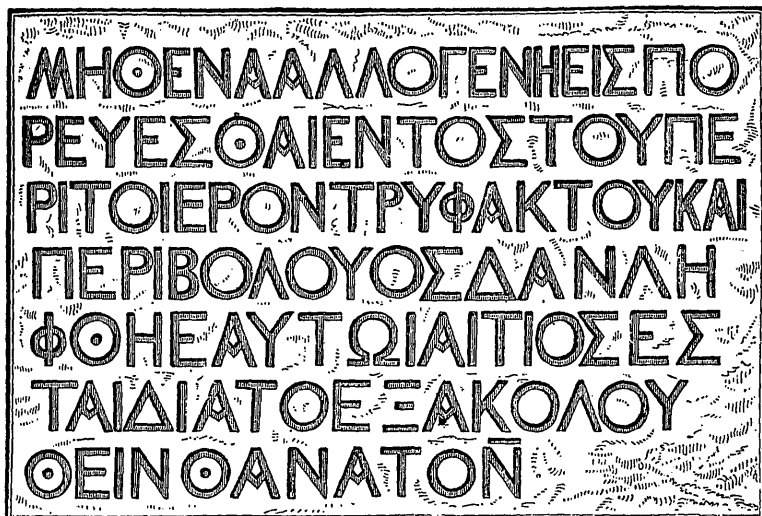
one of the little band which accompanied Paul from Philippi in Macedonia to Jerusalem. Being an Ephesian, he would be well known by sight to many of the Jews from Asia. Whom they supposed. Contrary to fact.

30. And all the city was moved, in commo-

tion. There was a tumultuous concourse of people.

They took Paul, *ἐπιλαβόμενοι*, laid violent hands upon him. And drew, dragged, him out of the temple, i. e., the inner Court of the Women.

Forthwith the doors were shut. This was



FACSIMILE OF GREEK INSCRIPTION ON ONE OF THE OBELISKS, which stood round the Temple in the time of our Lord and his Apostles.

obviously the act of the Levite gate-keepers. The doors were those of the Gate Beautiful, between the Court of the Women and the Court of the Gentiles. They were of Corinthian brass, 60 feet high, and it took 20 men to shut them.¹ The obvious reason why the doors were shut was, (1) to guard against the spaces of the temple being stained by the shedding of blood,² and (2) as it was already supposed that the inner court had been polluted by the entrance of a Gentile, to prevent its further pollution.³ (3) The holy places must be guarded against the rush of the excited mob.

31. And as they went about to kill him. They were already beating him (ver. 32), and

would have soon put an end to his life. Tidings came unto the chief captain, *χιλιάρχη*, chiliarch, or commander of a thousand men. His name was Claudius Lysias (23 : 26). Of the band, *σπείρης*, a Roman cohort, the tenth part of a legion, or about 600 men. It is equivalent to our regiment. This cohort formed the garrison of Castle Antonia, at the northwest corner of the temple area, so built as to overlook the temple and its courts. "Herod the Great rebuilt the castle with considerable splendor, and named it 'Antonia' after the Triumvir Mark Antony. This fortress communicated with the temple cloisters by means of two flights of steps. It stood on lower ground than the platform of the house, but

¹ Lewin.

² De Wette, Meyer.

³ Lechler.

32 ^{Who immediately} ^{And forthwith he} took soldiers and centurions, and ran down ^{unto} ^{upon} them: and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, ^{they} left off beating of Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and ^{took} ^{laid hold on} him, and commanded ^{him} ^{to be bound} ^a with two chains; and ^{demanded} ^{inquired} who he was, and what he had done.

34 And ^b some ^{cried} ^{shouted} one thing, some another, among the ^{multitude:} ^{crowd:} and when he could not know the certainty for the ^{tumult:} ^{uproar:} he commanded him to be ^{carried} ^{brought} into ^c the castle.

y Cp. ch. 23. 27. z ch. 20. 23. Cp. ver. 11. a ch. 12. 6. Cp. ch. 22. 29 & 26. 29 & 28. 20 & Eph. 6. 20 & 2 Tim. 1. 16. b ch. 19. 32. c ch. 22. 24 & 23. 10.

it was raised to such a height that at least one of its four turrets commanded a view of what was going on in the courts within. The ordinary



LIGHT-ARMED ROMAN SOLDIER. Lindenschmidt.
From *Julius Caesar*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

Roman garrison was probably increased at the times of the great Jewish festivals, such as Pentecost, as in these troubled and exciting periods, when the people were full of religious fanaticism, an outbreak among the pilgrims gathered together was not unusual."¹ The chiliarch, or colonel, was responsible for the peace of Jerusalem.

32. Took soldiers and centurions to command them.

33. Bound with two chains. One from each of his arms to a soldier on each side of him (compare chap. 12: 6). This secured the prisoner, yet left him free to walk away with his guards when the detachment was marched off. The prophecy of Agabus was here fulfilled (chap. 21: 11). The chains were at hand because, as Josephus states, every Roman soldier carried with him a chain



ROMAN SOLDIER, ARCHER. Lindenschmidt.
From *Julius Caesar*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

and also a thong. And demanded. Old English for "asked." Inquired of the bystanders.

34. Some cried one thing, some another. As in the riot at Ephesus (19: 32), most did not

¹ Schaff.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the ^{people.} crowd;

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying' out, "Away with him.

37 And as Paul was about to be ^{led} brought into the castle, he ^{said} saith unto the chief captain, May I ^{say} speak something unto thee? ^{Who} And he ^{said} said, ^{Canst} thou ^{speak} know Greek?

38 Art ^{not} thou that ^{say} thou not then the ^{E-ğyp'tiān}, which before these days ^{made}st an uproar, and ^{led} out ^{into} the wilderness ^{the} four thousand men ^{that} were murderers ^{of} the Assassins?

39 But Paul said, "I am a ^{man} which am a Jew, of Tār'sūs' ^a city in Cī-l'qā, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, ^{suffer} me ^{give} me leave to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him ^{licence,} leave, Paul, ^{stood} standing on the stairs, and ^{beckoned} beckoned with the hand unto the people; ^{And} and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto ^{them} them in 'the Hebrew ^{tongue,} language, saying,

d ch. 22. 22. Cp. Luke 23. 18 & John 19. 15.
ch. 12. 17. i ch. 22. 2 & 26. 14.

e Cp. ch. 5. 36.

f Matt. 24. 26.

g ch. 9. 11 & 22. 3.

h See

know just what Paul had done. Carried into the castle of Antonia.

35. And when he came upon the stairs. One of the two flights of stairs which led from the Court of the Gentiles to the top of the cloisters adjoining the castle of Antonia, one connected with the northern, and the other with the western cloister. He was borne of the soldiers. "No sooner had he got on the stairs which led up to the top of the cloister, and so into the fortress, than the mob, afraid that they were going to be baulked of their vengeance, made another rush at him, with yells of 'Kill him! kill him!' and Paul, unable in his fettered condition to steady himself, was carried off his legs, and hurried along in the arms of the surrounding soldiers." ¹

36. Away with him. The same cry which echoed before this same tower of Antonia against Paul's Lord (John 19 : 15).

37. Paul . . . said (in Greek, which the chief captain would understand, but not Hebrew), May I speak unto thee? Canst thou speak Greek? In surprise that he was not the ignorant brigand he supposed.

38. Art not thou that Egyptian. The "Egyptian," whom the chief captain took St. Paul to be, is mentioned by Josephus. A short time before this, he had gathered a large body of discontented Jews on Mt. Olivet, whom he had deluded into the belief that he was the Messiah, declaring that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down at his word. Felix marched out against the insurgents and dispersed them, but the Egyptian escaped. Among his followers were 4000 of the *Sicarii*, a numerous band of brigands. Josephus says, "There sprang up in Jerusalem another descrip-

tion of robbers called *Sikars*, who, under the broad light of day, and in the very heart of the city, assassinated men; chiefly at the festivals, however, when, mixing among the crowd, with daggers concealed under their cloaks, they stabbed those with whom they were at variance. When they fell, the murderers joined in the general expressions of indignation, and by this plausible proceeding remained undetected." ² The words of Lysias, "men that are murderers," are, literally, *men of the Sicarii*, alluding to a well-known and recent event. The name "*Sicarii*" (assassins) was derived from *sica*, a dagger. Into the wilderness. Between Egypt and Palestine. Four thousand men. Josephus says that this Egyptian prophet had led out 30,000 men. This was the whole number of his followers, and included the 4000 that were murderers, *σικαριῶν*, the well-known *Sicarii*, or assassins, not simply murderers. There seems to be some contradiction between the two accounts of Josephus, but Hackett shows how they may easily be reconciled.

39. I am a . . . Jew of Tarsus. "Paul refers to his city Tarsus with just pride; for it was not only the capital of Cilicia and a free city, but its schools of literature and philosophy ranked next to those of Athens and Alexandria amidst Greek universities." ³

No mean city, not *ἀσημα*, from *σημα*, a mark or token; hence, without a mark such as coined gold or silver has to distinguish its class and worth. Tarsus was not an *undistinguished*, *unnoted* city. It was like coined gold of which every one could see the value.

40. Paul stood on the stairs, overlooking the

¹ Farrar.

² See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20 : 8, 6; *Jewish Wars*, 2 : 13, 5.

³ Rendall.

great court of the Gentiles, and protected by the Roman guard. And beckoned with the hand. The object of Paul in beckoning with his hand was to obtain silence. "See that man who has to address a crowd, and who wishes for silence. He does not begin to bawl out, Silence! that would be an affront to them; he lifts up his hand to its extreme height, and begins to beckon with it, *i. e.*, to move it backward and forward; and then the people say to each other, *i. e.*, be silent,

be silent."¹ Spake in the Hebrew tongue. "The gesture by which Paul appealed for a hearing had a considerable effect in stilling the outcry; but his use of the Hebrew language had more, for though Greek was commonly spoken and understood in Jerusalem, the national party clung to Hebrew as the language of a genuine Israelite. By Hebrew is meant the later dialect, often called Aramaic, which had superseded the Biblical Hebrew as the current language of Palestine."²

¹ Roberts, in his *Oriental Illustrations*.

² Rendall. See, also, Schürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. i. pp. 47, 48.

CHAPTER 22.

PAUL'S ADDRESS FROM THE CASTLE STAIRS, AND ITS RECEPTION.

PAUL'S SPEECH TO THE
MULTITUDE IN THE
TEMPLE COURTS, vers. 1-21.

The conciliatory address.
His strict training as a Jew.
His zeal for the Jewish religion.
The story of his conversion.
His visit to Jerusalem.
His vision in the temple.
His commission to the Gentiles.

TIME. A. D. 57 or 58
at Pentecost.

THE SEQUEL, vers. 22-30.

The mob interrupt his speech.
Paul taken into the castle.
Ordered to be scourged.
Paul pleads his Roman citizenship.
Awaits a regular trial.

- 1 MEN,^J brethren,^{BRETHREN} and fathers, hear ye ^{my}the defence ^{which I make now}unto you.
2 * (And when they heard that he spake ^{in the Hebrew tongue to them,} ^{unto them in the Hebrew language,} they ^{kept}were the more ^{silence:}quiet: and he saith,)

j ch. 7. 2. * This verse is not a parenthesis in the R. V. *k* ch. 21. 40.

PAUL'S SPEECH FROM THE CASTLE STAIRS, vers. 1-21.

1. Men, brethren, and fathers. Paul opens his address to the crowd in the temple court with the same kindly and conciliatory words as those used by Stephen twenty years before in speaking in his own defence to the Sanhedrim, when Paul himself was present. Men, *ἄνδρες*, expresses the rights and dignity of men. Brethren, fellow Jews. Fathers, indicates that some of the more prominent men of Jerusalem were present.

Hear ye my defence. "Though the subject-matter of this speech has been related before, it assumes here a fresh interest from the manner in which it is adapted to the occasion and to the audience. The apostle is suspected of disaffection

to the law. In order to refute this charge, he addresses them in Hebrew; he dwells on his Jewish education, and on his early zeal for the law; he shows how at his conversion he was guided by Ananias, a man devout according to the law, and of good report among the Jews at Damascus, and how he subsequently worshipped in the temple at Jerusalem. So far they listen to him; but he no sooner touches on the promulgation of the gospel among the heathen (ver. 21) than he is interrupted, and his fate would probably have been the same as Stephen's, had he not been under the protection of the Roman captain."¹

2. In the Hebrew tongue. The Aramaic, the common language then used by the Jews. This was a proof of his Jewish inclinations, since he

¹ Humphrey.

3 I ^{verily} am a Jew, born in Tarsus, ^{a city in} Cilicia, ^{yet} brought up in this city, ^{at the feet of} "Ga-mā'li-ēl, ^{and taught} ^{instructed} ^{according to the} ^{perfect} manner of ^{the} law of ^{our} fathers, ^{and was} ^{being} zealous ^{toward} for God, ^{even} as ye all are this day:

4 And ^I persecuted ^{this way} "unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also ^{the} high priest doth bear me witness, and all ^{the} estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto ^{the} brethren, and ^{went} journeyed to Dă-mās'cūs, to bring them ^{also} which were there ^{bound} unto Jě-rú'să-lēm' in bonds, for to be punished.

6 And ^{it} came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and ^{was come} ^{drew} nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am ^a Jesus of Năz'ă-rēth, whom thou persecutest.

9 And ^a they that were with me ^{saw} ^{believed} indeed the light, ^{and were afraid}; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

l ch. 9. 11 & 21. 39. Rom. 11. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 22. Phil. 3. 5. m Deut. 33. 3. 2 Kin. 4. 38. Cp. Luke 10. 39. n ch. 5. 34. o ch. 26. 5. p 2 Macc. 6. 1. q Cp. John 16. 2 & Phil. 3. 6. See ch. 21. 20. r Rom. 10. 2. s ver. 19. See ch. 8. 3. t Cp. ch. 5. 20. See ch. 9. 2. u ch. 26. 10. Cp. ver. 20 & ch. 8. 1. v ch. 9. 1. w Luke 22. 66 (Gk.). 1 Tim. 4. 14 (Gk.). x ch. 28. 21. y For vers. 6-11, see ch. 9. 3-8 & 26. 12-18. z ch. 26. 9. a Cp. Dan. 10. 7. See ch. 9. 7.

spoke in a language that the chief captain could not, probably, understand, instead of in Greek, the language of the Gentiles.

3. I am . . . a Jew, and though born in Tarsus, was yet brought up in this city, from early boyhood, not later than when thirteen years old, possibly when eleven.

At the feet of Gamaliel, that is, as a student under him. "The most usual position of teacher and pupils at the time of St. Paul was that both should sit, the former on a higher level than the latter."¹ "According to later Talmudic tradition the sitting on the ground was not customary until after the death of Gamaliel I. But even if the later tradition was true, the scholar standing would still be at the feet of his teacher on his raised seat."²

Gamaliel, the famous teacher of the law, honored by all the people. See on 5: 34. According to the perfect manner, κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν, to the minutest point, of the law. A fuller account of his Jewish birth and training is given in Philip-pians 3: 5, 6. He was one of the strictest Pharisees, who prided themselves on the observance of the law, as did those present before him. "He

was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and his language shows how learned he was in all that concerned his own people. He makes frequent allusions to Jewish customs, laws, and festivals, and reckons his time by the Jewish calendar."¹ Of the fathers. This phrase "would appeal to the hearts of the people who loved the Torah as the chief good, but St. Chrysostom's words are also to be remembered: 'All this seems indeed to be spoken on their side, but in fact it told against them, since he, knowing the law, forsook it.'"²

4. Persecuted this way, with a capital W. The Way referred to the Christian religion, as the Way to God and heaven and holiness (John 14: 6). Unto the death. He went so far as to bring some of the disciples to death (ver. 20; 9: 1; 26: 10), and intended to bring more.

5. As also the high priest, at the time when the commission was given. He, though deposed from office, may still have been living. And the high priest at the time Paul was speaking, Ananias (23: 2), may have been a member of the Sanhedrim at the time the commission was given. Moreover the letters Paul carried to Damascus were official documents, to the record of which

¹ Cambridge Bible.

² Lightfoot, *Horæ Hebraicæ*, on Luke 2: 46. Compare, also, Schrûrer, *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. i. p. 326,

and Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*, pp. 14, 15, 2d ed.

³ Knowling. Chrysostom's *Homilies*, 47.

10 And I said, ^bWhat shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And ^cone An-ā-ni'ās, a devout man ^daccording to the law, ^ehaving a good report ^fwell reported of by all the Jews ^gwhich ^hdwelt ⁱthere;

13 Came ^junto me, and ^kstood, and ^lstanding by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And ^min that very ⁿhour I looked up ^oupon him.

14 And he said, ^pThe God of our fathers ^qhath ^rchosen ^sappointed thee ^tthat thou shouldst know his will, and ^uto see ^vthat Just ^wOne, and ^xshouldst ^yhear ^zthe voice ^aof his mouth.

15 For ^bthou shalt be ^chis ^dwitness ^efor him unto all men of what ^fthou hast seen and heard.

16 And now why tarriest thou? ^gArise, and be baptized, and ^hwash away thy sins, ⁱcalling on ^jthe ^kname ^lof the Lord.

17 And it came to pass, that, ^mwhen I ⁿwas come again ^ohad returned to Jerusalem, ^peven ^qwhile 'I prayed in the temple, I ^rwas in ^sfell into "a trance";

^b See ch. 16. 30. ^c ch. 9. 10. ^d ch. 24. 14. ^e ch. 10. 22. ^f ch. 9. 17. ^g ch. 9. 18. ^h See ch. 3. 13. ⁱ ch. 9. 15 & 26. 16. ^j Cp. Rom. 2. 18 & 12. 2 & Eph. 1. 9 & Col. 1. 9, *al.* ^k ver. 18. ^l ch. 9. 17 & 26. 16. ^m 1 Cor. 9. 1 & 15. 8. ⁿ Cp. ver. 15. ^o See ch. 3. 14. ^p Cp. Gal. 1. 12. ^q n ch. 23. 11. ^r o ver. 14. ^s ch. 4. 20. ^t p ch. 9. 18. ^u 1 Cor. 6. 11. ^v Heb. 10. 22. ^w Cp. Ps. 51. 2. ^x See ch. 2. 38. ^y See ch. 9. 14. ^z s ch. 9. 26 & 26. 20. ^a Cp. Gal. 1. 18, 19 (?). ^b ch. 3. 1. ^c Luke 18. 10. ^d u ch. 10. 10 & 11. 5. ^e Cp. 2 Cor. 12. 1-4.

the present high priest would have access. Hence the present tense, **doth bear me witness.**

To bring them which were there. "The Greek text here indicates that the Christians whom it was proposed to bring bound to Jerusalem were refugees, not citizens of Damascus. This explains one of the harshest features of the mission. The synagogues were probably urged to deal with citizens, but refugees only were to be handed over. The language of 26: 11, 'I persecuted them unto strange cities,' corresponds with this view."¹

Vers. 6-16. See on 9: 3-18.

13. Receive thy sight "gives an imperfect impression of the language used. Ananias really summoned Saul to an act of faith, *look up*, which contained an implicit promise that he should recover his sight, but demanded a preliminary effort of faith on his own part."¹

14. The God of our fathers. Another conciliatory expression.

That thou shouldst know his will, through being "filled with the Holy Ghost" (9: 17), who revealed it to him; through visions; through providential guidance, and through the revelation of Jesus himself. Paul did more than any of the apostles to guide Christian thought and unfold

Christian truths; he wrote more epistles than all the others together. Eph. 1: 1-11 is a comment on this clause.

To see that Just One. That is, Jesus, who had, as we here learn, appeared to Paul in the bright light three days before. Paul lays great stress on his having seen Christ (Acts 9: 17, 27; 1 Cor. 9: 1; 15: 8). That sight of Jesus was a perpetual blessing and power to him.²

15. Thou shalt be his witness, a mission identical with that assigned to the twelve (1: 8).

Thou hast seen and heard. Paul, like the others, based his teaching on facts of knowledge and experience. "For by revelation the Apostle was made aware of the whole scope of Christian truth, and of those doctrines which Christ in his life on earth had communicated to the Twelve."³

16. Be baptized, publicly confess your faith in Jesus. "Baptism represents the new or spiritual birth, by which the subject of it enters on a life of trust in Christ and peace with God."⁴

And wash away thy sins. Do that through which your sins are washed away. The forgiveness of sins, the cleansing from sin, come from God on condition of the faith and repentance of which baptism is the symbol.

Calling on the name of the Lord, praying to

¹ Rendall.

² See the hymn, "We would see Jesus."

³ Cambridge Bible.

⁴ Hackett.

18 And saw him saying unto me, "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: ^{for} ^{because} they will not receive ^{thy} ^{of thee} testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they ^{themselves} know that ^w I imprisoned and ^x beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20 And when the blood of ^{thy martyr Stephen} ^{thy witness} was shed, ^z I also was standing by, and "consenting, ^{unto his death,} and ^{kept} ^{the} ^{raiment} ^{garments} of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee ^{forth} ^b far hence unto the Gentiles.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word; and ^{then} ^{they} lifted up their ^{voices,} ^{voice,} and said, "Away with such a ^{fellow} ^{fellow} from the earth: for ^d it is not fit that he should live.

^v Cp. ch. 9. 29. ^w ver. 4. ^x ch. 26. 11. See Matt. 10. 17. ^y Cp. Rev. 2. 13. ^z ch. 7. 58. ^a ch. 8. 1. Cp. ch. 26. 10. See Rom. 1. 32. ^b See ch. 2. 39 & 9. 15. ^c See ch. 21. 36. ^d ch. 25. 24.

him, going to him for all you need, trusting him, giving yourself up to him as his servant.

17. When I was come again to Jerusalem, after three years' absence (Gal. 1: 18).

While I prayed in the temple. Showing that he still honored the temple as the house of God. "It has been also suggested, as a reason for his earnest prayer to God in the temple, that he hoped by a lengthened work in Jerusalem in some way to make amends for his former cruel injuries done in that city."¹ I was in a trance, *ἐκστασεῖ*, of which the English "ecstasy" is a transcript, from *εκ*, out of, and *ἵστημι*, to place, or put; hence, *the being put out of one's normal condition; the being transported, as it were, out of one's self*, into the region of divine things. See on 10: 10.

18. And saw him, Jesus. Get thee quickly out of Jerusalem. "Paul relates this vision to show that his own inclination and prayer had been that *he might preach the gospel to his own people*, but that it was by the imperative command of the Lord himself that he went to the Gentiles."² They will not receive thy testimony. The Jews were at this very hour fulfilling that prophecy.

19. And I said, Lord, they know. The Greek is emphatic, "They themselves know." "Paul seems, as it were, to plead with his Lord that men cannot but receive testimony from one who had previously been an enemy of Jesus of Nazareth; the words, too, are directed to his hearers, so that they may impress them with the strength of the testimony thus given by one who had imprisoned the Christians."³

I imprisoned . . . them that believed on thee. Paul speaks of his well-known persecutions of Christians either (1) as an argument why he should remain, so that he might undo the evil he had done, or (2) as expressing his recognition that the command to depart was wise and necessary.

20. Of thy martyr Stephen, *μαρτυρος*, of which our word "martyr" is a transcript; allied to the Latin *memor*. It means a witness, "one who avers what he has seen, or heard, or knows." Hence, one who bears witness to the truth by dying for it. Compare Rev. 2: 13; 17: 6. The word was in its transition state, from "witness" to "martyr," because so many of the earliest witnesses were sealing their testimony by their blood.

"At Lyons, A. D. 177, those who had been scourged and branded, and once and again exposed to wild beasts, rebuked those who called them martyrs, appropriating that designation to Christ, Rev. 1: 5; 3: 14, and to those to whose testimony he had set his seal in their passage out of this life; but speaking of themselves as mean and lowly confessors."⁴

21. I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. Showing that his missionary work among the Gentiles, which was familiar to all, was in accordance with a divine commission.

THE MOB CLAMOR FOR PAUL'S DEATH, vers. 22-24.

22. Gave him audience unto this word, not the word "Gentiles," but his statement that God had commanded him to go on his mission to the Gentiles. "Could it be true that the long-expected Messiah, in their own proud house in Jerusalem, spoke to this man, and commanded him to devote himself solely to the uncircumcised Gentiles? Was not such an assertion of itself rank blasphemy?"¹ It was for such teaching that Jesus was mobbed at Nazareth (Luke 4: 28, 29). "They could not bear the thought of uncircumcised heathen being made equal to the sons of Abraham." "This word fell like a spark on the inflammable mass of their fanaticism."² Their

¹ Schaff.

² Alford.

³ Knowling.

⁴ *Speaker's Commentary*. See Eusebius' *Church History*, 5: 2. Routh's *Reliquiæ Sacre*, 1: 320.

⁵ Farrar.

23 And as they cried out, and ^{cast} threw off ^{their} their clothes, and ^{threw} cast dust into the air,
 24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into ^{the} the castle, ^{and bade} bidding that he should be ^s examined by scourging; that he might know ^{wherefore} for what cause they ^{cried so} shouted against him.

25 And ^{as} when they ^{bound} had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge ^a a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

e ch. 21. 34 & 23. 10. f ver. 29. g ch. 16. 37.

indignation and rage, hitherto restrained, burst forth like the fires of a pent-up volcano.

23. And cast off their clothes. This "means not throwing off their garments as a preparation for



CASTLE ANTONIA.

stoning Paul, — for he was now in the custody of the Roman captain, — but *throwing them up*, tossing them about as a manifestation and an effect of their uncontrollable rage."¹

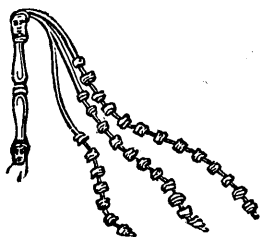
Threw dust into the air. An expression of violent, uncontrollable passion, as if they must throw something at him. "Then began one of the most odious and despicable spectacles which the world can witness, the spectacle of an Oriental mob, hideous with impotent rage, howling, yelling, cursing, gnashing their teeth, flinging about their arms, waving and tossing their blue and red robes, casting dust into the air by handfuls, with all the furious gesticulations of an uncontrolled fanaticism."² "This mode of demonstrating their feelings was suited, also, to inflame the populace still more, and to impress the tribune with the necessity of conceding something to their demands."¹

Sir John Chardin, writing concerning the peasants of Persia,³ tells us "that they carry their complaints against their governors by companies,

consisting of several hundreds, and sometimes of a thousand; they repair to that gate of the palace near to which their prince is most likely to be, where they begin to make the most horrid cries, tearing their garments and throwing dust into the air, at the same time demanding justice. The king, upon hearing these cries, sends to know the occasion of them."

24. The chief captain. "Lysias, who as a Greek had not understood one word of Paul's address in Hebrew, could only conclude from the fury of the people that Paul, if not the Egyptian, must at least be some notable malefactor."⁴ "Where there was so much smoke there must be some fire."

Should be examined by scourging, *μαστιγιῶν, with scourges*. Such was the practice of the day for extracting the truth. The victim was put to torture, to compel him to confess his crime. "The mildest form of this mode of examination was by scourging. A wooden post was erected in a slanting position, and the feet and hands were made fast to it with thongs, and blows applied with the



FLAGELLUM OR SCOURGE.

From Harper's Classical Dictionary, by per.

The Jewish scourge consisted of three thongs, one of ox hide, and two of ass's hide. In the Roman scourge the thongs were loaded with pieces of lead or brass, or sharp-pointed bones.

scourge or whip, formed of three lashes or thongs made of leather or small cords, to which sometimes iron points or sharp-cornered pieces of metal were fastened. Lysias, not caring to see the torture applied, retired apart."⁴

¹ Hackett.

² Farrar,

³ *Travels into Persia and the East Indies*,

⁴ Lewin,

26 When And when the centurion heard ^{that} ^{it}, he went ^{and told the chief captain} ^{to the chief captain, and told him,} saying, Take heed what thou doest: What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman.

27 Then And the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He And he said, Yea.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this ^{freedom-} ^{citizenship.} And Paul said, But I ^{was free} ^{am a Roman} born.

29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also ^{They then which were about to examine him straightway departed from} ^{him:} and the chief captain also ^{was afraid,} ^{after} ^{when} he knew that he was a Roman, and because ^{he} had bound him.

h ver. 24.

i ch. 16. 38.

j Cp. ch. 23. 27.

k ch. 21. 33.

PAUL SAVED FROM SCOURGING BY HIS ROMAN CITIZENSHIP, vers. 25-30.

25. They bound him, *προέτειναν*, they stretched him forward, alluding to the position of the victim for the scourging. "The preparation for scourging is here graphically presented: the victim was laid upon a post, his hands stretched out above his head, and wrists and ankles securely fastened."¹

With thongs. Either the thongs with which he was bound, or for the thongs, the scourges with which he was beaten.

Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman? The tribune, in ordering Paul to be immediately scourged, acted contrary to the Roman law, which enjoined that no examination should commence with scourging. "Augustus decreed that it must not be begun by torture."²

"How often," says Cicero, "has this exclamation, *I am a Roman citizen*, brought aid and safety even among barbarians in the remotest parts of the earth!"

26. When the centurion heard. "The magic of the Roman law produced its effect in a moment," and the centurion went immediately to the chief captain for instructions.

28. The chief captain answered, as if he could hardly believe that a Jew like Paul, assaulted by his own countrymen, possessed this prized gift. With a great sum obtained I this freedom, this citizenship. Originally very expensive, in later times the Roman citizenship could be purchased for a trifle. "Dio Cassius, lx. 17, tells us how Messalina the wife of Claudius and the freedmen sold the Roman citizenship, and how at one

time it might be purchased for one or two cracked drinking-cups."³ "Mr. Page compares the making of baronets by James I. as a means of filling the exchequer."

And Paul said, But I was free born, born a Roman citizen; not merely as a citizen of Tarsus, which was not a colony, but only a free city, birth in which did not confer Roman citizenship. His father or a near ancestor had probably received the honor for some service to the state; though possibly by purchase, for Ramsay argues shrewdly that Paul's family must have possessed some wealth.⁴

29. The chief captain also was afraid. "It was a grave crime, as Claudius Lysias well knew, to scourge a Roman citizen; so at once he stayed the proceedings pending further inquiries, which he conducted in person. The claim of Roman citizenship was instantly allowed. There was no fear of imposture in such a case: the assertion, if false, was punishable with death. 'Claudius prohibited strangers from assuming Roman names, especially those which belonged to families. Those who falsely pretended to the freedom of Rome he beheaded on the Esquiline.'⁵ There is no doubt Paul had papers and abundant references in the city by which he was ready to have made good his claim to the citizenship."⁶

And because he had bound him. "The chief captain had laid himself open to a serious charge by so far siding with a Jewish mob as to bind a Roman citizen without valid charge. This explains his extreme care for the prisoner's safety, and his subsequent pretence that he had interfered for his rescue as a citizen."¹

¹ Rendall.

² The *Digesta*, Book XLVIII. title 18, caput 1; one part of the great collection of authorities on Roman Civil Law, *Corpus Juris Civilis*, made between 527 and 565 A. D.

³ Knowing. See Cicero, *Ad Familiares*, 12: 36.

⁴ On Roman citizenship, see Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "Citizenship;" ⁵ Schürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. ii. pp. 277, 278.

When Shylock invokes the law of Venice to wreak a

cruel vengeance on his foe, in vain Bassanio implores the fair young judge to wrest the law:—

"To do a great right do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will."

Portia replies:—

"It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter that decree established."

⁵ Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25.

⁶ Schaff.

30 ^{On} ^{but on} the morrow, ^{because he would have known} ^{desiring to know} the certainty, wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him, ^{from his bands,} and commanded the chief priests and all ^{their} ^{the} council to ^{appear,} ^{come together,} and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

l ver. 24. ch. 23. 28.

30. Because he would have known the certainty. He must do something with the prisoner, and he must know what he had done, before he could decide what course to take with him. As it was purely a religious question, the Sanhedrim must be consulted, as the highest authority. He loosed him from his bands. The last clause of verse 29 seems to imply that the chief captain had already released him. But the bonds there spoken of referred to those with which he was bound to the post for scourging. This release was from the confinement in prison over night, with only such bonds as were needful to retain him in safety. "From his bands" is omitted in several important manuscripts.

Commanded the chief priests and all their council, the whole Sanhedrim, to appear, to assemble in their usual place of meeting. "The

Sanhedrim formerly assembled in a room called the Hall of Gazzith, situated within the sacred spaces of the temple; but, according to the Talmud, they removed from it forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and assembled in a chamber situated in the upper city, near the foot of the bridge leading across the ravine from the western court of the temple (Lewin, Biscoe). This removal was doubtless caused by the Romans, as they would thus have the Sanhedrim more completely under control. Had the Sanhedrim continued to meet within the temple, its assemblies could not have been directly interfered with, as no Roman could pass the sacred limits on pain of death. This accounts for Lysias being able to lead his soldiers into the place of meeting."¹ Brought Paul down, from the Castle Antonia to the Sanhedrim hall.

¹ Glogau.

CHAPTER 23.

PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM. THE PLOT. PAUL SENT TO CÆSAREA.

(THE BEGINNING OF THE STRANGE SERIES OF PROVIDENCES BY WHICH PAUL WAS BROUGHT TO ROME.)

PAUL BROUGHT BEFORE THE
SANHEDRIM, vers. 1-10.

{ Paul's opening remarks.
Interruption by the high priest.
Paul expresses his indignation.
Begs pardon for unintentional disrespect.
Makes use of a division of opinion.
Returned to Castle Antonia.

A VISION OF CHEER FROM THE LORD,
ver. 11.

Jerusalem.

THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST PAUL, vers.
12-15.

THE PLOT REVEALED TO CLAUDIUS LYSIAS
BY PAUL'S NEPHEW, vers. 16-21.

TIME.

May, A. D. 57 or 58.

PAUL SENT FROM JERUSALEM TO CÆSAREA
BY NIGHT, vers. 22-35.

Cæsarea.

1 AND Paul, ^{earnestly beholding} ^{looking steadfastly on} the council, said, ^{Men and brethren, m} ^{Brethren,} I have lived ^{in all} ^{before} good conscience before God ^{until this day.}
God in all good conscience

m 2 Cor. 1. 12. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Cp. ch. 24. 16 & Job 27. 5, 6 & 1 Cor. 4. 4 & 2 Cor. 4. 2 & 5, 11 & Heb. 13. 18.

PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM, vers. 1-10.

The morning after the riot in the court of the temple. The Hall of the Sanhedrim was just

outside of the temple walls, on the west toward the city.

1. And Paul, earnestly beholding, ἀνέπνοας,

2 And the high priest "Ananias commanded them that stood by him "to smite him on the mouth.

π ch. 24. 1. o 1 Kin. 22. 24. Lam. 3. 30. Mic. 5. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 20. Cp. John 18. 22, *al.*

from *ἀ*, intensive, and *τείνω*, to stretch; hence, denoting a *fixed, intense, questioning gaze*, as if he would look into their inmost souls. See on 1: 10. "On this occasion the apostle may well have gazed steadfastly on the council which condemned Stephen, and although many new faces met his gaze, some of his audience were probably familiar to him."¹

Men and brethren. He speaks to them as fellow countrymen and equals, for probably he was once a member of that body.

I have lived, *πεπολίτευμαι*, from *πολίτης*, a citizen; hence, *I have lived as a citizen*, obeying the laws of the commonwealth, and fulfilling its duties. He was a faithful covenant member of the commonwealth of God to which the other Jews, including the members of the Sanhedrim, belonged. "He lived as a true and loyal Jew."

In all good conscience, *συνειδήσει*. This word "is compounded of *σύν*, together with, and *εἰδέναι*, to know; and its fundamental idea is *knowing together with one's self*. Hence it denotes the consciousness which one has within himself of his own conduct as related to moral obligation; which consciousness exercises a judicial function, determining what is right or wrong, approving or condemning, urging to performance or abstinence. Hence it is not merely intellectual consciousness directed at conduct, but moral consciousness contemplating duty, testifying to moral obligation."

Conscience is a *faculty*, distinguished from reason and understanding. "Conscience is a *sensibility*; i. e., it contains and implies conscious emotions which arise on the discernment of an object as good or bad. The judgment formed by conscience awakens sensibility. When the judicial faculty pronounces a thing to be lovable, it awakens love. When it pronounces it to be noble or honorable, it awakens respect and admiration. When it pronounces it to be cruel or vile, it awakens disgust and abhorrence.

"In scripture we are to view conscience, as Bishop Eliot remarks, not in its abstract nature, but in its practical manifestations," so that it may be *weak, defiled, seared, or pure, good, void of offence*.² "Conscience is a *Law*." "Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide, the guide assigned us by the Author of our nature;

it therefore belongs to our condition of being; it is our duty to walk in that path and follow this guide." "It is superior to all other faculties, inasmuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in *judgment, direction, superintendency*. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself; and to preside and govern belong to it. Had it strength as it had right; had it power as it had manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world."³ Compare Acts 24: 16; 1 Tim. 1: 5, 19; 2 Tim. 1: 3.

Before God. However men may misjudge him, by their false standards or in ignorance of the facts, he is right in the sight of God, and acquitted "in a higher tribunal than that of the Sanhedrim or of Cæsar."

2. And the high priest Ananias. Not the Annas of Acts 4: 6 and John 18: 13, but the son of Nebedæus, made high priest in A. D. 48. He had been implicated in disorders arising from a dispute between the Jews and Samaritans, and sent to Rome for trial, A. D. 52. He was acquitted, and restored to his office, and afterwards seems to have been held in great reputation at Jerusalem. But his character as depicted by Josephus, who "gives us a terrible picture of his violent and unscrupulous conduct," is exactly such as would lead to the act which aroused Paul's indignation.⁴ "We are told that he reduced the inferior priests almost to starvation by defrauding them of their tithes, and sent his creatures to the threshing-floors with bludgeons to seize the tithes by force."

Commanded them that stood by him. It is probable that the record in verse 1 is but a summary of what Paul said.

To smite him on the mouth. Hackett quotes from Morier's *Second Journey through Persia*, to show that this treatment is not uncommon in the unchanging East in our own days. "As soon as the ambassadors came," writes this traveller, "he punished the principal offenders by causing them to be beaten before them; and those who had spoken their minds too freely, he *smote upon the mouth with a shoe*; which in their idiom is called 'eating shoe.'" "By far the greatest of all indignities and the most insupportable is to be hit with a shoe or one of the pantoufles which the Hindoos commonly wear on their feet. To receive a kick from any foot with a slipper on it is

¹ Knowing.

² M. R. Vincent in *Word Studies*, vol. i. pp. 653-656.

³ Bishop Butler, *Sermons*, 2 and 3, "On Human Na-

ture." See McCosh, *Divine Government*; Dr. Davison, *The Christian Conscience*; Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, "Conscience," for literature on the subject.

⁴ See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 5, 2; 6, 2; 9, 2.

3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, ^{thou} whited ^{for} wall: ^{and} sit-test thou to judge me ^{after} according to the law, and ^{and} commandest me to be smitten ^{and} contrary to the law?

4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou ^s God's high priest?

5 ^{Then said Paul,} ^{And Paul said,} I wist not, brethren, that he was ^{the} high priest: for it is written, "Thou shalt not speak evil of ^{the} ruler of thy people."

p Cp. Matt. 23. 27. q Cp. Isai. 30. 13 & Ezek. 13. 10-14. r Deut. 25. 1, 2. See John 7. 51. s Cp. 1 Sam. 2. 28 & Ps. 106. 16. t Cp. ch. 24. 17. u Cited from Ex. 22. 28, which see.

an injury of so unpardonable a nature that a man would suffer exclusion from his caste who could submit to it without receiving some adequate satisfaction. Even to threaten one with the stroke of a slipper is held to be criminal and to call for animadversion."¹ Our Saviour was thus treated when on his trial before the same council (John 18: 22).

(1) "The mouth must be shut that uttered such a declaration. It was not to be endured that a man arraigned there as an apostate from the religion of his fathers should assert his innocence."²

(2) "The high priest's character for violence and lawlessness suggests that a *guilty* conscience assumed the guise of zeal against blasphemy."³

(3) "Striking on the mouth was a symbolical gesture, like the rending or shaking of the garments, and implies a previous unlawful use of it as well as an injunction to cease speaking."⁴

"To him this assertion of a life so utterly unlike his own seemed almost like a personal insult. He fitted the cap, and raged with a brutal cruelty which reminds us of Jeffreys' treatment of Baxter."⁵

3. God shall smite thee, *τύπτει σε μέλλει*, is about to smite thee. Not a malediction, or a wishing of evil upon the high priest; but, like Christ's woes against the scribes and Pharisees, an expression of his belief that such conduct would be punished and ought to be punished. The terrible death of Ananias, about six years later, at the beginning of the Jewish wars, was a fulfilment of these words. In a sedition raised by his son and a band of Sicarii (Assassins) he hid in a sewer of the palace, and was drawn out and slain.⁶

Thou whited wall. The expression "whited wall," for hypocrite, was used with a slight variation, by the Lord, of the Pharisees and scribes (Matt. 23: 27; Luke 11: 44). The Jews white-washed the graves covered with plastered structures in the fields, especially a month before the

Passover, in order that the pilgrims might not be defiled by unintentionally coming in contact with them. "When newly 'whited,' as they had just been at the period of the year when our Saviour was speaking, they looked clean, and gleamed beautifully, as we have often seen them, in the sunshine."⁷ But within they were full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. The expression was especially appropriate if the priests wore their distinctive white raiment, and the high priest the same under his official decorations if he had them on. See below.

For, showing why he was a hypocrite.

Sittest thou to judge me after the law, etc. "The meaning appears to be this: Do you judge me for a disregard of the ceremonial law, and yourself disregard that judgment which is one of the weightier matters of the law (Matt. 23: 23). The act of Ananias violated the Mosaic precepts (Lev. 19: 35; Deut. 19: 17, 18; 25: 1), which required careful investigation before punishment, and gave the accused a right always to be heard in his own defence."⁸

4. Revilest thou God's high priest? They seem to have been shocked at what Paul said to the highest and most powerful official in the Jewish commonwealth.

5. I wist not, the preterit of "wit," *know*. I did not know that he was the high priest. "It has been argued with great force that Paul could not fail to recognize the person of the high priest, since he presided in the Sanhedrim in his official robes.⁹ But the real meaning of his apology is that he did not know who the speaker was. He had heard the words, and was provoked by their intemperate violence into an angry retort, but did not know from whom they proceeded."¹⁰ So Farrar,¹¹ who says: "In a crowded assembly he had not noticed who the speaker was. Owing to his weakened sight, all that he saw before him was a blurred, white figure, issuing a brutal order,

¹ Dubois' *Description of the People of India*.

² Hackett.

³ William Smith.

⁴ Alexander.

⁵ Plumptre.

⁶ Josephus, *Wars*, 2: 17, 8.

⁷ Morison, *Matthew*, 23: 27. Seneca uses a similar

figure to describe hypocrites, *De Providentia*, ch. 6; see, also, his *Epistles*, 115.

⁸ Lyman Abbott.

⁹ Edersheim, *Temple and its Services*, p. 67, says that the priests, including the high priest, wore their official robes only when performing their official duties.

¹⁰ Rendall.

¹¹ *St. Paul*, vol. i. Excursus 10.

6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were "Sād'dū-gees, and the other Phār'i-sees, he cried out in the council, ^{Men and brethren, Brethren,} "I am a Phār'i-see, ^{a Pharisee: of Pharisees: x touching} the "hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

v See Matt. 22. 23.
3. 4. See Col. 1. 5.

w ch. 26. 5. Phil. 3. 5.

x ch. 24. 15, 21 & 26. 6-8 & 28. 20.

y Cp. ch. 2. 26, 27 & Wisd.

and to this person, who, in his external whiteness and inward worthlessness, thus reminded him of the plastered wall of a sepulchre, he had addressed his indignant denunciation." So Lewin and Plumptre.

Meyer thinks the apostle's reply was ironical,—"I could not have supposed from his conduct that he was high priest;" but this seems inconsistent with the character of the apostle, and the appeal to Scripture would in that state of mind be akin to irreverence.

For it is written, in Ex. 22: 28, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people, implying that if he had known who it was, he would not have so spoken of him. That he should make this apology "on learning the halloved position of the delinquent, was in accordance with that high breeding of the perfect gentleman, which in all his demeanor he habitually displayed."¹ But it is noticeable that he did not retract the saying, or deny that what he said was true, but he was sorry that under the circumstances he spoke the true word. See Rom. 13: 7; 1 Pet. 2: 13-17; Jude 8-10. "A contrast has been drawn between St. Paul's conduct and that of our Lord under provocation, as, e. g., by St. Jerome, *Adv. Pelag.*, iii. 1, but there were occasions when Christ spoke with righteous indignation, and never more severely than when he was condemning the same sin which St. Paul censured,—hypocrisy."²

SPEAKING EVIL OF RULERS is a great evil. (1) The tendency is to criticise severely all their acts that work against us, however good for the whole people. (2) It is easy to find fault with others whose circumstances and limitations we do not wholly understand. (3) Speaking evil of rulers tends to disobedience and lawlessness, lessening the power of those who would execute law. (4) It tends to irreverence toward God. (5) We should respect the office, even when we cannot the officers. (6) This does not forbid a fair and candid discussion of the actions of rulers, or of their character so far as necessary to prevent the election of bad men, or the imitation of their conduct.

¹ Farrar.

² Knowing.

³ Plato illustrates the present condition of the soul by the marine Glaucus, who, finding the fountain of immortality, became immortal; but, angry at not being able to point out the fountain to others, he threw himself into

6. But when Paul perceived. The main body of Paul's defence is not reported, but only a condensed account. "No practised orator would have thrown out at once so abrupt an appeal to partisan zeal." From verse 9 the inference is natural that he told the story of his conversion, and "pleaded the voice of the risen Jesus as his justification before the Sanhedrim, as he did before the multitude and before Agrippa; and had used it as an argument for the Resurrection, as he did before the king." What he had done in bringing the Gentiles into the kingdom was in accordance to the command of the risen Messiah. It is quite probable that while he was speaking of the resurrection Paul perceived some manifestations of sympathy on the part of the Pharisees, and disapproval on the part of the Sadducees.

He cried out, *ἐκραξεν*, spoke with a loud voice, so that amid the arising confusion all must hear.

I am a Pharisee. Paul here spoke the exact truth. "All parties have their good and bad sides," as did the Pharisees. Their selfishness and their hypocrisy were accretions of evil upon the truth at the foundation of their system like the sea-weeds and shellfish on the marine Glaucus Plato describes.³ These Paul opposed with all his soul. At these Jesus launched his terrible "woes." But on the questions of the resurrection and the future life, which distinguished the Pharisees from the Sadducees, Paul heartily sided with the former.

"The true leaders of the Pharisees had given a prominence to the doctrine of the Resurrection which it had never had before. They taught an ethical rather than a sacrificial religion. Many of them had been, like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, secret disciples of our Lord. At this very time there were many avowed Pharisees among the members of the Christian Church (chap. 15: 5). St. Paul, therefore, could not be charged with any *suppressio veri* in calling himself a Pharisee. It did not involve even a tacit disclaimer of his faith in Christ. It was rather as though he said, 'I am one with you in all that is truest in your creed. I invite you to listen and

the sea, and every year coursed about among the islands. But people could "not easily perceive his ancient nature, because the ancient members of his body are partly broken off, and others are worn away; and besides this, other things are grown to him, such as shellfish, sea-weeds, and stones" (*Republic*, x. p. 11).

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Saddū-gees: and the ^{multitude} assembly was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great ^{cry:} clamour: and some of ^a the scribes ^{that were} of the Pharisees' part ^{arose,} stood up, and strove, saying, ^b We find no evil in this man: and what ^{but} if a spirit ^{or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.} hath spoken to him, or an angel?

^a Luke 20. 27. Cp. 1 Cor. 15. 12.

^a ch. 4. 5. Mark 2. 16. Luke 5. 30.

^b Cp. ver. 29.

^c Cp. ch. 22. 7, 17, 18 & John 12. 29.

see whether what I now proclaim to you is not the crown and completion of all your hopes and yearnings. Is not the resurrection of Jesus the one thing needed for a proof of that hope of the resurrection of the dead of which you and your fathers have been witnesses?"¹

There were two motives which would lead Paul to take the course he did. Consciously or unconsciously he was using in the cause of truth the principle "divide and conquer," so often perverted and misused.

(1) Paul shrewdly used the diversity of the council to escape from their condemnation. But it was the shrewdness of pure honesty and sincerity, seeking to advance the cause of the Lord rather than his own safety, yet it brought safety. "Honesty" proved to be the very "best policy." "Surely no defence of Paul for adopting this course is required, but our admiration is due to his skill and presence of mind. Nor need we hesitate to regard such skill as the fulfilment of the promise, that in such an hour the Spirit of Wisdom should suggest words to the accused, which the accuser should not be able to gainsay (Mark 13: 9-11). All prospect of a fair trial was hopeless. He well knew, from past and present experience, that personal odium would bias his judges, and violence prevail over justice."² "My only crime," he urged with passionate earnestness, "is that I preach with a strange success that great doctrine of the resurrection, the maintaining of which at all risks, in an unbelieving and faithless generation, is the reason of existence of the whole Pharisee sect."³ "The narrative illustrates the place of expediency in the Christian's conduct; it is possible to be keen, quick-witted, swift to seize advantage, turning disaster into victory, and yet be honest, truthful, and perfectly fair."⁴

(2) "May we not even say that to the Pharisees he became as a Pharisee in order to save some, to lead them to see the crown and fulfilment of

the hope in which he and they were at one, in the Person of Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life? That the Apostle's action met with Divine approval seems evident, ver. 11."⁵

Of the hope and (its ultimate object) the resurrection of the dead I am called in question. This can be construed to mean "the hope of the resurrection," or "the hope of Israel, the hope of a Messiah and his salvation," and the resurrection of the dead, which extends the Messianic hope into the future life.

The statement that Paul was called in question on account of this hope is true, because the reception of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, that was the especial object of the Pharisaic attack, was an essential part of the Messianic hope, which could not be fulfilled without it; and all depended upon the resurrection of Christ.

7. There arose a dissension, *στάσις*, a standing, hence, a standing apart, on different sides, an insurrection. Was divided.⁶

8. The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit, etc. "The strict accuracy of this description is borne witness to by Josephus, who tells us that 'the Sadducees reject the existence of the soul after death, and the rewards and punishments of an invisible world;' and that 'the Sadducees hold that the souls of men perish with their bodies.' Of the Pharisees' opinion he says: 'The souls of men have an immortal strength, and are destined to be rewarded or punished in another state according to the life here, as it has been one of virtue or vice.'"⁷

9. There arose a great cry, *κραυγή*, clamor, outcry, whether of partisan applause and joyful surprise, or of anger and wailing.

Scribes that were of the Pharisees' part. The professional lawyers and interpreters of the Scriptures belonged chiefly to the sect of the Pharisees, though some were in the ranks of the Sadducees.⁷

Arose, and strove, *διεμάχοντο*, from *διὰ*, through,

¹ Pluinptre.

² Alford. Gilbert, in his *Student's Life of Paul*, 187-189, argues against this view.

³ Schaff.

⁴ Addison P. Foster, D. D.

⁵ Knowing.

⁶ On the fundamental differences between Sadducees and Pharisees, see Edersheim, *Jesus the Messiah*, i. 315; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18: 1, 4; *Jewish Wars*, 2: 8, 14.

⁷ Schürer, *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. i. pp. 178, 319.

10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should ^{have been pulled} ^{be torn} in pieces ^{of} ^{by} them, commanded the soldiers to go down and ^{to} take him by force from among them, and ^{to} bring ^{him} ^{him} into "the castle.

11 And "the night following" the Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer: ^{Paul} for ^{as} thou hast testified ^{of} ^{concerning} me ⁱⁿ at Jerusalem, so must thou ^{bear witness also at Rome.}

d vers. 16, 32. ch. 21. 34 & 22, 24.
19, 21. i ch. 22. 15.

e ch. 18. 9 & 27, 23.

f 1 Sam. 3. 10.

g Cp. 2 Tim. 4. 17.

h Cp. ch.

thoroughly, and μάχουμαι, to fight, strive, properly of armed combatants, or those who engage in a hand to hand struggle; ¹ hence, to fight it out, to contend thoroughly to the bitter end.

If a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, better as in R. V. "What if a spirit hath spoken to him?" implying that there is no need of troubling Paul on account of such a thing as that. The sentence let us not fight against God is not in the best MSS. The reference of the Pharisees is doubtless to the account of his conversion and the vision in the temple (22: 6, 7).

10. Dissension, στάσεις, as in ver. 7.

Lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces, διασπασθῆ, rent asunder, as a wild beast tears its prey in pieces. (See Hos. 13: 8, Septuagint.)

Soldiers to go down from the Castle Antonia, or from whatever place near by the hall they were on guard.

THE VISION OF CHEER, ver. 11.

There were many reasons why Paul was in need of comfort and cheer at this time. (1) The reaction after two days of such exhausting excitement and exertion. (2) He had just escaped death, and was in the power of heathen who hated the gospel, and were likely to be influenced by the cunning and powerful Jewish hierarchy to put him to death. (3) The result of his work in Jerusalem seemed likely to be a failure. His very efforts to bring harmony and peace, and to bring the Jews into the kingdom, had apparently made matters worse. (4) His prayers and long-cherished hope that he might preach the gospel in Rome seemed likely to be frustrated.

11. The Lord Jesus, in his glorified condition, stood by him, showing that he was his ever present helper, as the electric flash reveals the continual presence of the unseen electric power. "Three such experiences of divine encouragement afforded to the apostle, under circumstances of peculiar peril or anxiety, are recorded in the Acts; one when he was 'in weakness and in fear and in much trembling' in Corinth (ch. 18: 9, 10), once during the long storm at sea (ch. 27: 24). Compare analogous experiences in the life of Christ (Mark 1: 13; Luke 22: 43)."²

Be of good cheer, θάρσει, be of good courage, of good cheer. "This word on the lips of Christ had brought cheer to the sick and diseased, Matt. 9: 2, 22; Mark 10: 49; to the disciples sailing on the sea, Matt. 14: 27; Mark 5: 50; to the same disciples in an hour of deeper need, John 16: 33."³

SOURCES OF COMFORT AND CHEER. (1) The manifest presence of Christ. Paul was not alone, but He who had all power and wisdom and love was with him as his friend. (2) He had the approval of God, and his conscience would be at peace. (3) His life was safe. (4) He had more work yet to do for the Master; more souls were to be saved through him from sin and death. (5) He should have his heart's desire, and preach the gospel in Rome, the capital of the world. (6) All things were working together for good, and the very hindrances he met were the means of accomplishing his desired purpose. Alford well notes the power of comfort which these words of the Lord possessed in his subsequent experiences: "(1) in the uncertainty of his life from the Jews; (2) in the uncertainty of his liberation from prison at Cæsarea; (3) in the uncertainty of his surviving the storm in the Mediterranean; (4) in the uncertainty of his fate on arriving at Rome. So may one crumb of divine grace and help be multiplied to feed five thousand wants and anxieties."

As thou hast testified, διεμαρτύρω. The compound word implies the thoroughness (διδ) of the apostle's testimony. His work was so approved of God that he promised him a larger and more difficult field.

So must thou bear witness also at Rome. His wish (19: 21; Rom. 1: 10, 11) was to be gratified in a way of which he had no thought.

"Mark how blindly men fulfil God's purposes. The two bitter antagonists, Jew and Roman, seem to themselves to be working in direct opposition; but God is using them both to carry out his design. Paul has to be got to Rome, and these two forces are combined, by a wisdom beyond their ken, to carry him thither. Two clogged wheels, turning in opposite directions, fit into each other, and grind out a resultant motion, different from either of theirs. These soldiers

¹ Thayer, Greek-English Lex. of N. T.

² Lyman Abbott.

³ Knowling.

12 And when it was day, ^{certain of} the Jews banded together, and ^k bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which ^{had} made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and ^{the} elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, ^{that we will eat} nothing until we have ^{slain} killed Paul.

j ver. 30. *k* vers. 14, 21.

and that mob were like two pawns on a chess-board, ignorant of the intentions of the hand which moves them."¹ Paul's voice, so said his Master to him, was to be heard in the two capitals of the world, — in Jerusalem, the metropolis of the religious, and in Rome, the metropolis of the civil world. The results of his preaching in each of these centres deserve attention. In Jerusalem, Paul's mission was a complete failure; his words there were spoken to the winds, they were written upon the sand; but when Paul left Jerusalem, the days of the city were numbered. In about ten years from the day when his pleading voice was drowned by the execrations in the temple, and a few hours later in the Sanhedrim hall, not one stone of the doomed city was left on another. In Rome he helped to build up a flourishing church; and when the sovereignty of the world was lost to the imperial city, the once despised religion of Paul restored to Rome a new and even grander empire than the proudest of the early Cæsars had ruled over. The words of the Master in the vision were indeed fulfilled, fulfilled, too, in that deeper sense which the solemn word "to bear witness" was beginning to assume in the familiar language of Christians, when in the martyr's painful death he should pass to his rest at Rome.²

THE PLOT AGAINST PAUL, AND HOW IT FAILED, vers. 12-22.

12. And when it was day, the day after the trial and Paul's vision, ^{certain of} the Jews. It is probable that among the conspirators were members of the fanatic association called Sicarii (from *sica*, a dagger), or Assassins, which played a prominent part in the last turbulent years of Jerusalem.

Bound themselves under a curse, ἀνεθεματίσαν ἑαυτοὺς, lit., anathematized or cursed themselves, bound themselves under an anathema,³ or

curse. They invoked the curse of God upon them if they should eat or drink till they had killed Paul. "Assassination was a common weapon of the Jewish Zealots in the last troubled years of the national existence. Religious leaders resorted to it the more readily as the Sanhedrim had no power of life and death. There had been secret intrigues to procure the murder of Jesus and Lazarus (John 11: 53; 12: 10), as now of Paul, to all which members of the council were privy.

"This was a traditional form of Hebrew curse (comp. 1 Sam. 20: 13 and 1 Kings 2: 23), by which a man devoted himself before God as anathema, i. e., an offering unto death, if he failed to fulfil his pledge."⁴

13. More than forty. Showing the intensity of the desire to make certain the death of Paul; and at the same time rendering it more difficult to keep the secret from Paul's friends.

Conspiracy, συνωμοσίαν, from σύν and ὁμνύμι, to swear, hence, *swearing together, an agreement together under oath*. The English *conspiracy* is from the Latin *conspirare*, to breathe together, especially of a secret agreement, as if whispering together. "In the case of such fearful vows, by no means uncommon in that wild time of disorder and hatred, the Talmud, however, provided a loophole of escape for those who so rashly took this burden on themselves; they furnished the means of releasing the man from the vow and the curse, if the carrying it out in its entirety became impossible."⁵

14. They came to the chief priests, many of whom probably, and Ananias the high priest certainly, belonged to the Sadducean party, and were anxious to have Paul destroyed. Glogau suggests that the "favorable feeling on the part of the Pharisees was transient, being the impulse of the moment, and that they soon united with the Sadducees in hostility to the apostle. It is

¹ Alexander Maclaren. Compare the story of Joseph as an illustration of God's guiding providence. Also Edward Everett Hale's capital story, "Hands Off," based on Joseph's history, in his *Christmas in a Palace*; Dr. Bushnell's *Sermons for the New Life*, "Every Man's Life a Plan of God."² Schaff.

³ On "Anathema," see Vincent's *Word Studies*, vol. i. p. 417.

⁴ Rendall. For instances of similar bindings by oath, Josephus, *Vita*, 53, and a similar combination of ten men to murder Herod, *Antiquities*, 15: 8, 3, 4.

⁵ Schaff. "Edersheim quotes a curious illustration of the rash vow before us, which shows how easily absolution from its consequences could be obtained, *Jewish Social Life*, p. 229; J. Lightfoot, *Howe Hebrewæ*."

15 Now therefore do ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you, ^{to morrow,} as though ye would ^{inquire something more perfectly judge of his case more exactly :} concerning him : and we, or ever he come near, are ready to ^{kill} ^{slay} him.

16 ^{And when} ^{But} Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, and he ^{went} ^{came} and entered into ^{the} castle, and told Paul.

17 ^{Then} ^{And} Paul called ^{unto him,} one of the centurions, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain : for he hath ^{a certain thing something} to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought ^{him} ^{him} to the chief captain, and ^{said,} ^{saith,} Paul " the prisoner called me unto ^{him,} ^{him,} and ^{prayed} ^{asked} me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say ^{unto} ^{to} thee.

19 ^{Then} ^{And} the chief captain took him by the hand, and ^{went with him aside} ^{going aside} asked him privately, and asked ^{him,}. What is that thou hast to tell me ?

20 And he said, ° The Jews have agreed ^{to} ^{to} thee ^{that thou wouldst} ^{bring down} Paul tomorrow ^{into} ^{unto} the council, as though ^{they would} ^{thou wouldst} inquire somewhat ^{of him more} ^{more exactly}

l Cp. Rom. 16. 7 (?).

m vers. 10, 32.

n See Eph. 3. 1.

o vers. 14, 15.

evident that they, as well as the Sadducees, accused him before Felix (Acts 24 : 15)."

15. Now therefore . . . signify, *ἐμφανισατε*, cause to appear, declare, make known. "A legal term; give official notice; a formal request for a regular investigation, to which Lysias, it might be assumed, would be disposed to accede, after the abrupt interruption of the previous day."¹ We, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. The first word stands in the Greek with a kind of ferocious emphasis. "You may safely leave us to do our part." Their plan was to assassinate him on his way down from the barracks to the council. The suspicion of complicity in the crime would not fall upon the chief priests and elders. Their intention would appear to have been to give St. Paul a fair hearing, and the murder would seem to be the work of some fanatics unconnected with the council.² They might reckon on the guard being in no great force. The murder would admit of being represented as the result of an accidental tumult, and the Sanhedrim would exert themselves to appease the Roman authorities.¹

16. When Paul's sister's son. "This is the only direct reference in Scripture to Paul's family. It is uncertain whether Paul's sister resided in Jerusalem, or whether the young man may have come up to Jerusalem with Paul, or had been sent thither for his education, as his uncle was before him."³ Paul had kinsmen in Rome (Rom. 16 : 7, 11). Whether he was a Christian is unknown, but some think he would be more likely to obtain the information if he were a non-Christian

Jew. He may have heard the plot talked over in the caravanserai, where he and some of the conspirators were lodged. As to "how such a conspiracy, or, rather, conjuration, which, in the nature of it, would be kept a profound secret, should have become known to Paul's sister's son, the circumstances of the case furnish a sufficient explanation. The Pharisees were avowedly a *fraternity or guild*; and they, or some of their kindred fraternities, would furnish the ready material for such a band, to whom this additional vow would be nothing new or strange, and, murderous though it sounded, only seem a further carrying out of the principles of their order. Again, since the wife and all the children of a member were *ipso facto* members of the guild, and Paul's father had been a Pharisee (ver. 6), Paul's sister also would, by virtue of her birth, belong to the fraternity, even irrespective of the probability that, in accordance with the principles of the party, she would have married into a Pharisaical family."⁴

Entered into the castle. Showing that his friends had free access to him, as afterwards at Cæsarea (24 : 23).

17. This young man. "The narrative gives the impression that he was quite a young man."

18. Paul the prisoner, *δέσμιος*, from *δέω*, to bind, to fasten with chains; hence, one bound, but gradually taking the wider signification of a *cap-tive* or *prisoner*. So that the word does not imply that Paul was in chains.

20. As though, *ὡς ἐμλλοντες*, as if about to, intending to as a pretext.

¹ Speaker's Commentary.² Cambridge Bible.³ Meyer's Commentary. Note by the Am. Editor.⁴ Eidersheim's Jewish Social Life.

21 ^{But do} ~~Do~~ not thou therefore yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which ^{with an oath, that they will} have bound themselves ^{under a curse,} neither to eat nor to drink till they have ^{killed} slain him: and now are they ready, looking for ^{the} the promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain ^{then} let the young man depart, and charged him, ^{See thou tell} ~~no~~ man that thou hast ^{showed} ~~signified~~ these things to me.

23 And he called unto ^{him} ~~him~~ two of the centurions, ^{saying,} ~~and said,~~ Make ready two hundred soldiers to go ^{to} ~~as far as~~ Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;

p vers. 12, 14.



THE LEGIONARY.

Slightly altered from Bertholdi's model in the Museum of St. Germain.

From *Cæsar's Gallic War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

22. So the chief captain. "The chiliarch is obviously glad of the intelligence. His sympathies are clearly with St. Paul personally as against the high priest and his followers. He welcomes an opportunity for showing his zeal for the safe-keeping of a Roman citizen, and for making a statement of the whole transaction from his own point of view."¹ See thou tell no man. (1) To avoid any interference with his own plans, or a new conspiracy; (2) to avoid danger to the young man for revealing the secret; (3) to avoid any explanations of his conduct to the Jewish leaders.

23. Two hundred soldiers. These soldiers were common foot soldiers, or legionaries of the Roman army, composed of Romans only.² To Cæsarea, the Roman capital, about 68 Roman miles from Jerusalem. Spear-men, *δεξιολάβους*, that is, soldiers grasping their weapons with their right hand, apparently a special class of light-armed soldiers, whose weapons were spears or javelins thrown by the right arm alone.³

The third hour of the night, nine o'clock. This night march was planned in order that the cavalcade might be well on its way before the conspirators could learn what was going on; and to avoid the necessity of any explanations to the fanatical Jews. The large number of soldiers, 470 in all, made a rescue by the 40 impossible; and avoided the danger which might arise from the disturbed and uneasy state of the country around Jerusalem.

¹ Plumptre.

² For description of the clothing, weapons, and armor of the legionaries, see *Cæsar's Gallic War*, pp. 35-38.

³ Livy, 22 : 21.

24 And ^{he bade them} provide ^{them} beasts, that they ^{may} might set Paul ^{on} thereon, and bring ^{him} safe unto ^a Fē'līx ^r the governor.

25 And he wrote a letter after this ^{manner:} ^{form:}

26 Clau'di-ūs Lys'i-ās unto the ^a most excellent governor Fē'līx, ^{sendeth} ^t greet-
ing.

27 This ^a man was ^{taken of} seized by the Jews, and ^{should have been killed} ^v was about to be slain of them; ^{then came I with} ^v when I came upon ^{an army,} them with the soldiers, and rescued him, ^w having ^{understood} ^{learned} that he was a Roman.

g ver. 26. ch. 24. 3 & 25. 14. *r* ver. 33. ch. 24. 1, 10 & 26. 30. See Luke 20. 20. *s* ch. 24. 3. *t* See ch. 15. 23. *u* ch. 21. 27. *v* Cp. ch. 21. 32, 33. *w* Cp. ch. 22. 25-29.

"Then, as we learn from Josephus, the Sicarii abounded, and murders were of daily occurrence. So numerous were these zealots that a few years after this an army of them took possession of Jerusalem and held it for several days, murdering the principal men and committing great atrocities. Besides, the conspiracy against Paul was of a formidable nature, as it was countenanced and supported by the Sanhedrim; and, as he was a Roman citizen, it was the bounden duty of the tribune to protect him to the utmost of his power."¹

24. And provide beasts. "In the Orient a general word which might include camels and asses as well as horses. Relays would be necessary. If the apostle rode, the soldiers to whom his chains were attached must have been mounted also. And from Antipatris to Cæsarea his escort consisted entirely of cavalry."²

Unto Felix, see on 24 : 3.

The governor, ἡγεμόνα, a leader, used of a leader of any kind, of an emperor, or king.

25. He wrote a letter after this manner, or form; implying that only the substance of the letter is given.

"Luke might easily have learnt its contents, as there is reason for supposing that the letter would have been read in open court before Felix, as containing the preliminary inquiry, and that a copy may have been given to Paul after his appeal."³

26. Claudius Lysias. "Here the name of the tribune is incidentally given. There is no mention of him in Roman history; but certainly his character and conduct contrast most favorably with that of his superior Antonius Felix, and

with that of Pontius Pilate, when placed in somewhat similar circumstances. He exhibited energy, decision, and prudence: he had evidently taken a great interest in his prisoner, and was determined to rescue him at all hazards."¹

Most excellent, *καρίστω*, governor, the official title of Felix, as in the English colonies the



THE AGMEN QUADRATUM.

Taken from the Antonine Column. This was the formation when a sudden attack was expected; the prisoners being enclosed on four sides by the soldiers.

From Harper's Classical Dictionary, by per.

governor is addressed as "his excellency the governor." The term "most excellent" is applied by Luke to Theophilus, to whom he dedicated his Gospel and the Acts (Luke 1 : 3).

27. This man, ἄνδρα (not ἄνθρωπον), which choice of words Bengel takes to imply a certain degree of respect.

Having understood that he was a Roman. Lysias puts the best construction possible on his conduct, on account of his fear of punishment if the exact truth were reported.

¹ Glog.

² Speaker's Commentary.

³ Knowing.

28 And ^{when I would have known} ^{z desiring to know} the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him ^{forth into} ^{down unto} their council:

29 Whom I ^{perceived} ^{found} to be accused ^{y of} ^{about} questions of their law, but ^z to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.

30 And ^{when it was told} ^{shewn to me} ^{how} ^{b that} ^{the Jews laid wait for} ^{there would be a plot against} the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to him to thee forthwith, ^{c charging} his accusers also to ^{say} ^{before thee what they had against} speak against him before thee. him. Farewell.

x ch. 22. 30. *y* ch. 18. 15 & 25. 19. *z* ch. 25. 25 & 26. 31 & 23. 18. Cp. ver. 9. *a* ver. 20. *b* ver. 12. See ch. 9. 24. *c* ver. 35. Cp. ch. 24. 19 & 25. 16.



SOLDIERS MARCHING WITH PACKS.

From the Column of Trajan, after a cast made in Rome in 1861, and reproduced in photo-engraving in 1872 by Gustave Arosa.

From *Cæsar's Gallic War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

29. Accused of questions of their law. "The points which probably presented themselves to the chiliarch's mind as the result of his inquiries were: (1) that the prisoner was accused of transgressing the rules of the temple; (2) that the question at issue seemed to be whether he had seen a teacher named Jesus risen from the dead;

(3) whether that teacher was entitled to the name of Christ."¹

Nothing... worthy of death, *θανάτου*, "the highest penalty, or of bonds, *δεσμῶν*, the lowest penalty of the law. It is observable that all the judges — Claudius Lysias, Felix, King Agrippa, and Festus — testify to the innocence of the apostle."²

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² Glogau.

31 ^{Then}_{So} the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought ^{him}_{him} by night to Ān-tīp'ā-trīs.

32 ^{On}_{But on} the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to ^d the castle :

33 ^{Who}_{And they}, when they came to Cæs-ā-rē'ā, and delivered the ^{epistle}_{letter} to the governor, presented Paul also before him.

34 And when ^{the governor}_{he} had read ^{the letter}_{it}, he asked of what ^e province he was; ^{And}_{and} when he understood ^s that ^{he was}_{he was} of Cī-l'ī'q'ā' :

35 I will hear ^{thee}_{thy cause}, said he, ^o when thine accusers ^{are also}_{also are} come: ^{And}_{and} he commanded him to be kept in Hēr'ōd's ^{judgment hall}_{palace}.

d vers. 10, 16.

e ch. 25. 1.

f ch. 21. 39.

g ver. 30.

h See Matt. 27. 27.

30. Farewell. "The closing formula, like the opening one, agrees with that used in the letter of the Council of Jerusalem."¹

31. Brought him by night. That is, they started by night, and reached Antipatris some time the next day. They could not well march the 42 or 43 miles to Antipatris in the part of one night.

Antipatris. A city built by Herod the Great both as a fortress and a pleasant place of residence, and named in honor of his father. Conder locates its site at *Rās el 'ain*, "The Spring Head," about six miles south of Keḥr Sābā, where Robinson placed it. It is 29 Roman miles from Cæsarea, and 11 miles north of Lydda, in the plain of Sharon, the site being chosen for its abundance of water and richness of soil. "A river encompassed the city, and a grove of very fine trees."²

32. On the morrow, either the day after they left Jerusalem, or the day after their arrival at Antipatris. They left the horsemen to go with him. They had gone beyond the danger line, for Antipatris was on the border line of Judea; the wilder hilly region, where there was danger of surprise, had been passed, and the remaining road traversed the open plain.³

33. Who. The cavalry sent by Lysias.

When they came to Cæsarea, . . . presented Paul, to whom the epistle referred. "St. Paul thus entered Cæsarea with a pomp of attendance very unlike the humble guise in which he had left it, amid the little caravan of his fellow Christians. They entered the town in broad daylight, and so large a body passing through the streets must have attracted many curious eyes. How must Philip and the other Christians of Cæsarea have been startled to recognize the rapid fulfilment of

their forebodings as they saw the great teacher, from whom they had parted with so many tears, ride through the streets, with his right hand chained to the arm of a horseman, amid a throng of soldiers from the garrison of Antonia! That ride, in the midst of his Roman bodyguard, was destined to be his last experience of air and exercise, till — after two years of imprisonment — his voyage to Rome began."⁴

34. Of what province he was, *ἐκ ποίας*, from what kind of province, whether senatorial or imperial, so that governor Felix could know whether his superior was the government at Rome, or the proconsul of Syria of which Judea was a dependency or department. When he understood that he was of Cilicia, an imperial province. He does not inquire whether he was a Roman citizen, for that fact was stated in the letter.

35. I will hear thee, said he. "A procurator of Judea, like Felix, was only subordinate to the governor of Syria, inasmuch as the latter could bring his supreme power to bear in cases of necessity. The military command and the independent jurisdiction of the procurator gave him practically sole power in all ordinary transactions, but the governor could take the superior command if he had reason to fear revolutionary or other serious difficulties."⁵

Kept in Herod's judgment hall, rather, palace. This palace was built by Herod the Great. As usual the palace was also a fortress and judgment hall for public business, and beneath it or in some tower were guard-rooms and prison cells. Probably Paul was thus not sent to the common prison, but made as comfortable as possible, as the letter of introduction was kindly, and the governor could exercise his choice as to how and where the prisoner should be confined.

¹ Plumptre.

² See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 16 : 5, 2, and 13 : 7, 1 ; 13 : 15, 1. Conder's article in *Hastings' Bib. Dic.*, and Geo. Adam Smith's in *Encyc. Biblica*.

³ Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography*, p. 165.

⁴ Farrar, *St. Paul*.

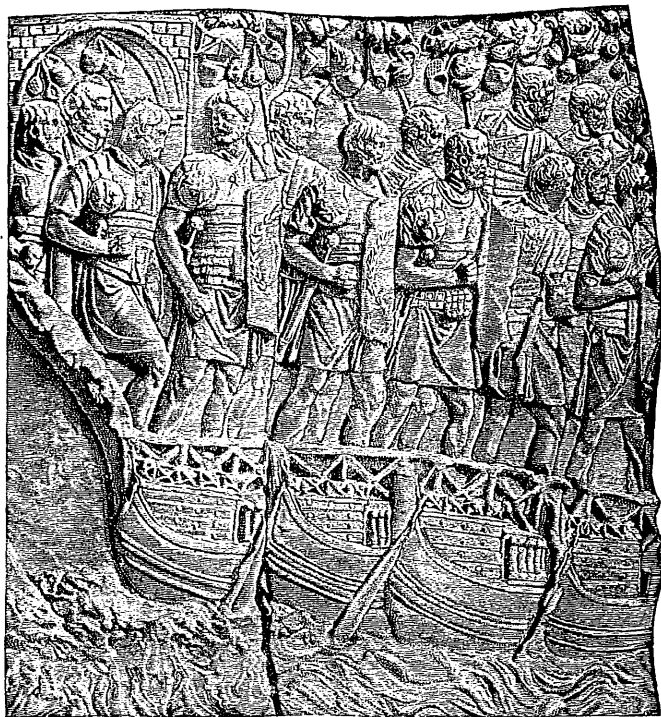
⁵ Knowing. See Schürer, *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. ii. p. 44, etc.

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their forebodings as they saw the great teacher, from whom they had parted with so many tears, ride through the streets, with his right hand chained to the arm of a horseman, amid a throng of soldiers from the garrison of Antonia! That ride, in the midst of his Roman bodyguard, was destined to be his last experience of air and exercise, till — after two years of imprisonment — his voyage to Rome began."⁴

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³ Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography*, p. 165.

⁴ Farrar, *St. Paul*.

⁵ Knowling. See Schürer, *Jewish People*, Div. I, vol. ii. p. 44, etc.

CHAPTER 24.

PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE FELIX AT CÆSAREA.

THE ACCUSATION OF TERTULLUS,
vers. 1-9.

May, A. D. 57 or 58.

{ The arrival of the accusers.
The charges against Paul.
A slur at Chief Captain Lysias.
The testimony of witnesses.

{ Treason against Rome.
Heresy against the Jews.
Sacrilege of profaning the temple.

PAUL'S DEFENCE,
vers. 10-21.

{ His courteous introduction.
A plain statement of the facts.
Denial of the first charge.
Explanation of the second charge.
Denial of the third charge.
Denial of the value of the testimony of the witnesses against him.

THE DECISION DEFERRED,
vers. 22-27.

TIME. A. D. 57-59 or 58-60.

{ Felix defers his decision for further light.
Paul detained, but with all possible liberty.
Paul preaches the gospel to Felix and Drusilla.
Felix waits for a convenient season.
Paul two years a prisoner.
A change of governors.

1 AND 'after five days ^{j An-a-ni'as the high priest descended} with ^{the} elders, and ^{with} ^{a certain} orator, ^{named} ^{one} Tēr-tūl'lūs; ^{who} ^{and they} informed ^k the governor against Paul.

ⁱ Cp. ch. 21. 18, 27, with ver. 11.

^j ch. 23. 2.

^k ch. 23. 24.

THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PAUL, vers. 1-9.

1. And after five days, from Paul's arrival at Cæsarea, and his presentation to the governor. "A Roman judge to whom a prisoner had been sent with an *elogium* was bound, if possible, to try him within three days. Felix, however, had to send a message to Jerusalem, and fix a time for the case to come on, in order that the accusers might be present; and as the journey took nearly two days, it was the fifth day after St. Paul's arrival at Cæsarea that he was brought to trial."¹ Others regard the time as five days after his departure with the armed escort from Jerusalem. The question is unimportant except as it bears on the reckoning of the twelve days of ver. 11.

Ananias the high priest, who "would be sure to be hot against the apostle after that speech about the 'whited wall.'"²

Descended, came down from Jerusalem on the hills to the seacoast.

With the elders, the better reading is that of the R. V., "with certain elders," who would confirm with all their influence the accusations of their advocate. "The Sanhedrists, smarting under defeat, would not be likely to leave any stone unturned which should bring the offender within reach of vengeance."¹

A certain orator, *ῥήτορας*, a forensic orator, a paid advocate. He was brought with them on account of his superior knowledge of Roman law and methods of court procedure, his skill as a pleader, and the fact that a Roman lawyer would have more influence, as an unbiassed man, in a Roman court, and could more easily make it appear that Paul "was dangerous to the Roman power, and not merely a turbulent and renegade Jew."

Tertullus, a diminutive of Tertius. The name is Roman, and it is most probable that he was a Roman. Blass speaks of him as a Jew, and it is true that Jews often bore Roman names. The expression "according to our law" points in that direction, but does not necessarily imply that he was a Jew, for an advocate assumes as his own the position of those for whom he pleads. The fact that a Roman advocate would be far more effective than a Jewish one, renders it almost certain that Tertullus was not a Jew by race. "The Jews, as subjects of the Roman empire, seem to have had no professed advocates of their own; and being themselves little acquainted with the laws and forms in use among the Romans, they had to employ Roman advocates."²

Who, plural, including the whole delegation,

¹ Farrar.

² Cambridge Bible.

³ Glog.

2 And when he was called, ^{forth,} Tēr-tūl'lūs began to accuse ^{him,} saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy ^{great quietness,} and that ^{very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy} ^{providence,} ^{much peace,} ^{by thy providence evils are corrected for this nation,}

3 We accept ^{it always,} and in all places, ^{most} ^{noble} ^{excellent} Fē'līx, with all thankfulness.

l Cp. 2 Macc. 4. 6. m ch. 23. 26. Luke 1. 3.

informed, ἐνεφάνισαν, the technical term for laying a formal information before a judge.

2. And when he was called forth. Omit "forth." "The 'calling' referred to is that of the crier of the court calling on the case."¹ "According to the Roman mode of procedure, a special charge had first to be made by the accuser; and this was intimated to the accused, and then the trial proceeded in the presence of both parties (Acts 25: 16)."²

Tertullus began to accuse him. "It is a matter of dispute whether the pleading in the provincial courts was in Latin or in the language of the province. Valerius Maximus tells us that Latin was the language of the law courts throughout the Roman Empire.³ But it would appear from a passage in Dio Cassius, that under the emperors trials were permitted in Greek even in Rome itself.⁴ It is probable that we have here the mere outlines of his speech. . . . But still, from what we have, it is evident that Tertullus must have been a skilful advocate; the eulogium which he pronounces was at once delicate and artful; and the charges brought against Paul were well chosen, being such as it became the Roman governor to investigate."²

Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness. This artful encomium was based on some facts, on which Felix could pride himself, for he had assumed the title *Pacificator*. It was the only point on which the orator could hang any praise. But as a whole the encomium was historically false, and the most exaggerated flattery.⁵

The substratum of truth was his energy and vigor in suppressing robberies and rebellion. "As to the number of robbers," observes Josephus, "whom he caused to be crucified, and of those whom he brought to be punished, they were a multitude not to be enumerated."⁶ "He seized and sent to Rome a famous brigand called Eleazer, who had ravaged the country for nearly twenty years; he repressed the rebellion of the Egyptian impostor; and quieted a sedition which arose between the Jewish and Greek inhabitants of Caesarea.⁷ Yet, notwithstanding, he was probably the worst governor that Judea had. He had

a number of the Sicarii continually in his employment; and instead of pacifying the Jews, he only fanned the spirit of sedition."² He employed some of these Sicarii to assassinate Jonathan, the high priest, and plunder and arson became very prevalent.

We learn from Tacitus⁸ that Felix in all savageness and profligacy wielded the power of a king in the spirit of a slave; that "by applying unseasonable remedies, he inflamed the dissimulation, emulated, as he was, in his abandoned courses by Ventidius Cumanus;" and, that "his severity in the end bore evil fruit; and it seems probable that his main motive in suppressing other plunderers was that there might be the more left for himself."

"He left a Corsair's name to other times

Linked to one virtue and a thousand crimes."⁹

Very worthy deeds, κατ'ορθώματων, "from κατ'ορθώω, to set upright. Hence, a success consequent on right judgment; a right action. The best texts, however, read διορθώματων, settings right; amendments. Thus the sentence reads, literally, obtaining much peace through thee, and amendments taking place for this nation through thy providence, we accept, etc."¹⁰

By thy providence, προνοίας, forethought, thinking beforehand, and so guiding the future. So our word "providence" is pro-vidence, seeing beforehand, acting by foresight, and therefore the power to watch over, to guard and guide affairs. "Tuā providentiā, Providentiā Cæsaris, is a common inscription on the coins of the emperors. It was a skilful and delicate piece of flattery, to weave this well-known phrase of imperial adulation into his words of praise on this occasion.

"There was absolutely no ground for this statement of Tertullus; within two years of this time, Felix was accused by the Jews of bad government, and the accusation supported by such undeniable proof that he was recalled from his province to Rome, and only escaped punishment through the influence of his brother Pallas, which, though waning, was still powerful at the court of the Cæsar."¹¹

¹ Cambridge Bible.

² Gloag.

³ Valerius Maximus, 2: 2.

⁴ Dion Cassius, 57: 15.

⁵ See Cicero, *De Oratore*, 2: 78, 79, on the Exordium and its rules.

⁶ Wars, 2: 13, 2.

⁷ Antiquities, 20: 8, 5-7.

⁸ History, 5: 9; Annals, 12: 54.

⁹ Byron.

¹⁰ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

¹¹ Schaff.

4 Notwithstanding, ^{But,} that I be not further tedious unto thee, I ^{pray} ^{intreat} thee ^{that thou} ^{wouldst} hear us of thy clemency a few words.

5 For we have found this man ^a pestilent ^{fellow,} ^{yellow,} and ^a mover of ^{sedition} ^{insurrections} among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of ^{the} sect of the Nāz'ā-rēnēs:

6 Who ^{also} ^{moreover} ^{assayed} to profane the temple: on whom ^{also} we ^{took,} ^{and would have} ^{laid hold:} judged according to our law.

n 1 Macc. 10. 61 & 15. 3, 21.

o See Luke 23. 2.

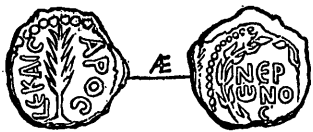
p ver. 14.

ch. 5. 17 & 15. 5 & 26. 5 & 28. 22.

q ch. 21. 27-29.

3. Most noble Felix, *κράτιστε*, the same honorary title which Claudius Lysias gave to him in his letter (23 : 26).

4. That I be not further tedious, *ἐγκόπτω*. The word means, literally, to cut into, to impede



COIN OF FELIX. (Lewin.)

Obverse: A palm branch, with the legend *Καίσαρος Α Ε*. (of Caesar in the year 5), the fifth year of Nero. Reverse: *Νερόνος* (of Nero) in a wreath.

one's course by cutting off his way, hence, to hinder, to detain, "as if Felix was so busy with his reforms that Tertullus would not interrupt him."

THE FIRST CHARGE AGAINST PAUL. 5. We have found this man, pointing to Paul, a pestilent fellow, *λοιμὸν*, a plague, a pestilence, used in 1 Maccabees 10 : 61 to describe "men of a wicked life," and by Demosthenes to designate a dangerous person.

A mover of sedition, *στάσις*, insurrection, among all the Jews throughout the world, the Roman Empire, the civilized world. "We must bear in mind that Paul had been assailed at a time when Jerusalem was full of strangers come to the feast. It is not improbable that from some of the Jewish visitors particulars had been gathered about the apostle's troubles at Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, and elsewhere, which in the minds and on the lips of his accusers would be held for seditious conduct, conduct which had brought him at times under the notice of the tribunals. This Tertullus would put forward in its darkest colors."¹ In Thessalonica the apostle and his companions had been described as "those who had turned the world upside down," and doing things "contrary to the decrees of Cæsar" (17 : 6, 7). This charge would be especially obnoxious to Felix, who had just been praised for keeping the peace in his dominions. It was the

same charge that had been brought against Jesus before Pilate.

THE SECOND CHARGE. And a ringleader, *πρωτοστάτην*, from *πρῶτος*, first, and *ἰστημι*, to stand; hence, one who stands first in the line, and leads the file. Our word ringleader means the leader of a ring or circle, i. e., a clique, as it were, in an enclosed space.

Of the sect of the Nazarenes. "This was really in the eyes of the Jews the offence which Paul had committed. It was here urged by the Sanhedrim advocate Tertullus, before a Roman tribunal, as an offence against the laws of the Empire, inasmuch as the prisoner was an acknowledged chief of a worship not licensed and approved by the state, and an introducer of strange gods.

"This is the only passage in the New Testament where the word 'Nazarenes' is used to denote 'the Christians.' We know it was the ordinary Jewish appellation by which the disciples of Jesus were then known. They (the Jews) could not of course use the ordinary term 'Christians,' by which name the disciples of Jesus were known among Pagans. 'Christ' was to every Jew a sacred name, and to these blinded ones still remained a title unappropriated. They were eager to call 'the Crucified Lord' the Nazarene, the citizen of a nameless city; and they chose the dishonored title as the heritage of those who called him Master and Lord, styling them 'Nazarenes.' The name is still used as the designation of the Christians by Jews and Mohammedans."²

THE THIRD CHARGE. 6. Hath gone about to profane the temple, *βεβηλώσαι*, akin to *βηλός*, threshold, and *βαίω*, to step; hence, to step over the forbidden threshold of a temple or sacred place, to profane. So our word "profane" is from the Latin *pro*, before, and *fanum*, a temple, a sacred place, hence, outside of the sacred place, unholy. Paul was charged with bringing the unholy, that which was to be excluded from the sanctuary, into the holy place. "Probably Tertullus wanted to insinuate that the prisoner was punishable even according to Roman law; but

¹ Cambridge Bible.

² Schaff. And it has been stated (Smith's *Dict. of Bible*, art. "Nazarene") that during the Indian Mutiny

of 1855 the Mohammedan rebels relied on a supposed ancient prophecy that the *Nazarenes* would be expelled from the country after ruling for a hundred years.

- 7 But the chief captain Lysias came *upon us*, and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands,
 8 Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: ^{From whom thou wilt be able,} by examining ^{of whom} *him* thyself, ^{mayest} *to* take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.
 9 And the Jews also ^{assented, saying} joined in the charge, affirming that these things were so.
 10 ^{Then Paul, after that} ^{And when} the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, Paul answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do ^{the more} cheerfully ^{answer for myself:} ^{make my defence:}
 11 ^{Because} ^{Seeing} that thou ^{mayest understand,} ^{canst take knowledge,} that ^{there are yet but} ^{it is not more than} twelve days since I ^{to} ^{Jerusalem for to worship.} ^{worship at Jerusalem:} went up ^{to}

r See ver. 1. *s* ch. 8. 27. John 12. 20. *t* ch. 20. 16.

Trophimus as a Greek, and not Paul, would have been exposed to the death penalty, to say nothing of the fact that the charge was only one of suspicion."¹ "The Romans granted the Jews the power of punishing any of their countrymen who profaned their worship; and it would almost appear that they could put to death any Gentile, even though he were a Roman, who crossed the barrier between the court of the Gentiles and that of the Jews."²

Whom we took. How mildly Tertullus states the action of the fanatical mob who would have torn Paul to pieces.

And would, etc. "These words, as well as verse 7 and verse 8 down to 'come unto thee,' are omitted in nearly all the oldest MSS., and by the *Rev. Ver.*, while the Greek text, in those MSS. where it is found, exhibits many variations. But in spite of this it is very difficult to see how the advocate could have avoided some allusion to the circumstances mentioned in these words. Of course he puts the matter in a light most favorable to the Jews. 'We would have judged him according to our law' is very different language from that in which (23: 27) Lysias describes Paul as in danger to be killed by the Jews. The action of Lysias, too, is described by Tertullus as one of great violence. Probably the Roman soldiers would not handle the mob tenderly. But Tertullus is trying to cast blame upon the chief captain and to represent his party as doing all things according to law."³

THE WITNESSES were the high priest and the elders who came from Jerusalem with him, ver. 1.

8. **By examining of whom,** singular number, referring either to Paul or more probably to Lysias,

if we retain the disputed passage. The examination, *ἀνακρίνας*, was not by torture, as in 22: 24, for that would be illegal. The word was a law term among the Greeks, signifying "the preliminary investigation held for the purpose of gathering evidence for the information of the judges."⁴

9. **And the Jews also assented,** *συπέθευρο*, lit., *placed together*, hence, *assented to*, *agreed to*. The better reading, however, is *συνετέθευρο*, *placed themselves together against*, i. e., *joined in the charge*, assailed Paul together with Tertullus.

PAUL'S DEFENCE, vers. 10-21.

INTRODUCTION. 10. **Then Paul . . . answered.** Paul's preamble was at once courteous, sincere, and true to fact. It was "complimentary without falling into flattery." "There is scarcely a more striking contrast in the records of oratory than that between the fulsome harangue of the hired advocate Tertullus and the manly simplicity of Paul's defence. His own attitude toward Roman magistrates was invariably that of a respectful but independent citizen."⁵

Thou hast been of many years a judge. Felix was appointed procurator in A. D. 52, so that he had been in office five or six years, which was a long term of office in those unsettled times. The average term of the three preceding governors was less than three years. It is noticeable that Paul here calls Felix "judge" for these years, and there are reasons for believing that Felix was a judge under Cumanus some years before he became procurator, in which case the "many years" may have been ten instead of five or six.⁶

I do the more cheerfully. The best texts

¹ Knowing. See Schlürer, *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. i. p. 74, note; Div. 2, vol. i. p. 266; Edersheim's *Temple and its Services*, 24.

² Gloag. So Josephus, *Wars*, 6: 2, 4.

³ *Cambridge Bible*. See Rendall, and Knowing's note, p. 479.

⁴ Thayer's *N. T. Lexicon*.

⁵ William Smith, *New Test. History*.

⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20, and Tacitus, *Annals*, 12,

seen to be contradictory. Knowing shows how a reconciliation is possible. Ramsay says that the contradiction "is resolved by Mommsen in favor of Tacitus as the better authority on such a point; and most students of Roman history will agree with him." *St. Paul*, 313. See, also, Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, art. "Chronology;" McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, 358; Schlürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. ii. p. 173, etc.

12 And ^u they neither found me in the temple ^{neither in the temple did they find me} disputing with any man, ^{neither raising or stirring up} the people, neither crowd, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13 Neither ^v can they prove to thee the things whereof they now accuse me.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after ^w the way which they call heresy, ^x so ^{worship serve} I ^z the God of ^{my our} fathers, believing all things which are ^{written in} according to the law, and which are written in the prophets:

^u Cp. ch. 25. 8. ^v ch. 25. 7. ^w ver. 22. See ch. 9. 2. ^x ver. 5. ^y 2 Tim. 1. 3. Cp. ch. 27. 23 & Luke 1. 74 & Rom. 1. 9 & Heb. 9. 14 & 12. 28. ^z See ch. 3. 13 & 22. 3. ^a ch. 26. 22 & 28. 23. Cp. Rom. 3. 21.

omit "the more" (the comparative degree) and simply say "I do cheerfully." The long experience of Felix in Judea would enable him to understand and appreciate the facts which Paul was about to state as no stranger could possibly do.

PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE FIRST CHARGE. 11. Thou mayest understand. The events were so recent that Felix could easily ascertain the exact truth of the occurrences; and his knowledge of the Jews, their customs and characteristics, would enable him to give them their true value.

There are yet but twelve days, not more than twelve days. There are several ways of reckoning these twelve days, varying chiefly as to the point from which the five days of ver. 1 are counted. Perhaps the most satisfactory is as follows:—

DAYS.

1. Meeting with James at Jerusalem.
2. } Days of the vow.
3. }
4. }
5. }
6. Mob and arrest.
7. Trial before the Sanhedrim.
8. On the way to Cæsarea.
9. }
10. } At Cæsarea awaiting trial, five days in-
11. } clusively.
12. }
13. Trial before Felix.

Rendall would make the twelve days begin with the last day he went up to worship in the temple, on which he was attacked by the mob.

For to worship, *προσκύνησεν*. The verb means properly to *kiss the hand* to one in token of reverence; hence, among the Orientals to *fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead* as an expression of profound reverence; hence, *homage and worship toward God*. It was just the op-

posite of exciting seditions and tumult. "The purpose was in itself an answer to each accusation—reverence not insurrection, conformity not heresy, worship not profanity."¹

12. They neither found me in the temple disputing. Discussing the disputed questions which might excite a tumult. He was a quiet, peaceful worshipper. Neither raising up the people, making an *ἐκτίσθαι*, a gathering of a crowd together against some one, or some cause with hostile intent, a *concourse* of people. The crowd around Paul in the temple was gathered by his enemies, not by himself. The accusation against Paul was like that which Ahab made against Elijah, that he caused the famine which was really caused by Ahab's own sins.

In the synagogues. Plural, because there were so many in the city. These acts, disputing and raising up a popular tumult, are denied with reference to these three places, the temple, the synagogues, and the city.

13. Neither can they prove the things, that not only in Jerusalem, but throughout the world he had excited sedition. They did not even attempt to prove it, nor bring any witnesses, for all true witnesses would have been compelled by the facts to testify in favor of Paul. The only charge which was serious before Roman law was thus thrown out of court.²

PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE SECOND CHARGE. He acknowledged that he was "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," but denied that it was heresy against the Jewish religion.

14. After the way which they call heresy. Better, with R. V., "after the Way which they call a sect." Christianity was not a sect, a division and divergence from the Jewish religion by self-willed schismatics, but the only Way through which the Jewish religion could fulfil its mission; it was the blossoming and fruitage of

¹ Knowing.

² "Then the Shepherds had the Pilgrims to another place called Mount Innocent, and there they saw a man clothed all in white, and two men, Prejudice and Ill-will, continually casting dirt upon him. Now, behold, the dirt, whatsoever they cast at him, would in a little time fall off again, and his garment would look as clear as if no dirt had been cast thereat. Then said the Pilgrims, 'What means this?' The Shepherds answered, 'This

man is named Godly-man, and this garment is to show the innocency of his life. Now, those that throw dirt at him are such as hate his well-doing; but, as you see the dirt will not stick upon his clothes, so it shall be with him that liveth truly innocently in the world. Whoever they be that would make such men dirty, they labor all in vain; for God, by that a little time is spent, will cause that their innocency shall break forth as the light, and their righteousness as the noon-day.'"—John Bunyan.

15 ^{And ^h have} ^{Having} ^chope toward God, which ^{they themselves also allow,} ^{these also themselves look for,} that there shall be ^da resurrection ^{of the dead,} ^eboth of the just and unjust.

16 ^{And herein} ^{Herein} do I also ^fexercise myself to have ^{always} a conscience ^gvoid of offence toward God and ^{toward} men ^{always}.

17 Now ^hafter many years ⁱI came to bring alms to ^jmy nation, and ^kofferings:

^b See ch. 23. 6. ^c Tit. 2. 13. ^d Luke 14. 14. ^e See Dan. 12. 2. ^f Cp. 1 Tim. 4. 7, 15. ^g 1 Cor. 10. 32. Phil. 1. 10. ^h Cp. Jude 24. ⁱ See ch. 23. 1. ^j Cp. ch. 20. 31. ^k Rom. 15. 25-28, 31. 1 Cor. 16. 1-3. 2 Cor. 8. 1-4 & 9. 1, 2, 12. Cp. Gal. 2. 10. ^l ch. 26. 4 & 28. 19. ^m Cp. ver. 11 & ch. 20. 16.

the whole tree, not a mere branch grafted into it, and bearing a different kind of fruit.

Then Paul presented three reasons why his way of worship was not a sect or heresy, but a Way.

FIRST. So worship I, *λατρεύω*, *serve, render religious service to*. This meaning of the word seems "to spring from the conception of complete devotion of powers to a master."

The God of my Fathers, better "our" fathers. Paul worshipped the same God as the other Jews, even his accusers. It was no strange God whom he preached.

SECOND. He believed all things which are written in the law. Better as R. V., "which are according to the law," the phrase used by Tertullus in his charge, ver. 6. He rejected some of the interpretations which the scribes had put upon the law and the prophets; but what they actually taught he accepted. His whole doctrine of the Messiah was founded on them. His arguments were from the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Messiah. Christ and his gospel did not destroy the law and the prophets, but fulfilled them.

THIRD. 15. Paul agreed with the Pharisees in having hope toward God, supporting itself on God, looking to God as its source and fulfiller, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and therefore immortal life. Both of the just and unjust, the first to everlasting life, to "shine as the brightness of the firmament . . . and as the stars for ever and ever;" and the others "to shame and everlasting contempt," as taught by their prophet Daniel (12: 2, 3).¹

16. Herein, in this confession of faith and principles just expressed. Do I exercise myself, *ἀσκάω*. The verb means *to work raw material into some object, to form curiously by art as a bowl*,² or a chariot finely wrought with gold.³ Hence, *to adorn, then to practise athletic arts, to discipline, to train as the human soul into its perfection,*

"implying training one's self, as in an art that requires practice for its perfection (comp. 1 Cor. 9: 27; 1 John 3: 3)." We are apt to think that whatever other difficulties the apostles had to contend with, they had none within. But it was not so. The whole aim of Paul's life was to be free from such evils as had been charged against him. A conscience void of offence, *ἀπρόσκοπον*, from *d*, not, and *προσκόπτω*, to strike against, to stumble; hence, a conscience that does not stumble, nor is a cause of stumbling to others.

Toward God in heart and worship, and **toward men** in good deeds. "It is a commonplace in military economy that a soldier cannot be made in a day. Raw recruits, however perfect may be their arms and their uniform, are useless when they meet an enemy. Wherein really consists the strength of an army in the day of battle? In the previous exercise of the individual combatants."⁴

PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE THIRD CHARGE. 17. Now after many. Several years' absence from Jerusalem. It was four years since he was there, and then only for a brief time, at the close of the second missionary journey (Acts 18: 22); eight years since he was there for any length of time at the conference, A. D. 50, at the close of the first missionary journey (Acts 15: 1-30), and twenty-one since he lived there before his conversion (Acts 9: 1, 2). I came to bring alms to my nation. The large sums he had been collecting in Corinth and Macedonia. (See Rom. 15: 25; 1 Cor. 16: 1-4; 2 Cor. 8: 1-4; Gal. 2: 10.) This showed how much Paul cared for his people. Doing good to others, and especially to enemies, is one of the best answers to those who slander us. And offerings. The customary Pentecost sacrifices in the temple. This was the exact opposite of sacrilege, and was the answer to the charge of profaning the temple. Compare Christ's twice cleansing the temple from the profanation of the Jews (John 2: 13-16; Matt. 21: 12, 13), which

¹ "Josephus, in giving an account of the ordinary Pharisaic doctrine, speaks only of the virtuous reviving and living again, *Antiquities*, 18: 1, 3. So too in the Talmudic literature the resurrection of the dead is a privilege of Israel, and of righteous Israelites only—there is

no resurrection of the heathen. On the other hand there are passages in the Book of Enoch where a resurrection of all Israelites is spoken of." Knowing.

² *Iliad*, 23: 743.

³ *Iliad*, 10: 438.

⁴ William Arnot.

18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me ^{neither with multitude, nor} purified in the temple, ^{with no crowd, nor yet with} ^{neither with multitude, nor} ^{with tumult.} ^{with tumult:} but ^{there were} certain Jews from Asia—

19 Who ^{ought to have been here before thee, and} ^{to make accusation,} if they had aught against me.

20 Or else let these ^{same here} men themselves say ^{if they have found any evil doing in me, while} ^{what wrong-doing they found, when} I stood before the council,

21 Except it be for this one voice, ^{that I cried standing among them,} Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question ^{by} before you this day.

22 And when ^{But} Felix, ^{heard these things,} having more ^{perfect} knowledge ^{of that way, he} ^{concerning the Way,} deferred them, ^{and said,} When Lys'i-ās the chief captain shall come down, I will ^{know the uttermost of} ^{determine} your matter.

23 And he ^{commanded a} centurion ^{that he should be kept in charge, and should have indulgence ;} ^{to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty,} and ^{that he should} forbid ^{none} of his ^{acquaintance} friends ^{to minister} ^{or come} unto him.

l ch. 21. 26 & 26. 21.
ch. 28. 16.

m ch. 21. 27.

n See ch. 23. 30.

o See ch. 23. 6.

p ver. 14.

See ch. 9. 2.

q Cp.

shows how the gospel stood in relation to the temple.

18. Certain Jews from Asia, of which province Ephesus was the capital. Found me purified, ἡγιασμένον, from ἁγρός, pure, sinless; hence, purified, made ceremonially pure; referring to the purifications required by the Nazirite vow, and the worship and offerings in the temple. Neither with multitude. Paul gathered no crowd; the Jews did all that.

19. Who ought to have been here. They did not dare to come, because they were the ones who had done the wrong and were liable to punishment. "To have repeated the charges of the Asiatic Jews would have prejudiced the prisoner; to show that they were the only witnesses against him, and they absent, strengthened his case."¹ In their absence he demanded the witness of the Jews who were present, as to what they knew of his conduct before the Sanhedrim.

21. Except it be. He had not done any evil, and the only possible thing which could be construed into exciting a tumult was his siding with one party in the council, which was the occasion of a division among them. For this one voice. "Voice" refers to the act of speaking rather than to what was said. Touching the resurrection, etc. He quotes his own words (chap. 23: 6), and quite accurately.

There was no answer to Paul's argument, for there could be none.

THE DECISION DEFERRED FOR TWO YEARS,
vers. 22-27.

22. Felix . . . having more perfect, exact, knowledge of that way, concerning the Way, the

teachings of Christ. Cornelius the centurion and Philip the evangelist lived at Cæsarea, and Felix' wife was a Jewess (ver. 24). Therefore, knowing the character of the disciples, and that Paul's story accorded with what he knew of them, Felix, by deferring his decision, avoided outrageous injustice to Paul, and at the same time avoided giving serious offence to the turbulent Jews who knew his evil deeds. His excuse was that Lysias, the chief captain, could give him personal testimony that would be decisive between the contradictory assertions of the two parties. I will know the uttermost, διαγνώσσομαι, to know all through, to know accurately, and hence, in a legal sense, to decide a case, to give his decision.

23. Keep Paul that "Paul should be kept in charge" as a prisoner, and to let him have liberty. Better, "and should have indulgence," ἐνεσθῆναι, from ἀνίστημι, to let up, to relax, to loosen, as the tense string of a bow; hence, relaxation of the rigors of imprisonment, all the indulgence consistent with his safety. "Prisoners in military custody were as a rule chained to a soldier. No exception was made to this rule in Paul's case. Speaking at Rome he mentions his chain (28: 20). His bonds are named on three earlier occasions in the Acts, viz., when he was brought before the Sanhedrim, when Felix departed, and when he appeared before King Agrippa (22: 30; 24: 27; 26: 29). Indulgence was granted him in respect of food, lodging, and friends, but did not probably include removal of his chain. It did not certainly in the case of Agrippa's imprisonment at Rome, which is related in similar language by Josephus."²

Forbid none of his acquaintance, such as

¹ Rendall.

² Rendall. See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18: 6, 7.

24 ^{And} after certain days, ^{when} Felix came with ^{his wife Drusilla,} ^{his wife,} which was a Jewess, ^{he} sent for Paul, and heard him concerning "the faith 'in Christ'

Jesus.

25 And as he reasoned "of righteousness, ^{and} temperance, and ^{the} judgment to come, Felix ^{trembled,} ^{was terrified,} and answered, Go thy way for this time; ^{and} "when I have a convenient season, I will call ^{for thee,} ^{thee unto me.}

s See ch. 20. 21. t Gal. 2. 16. Cp. Rom. 3. 24. u Cp. Tit. 2. 12, 13. v ch. 17. 32. Cp. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

Luke, Philip the evangelist, and the Christians of the city.

VALUE OF THIS IMPRISONMENT TO PAUL. Doubtless this mild imprisonment was the best thing for Paul.

1. He was sickly and worn out, and needed rest. Luke, his physician, was with him. He probably would not have taken this rest unless he had been compelled by circumstances beyond his control.

2. It may have been best for him spiritually. "St. Paul had spent many a long and busy year building up the spiritual life of others, founding churches, teaching converts, preaching, debating, struggling, suffering. His life had been one of intense spiritual, intellectual, bodily activity on behalf of others. But no one can be engaged in intense activity without wasting some of the spiritual life and force necessary for himself. Religious work, the most direct spiritual activity, visiting the sick, or preaching the gospel, or celebrating the sacraments, make a tremendous call upon our devotional powers, and directly tend to lower our spiritual vitality unless we seek abundant and frequent renewal thereof at the source of all spiritual vitality and life."¹ Thus Moses, Elijah, and John the Baptist had enforced periods of retirement.

3. During these two years, as well as during his imprisonment in Rome, Paul had an opportunity "such as he never had before, of realizing, digesting, and assimilating in all their fullness the doctrines he had so long proclaimed to others." He was, perhaps unconsciously, preparing to write those epistles which have enabled him to preach the gospel throughout all the ages, and mould Christian thought for all time.²

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage."

24. And after certain days, when Felix came,

¹ Prof. Stokes, *Expositor's Bible*.

² So Luther found time for noble work while shut up in Wartburg Castle with "liberty." Bunyan in his prison could not understand why God should thus allow him to be shut out from his work for the best twelve years of his life, his soul longing to preach the gospel, and thousands waiting to hear him. He could not then see, what now is plain, that by the *Pilgrim's Progress* he there wrote, he

literally, "Felix having come . . . sent for Paul." Either Felix had been away from Cæsarea for a time, and on his return sent for Paul; or he came to a reception room in the prison, and sent for the prisoner to meet him there.

With his wife Drusilla. Drusilla was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I., who died in Cæsarea in horrible torments (Acts 12: 23), and sister of the Herod Agrippa II., of chapter 25, and therefore a Jewess. She was endowed with extreme beauty, like her sister Bernice of the next chapter, and married, when only about fifteen, Azizus, the petty king of Hamath, north of Palestine. Felix, a libidinous old slave, well advanced toward sixty, by the aid of that Simon Magus, it is said, who wanted to buy the Holy Ghost (Acts 8: 18, 19), seduced the girl, then only eighteen years old, and carried her away as his wife. They had one son, "Agrippa by name, in whom there seemed danger of another generation of the accursed race of Herod. But God is merciful. The awful eruption of Vesuvius, A. D. 79, that overwhelmed Pompeii amid its luxuries, its debaucheries, and its idolatries, blessed mankind by burying beneath the storm of suffocating ashes the Princess Drusilla and her only child."³

He sent for Paul. Either from curiosity to see such a well-known man, or from some remnant of conscience and thought of a better life, or, as in verse 26, in order to extort money from him. Perhaps all the motives influenced him.

And heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Paul preached the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, which required supreme love to God, and repentance of sin, and a new life which put off the old man with his deeds, and was filled with the fruits of the Spirit. Plumptre may be right in saying, "The procurator and his wife were apparently in the first stage of an earnest inquiry which might have led to a conversion."

25. And as he reasoned, διαλεγόμενον, δια-

has been preaching to millions instead of thousands, and for centuries instead of years.

³ Leonard W. Bacon, D. D. See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 7, 2. Some, as Schlürer, think that Josephus does not refer to Drusilla, but to the wife of Agrippa, when he speaks of "the wife" as perishing in the eruption of Vesuvius. See Farrar's *The Herods*.

26 He hoped ^{also} ^{withal} ^{that} money ^{should have been} ^{would be} given him of Paul; ^{that he might loose} ^{him}: wherefore ^{also} he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

w Cp. ver. 17.

logued, discoursed, argued. Paul naturally pressed home such great motives for accepting Christ, as would appeal most strongly to such characters as Felix and Drusilla. And he did it without fear or favor.

Of, concerning, righteousness, δικαιοσύνης, the state of him who is as he ought to be, integrity, justice, purity of life, and all the duties which man owes to man. How Felix had failed in these duties his whole past life proved, as we have seen at the beginning of this chapter,¹ and Drusilla at his side was a present living proof. But Paul's object was not to condemn them, but to lead them to repentance.

Note that Paul condemned the vices by teaching and picturing the opposite virtues. He let the truth convict them. The positive was much the more effective way. For if you cultivate the virtues, you must, by very necessity, root out the vices, but you can cut down the vices and not have any virtues in their place, but only room for a new growth of vice. The seven unclean spirits may take the place of the one cast out (Matt. 12: 43-45).

Temperance, ἐγκρατείας, from ἐν, in, and κρᾶτος, strength, power; hence, having power and control over one's self, ability to guide and restrain all one's feelings and appetites; having the passions and powers of the soul under the control of reason and conscience, as a horse is under the control of its rider, and obeys his guiding rein, or a ship is under the control of its captain.

Paul here again showed his faithfulness and courage, for his audience of two were living in adultery; "voluptuaries who thought only of pleasure and revelling;" and Paul's words must

have cut to the quick. As in the cases of Herod and Herodias, and Ahab and Jezebel, the wife was more to be feared than the husband.²

It was but a short time before this that "the upright Jonathan, to whom he owed his office, ventured to reason with him of righteousness, and Felix hired assassins to murder him."

And the judgment to come, with its rewards for virtue, and punishment for sin and crime. Paul presented this motive in all its terrible force to persuade those before him to enter upon the life of righteousness and self-control. Without doubt he showed how ready Christ was to forgive sins, and to welcome the prodigal to his Father's house and kingdom; how able he was to impart the new life of righteousness and peace.

Felix trembled. Better as R. V., *was terrified*.³ Well might he be filled with fear. His conscience told him that what Paul said was true. Note that it is not said that Drusilla trembled. Eugene Stock says that it was because she was too reckless and hardened. She was past feeling. Her conscience was seared as with a hot iron, for she, having been brought up as a Jew, had sinned against more light. Go thy way for this time, τὸ νῦν ἔχον, literally, as to what has itself now; the things that belong to "the now," the present time, with no outlook into what is coming in the future. Fear sent away not the sin, but the preacher. When I have a convenient season. He put off deciding to repent till he could hear more. But his good feelings vanished like "the morning cloud and the early dew." The convenient season never came. To have become a Christian would have been costly, but so was sin.⁴

¹ See Tacitus, *Annals*, 12: 54; *History*, 5: 9.

² Compare Bishop Latimer preaching before Henry VIII. Luther before the Diet of Worms. Socrates and the Athenians: Plato's *Apology*, p. 23.

³ Compare Browning's *Poems*, "Pippa Passes." "I know no poem since *Macbeth* that so portrays the agony of an awakened conscience." Pres. Stanley Hall's *A Study of Fears*. Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, vol. II., "The Bosom Serpent," where the chief character continually exclaims, "It gnaws me." Hood's *Poems*, "Dream of Eugene Aram." The Roman poet Persius, *Satires*, about thirty years after the murder of John, uses this experience of Herod to show how superstitious fear mars all the pleasures of life. "The Furies" in *Classical Dictionary*. An interesting parallel to Herod and his course here is given in Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. IV. pp. 456-459; concerning Xerxes. On the power of conscience, see Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures* (vol. IV.), "Conscience," where are brought together illustrations from a wide range of literature.

Shakespeare's *Richard III.*, to whose last vision came the ghosts of his victims, saying, "Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow."

⁴ "To-morrow and to-morrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death."

Shakespeare, *Macbeth*.

"Procrastination is the thief of time.
Year after year it steals till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal time."

Young.

Butler's *Analogy*, the famous chapter 5, on the weakening of passive impressions by repetition, as in the well-known effect of not heeding the alarm clock's call to

27 But ^{after} when two years ^{Porcius Festus came into Felix's room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, were fulfilled, by Porcius = Festus; and y desiring to gain favour with the Jews, = Felix left Paul bound, in bonds.}

x ch. 25. 1 & 26. 24.

y ch. 25. 9. Cp. ch. 12. 3 & Mark 15. 15.

z ch. 25. 14. See Luke 21. 12.

26. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul.¹ There are several sources from which Felix might have expected that Paul could derive funds to buy his liberty. He knew from Paul's own statement (ver. 17) that he had been collecting money for the poor at Jerusalem, and he could not imagine that money could pass through his hands without some of it cleaving to them. "Spitta thinks that *Philippians* may have been written from Cæsarea, and that therefore (Phil. 4: 10) Felix had double cause to suppose that the poor missionary had command of money; but without endorsing this view as to the place of writing of *Philippians*, it may be suggested that St. Paul's friends at Philippi might have helped to provide financial help for the expenses of his trial: Lydia, *e. g.*, was not only ready with large-hearted hospitality, but her trade in itself required a considerable capital."² Moreover Paul had many friends in Antioch, Corinth, Cæsarea, and other places, who would deny themselves to almost any extent to release Paul.

Professor Ramsay suggests another source from which money might come. "Several facts show that during the following four years Paul had considerable command of money. Imprisonment and a long lawsuit are expensive." "A poor man never receives such attentions" as were given to Paul by Felix, Princess Drusilla, King Agrippa, and Queen Bernice. Therefore it is probable that in some way Paul had come into his hereditary property. Even if he had been disowned by his family during the earlier years of his missionary labors, which would account for his poverty, on the death of his father he would come into his inheritance as "legal heir, whose right could not be interfered with by any will."³ "When Overbeck expresses surprise that Felix did not deliver Paul to the Jews for money, he forgets that Paul's Roman citizenship would make such an action much more dangerous than his detention."²

awake in the morning. Southey's poem, *The Incheape Rock*. Poems: "The Doomed Man;" "The House of Never;" "The Land of Pretty Soon" (all in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*).

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Shakespeare.

¹ There is a curious little picture in the Crystal Palace gallery of Munich called "The Red Fisherman." The

Sent for him the oftener. Nothing could more plainly show the corruption of the Roman government than the conduct of Felix in face of the law:² "Lex Julia de repetundis præcepit, ne quis ob hominem in vincula publice conjiciendum, vinciendum, vincirive jubendum, exve vinculis dimittendum; neve quis ob hominem condemnandum, absolvendum . . . aliquid acceperit."⁴ (The Julian law enjoins concerning bribes, that no one shall receive anything in return for putting any man publicly into chains, confining him, or ordering him to be confined, or for releasing him from his chains; nor in return for condemning or acquitting a man.) "It is not impossible that the alternative of Paul's protracted imprisonment under Felix was not his release, but his conviction, and that if Felix had not hoped to receive a bribe, he would have passed sentence upon him long before he was succeeded by Festus."⁵

27. But after two years. Probably 58, 59, or 59, 60. See Table of Chronology for varying dates.⁶

Porcius Festus. We know nothing concerning him except from the Acts and Josephus. "Josephus tells us that he governed his stormy province with a wise, firm rule, putting down the Sicarii (assassins), and other predatory companies, who were then harassing Judea. He finds no fault with Festus. His rule, unfortunately, was prematurely cut short by death, before he had completed his second year of office."⁷ Two other events besides those related in the Acts "marked his procuratorship: (1) the quarrel between the priests and Agrippa, because the latter built on to his palace so as to overlook the temple, and the priests retaliated by building so as to shut off his view. Festus sided with Agrippa, but allowed the priests to appeal to Rome. (2) The decision of the emperor in favor of the Syrian against the Jewish inhabitants of Cæsarea, which caused a bitterness provoking in A. D. 66 the disturbances in which Josephus⁸ marked the beginnings of the great War."²

devil in red costume is fishing for men who are like fishes in a pond. The bait on his hook consists of gold coins, but near him are other kinds of bait, — crowns, swords, wine, jewels.

² Knowing.³ St. Paul, 310-312.⁴ Digest, xl. 11, 3 (Wetstein).⁵ McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, 354, note.

⁶ See Turner's article on "Chronology" in *Hastings' Bib. Dic.*, and art. "Festus;" Schürer's *Jewish People*, Div. I., vol. ii. p. 188.

⁷ Schaaf.⁸ *Antiquities*, 20: 8, 9.

Came into Felix' room. The Greek idiom is "Felix received Porcius Festus as his successor."

Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, χάριτας καταθέσθαι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, lit., to lay up thanks for himself with the Jews. R. V., correctly, to gain favor with the Jews; to lay up a store of good will or favor to be requited at some future period. "A frequent phrase in the best

classical authors. Felix had good reason thus to try and put the Jews under obligation to him at the close of his government. For the danger was great to the retiring governor of complaints being sent to the emperor of oppression and plunder, which were often listened to and punished. Josephus relates,¹ in point of fact, that the chief Jews in Caesarea sent an embassy to Rome to lodge a charge against Felix before Nero."²

¹ Antiquities, 20 : 8, 9.

² Schaff.

CHAPTER 25.

PAUL'S CASE COMES BEFORE FESTUS.

THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR, vers. 1-12.

Paul in prison at Caesarea.
Festus enters upon his duties as governor.
The Jews desire him to bring Paul to Jerusalem for trial.
Festus decides to try Paul at Caesarea.
He invites the Jews to come there with their charges.
They bitterly denounce Paul.
Paul appeals to Cæsar.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HEARING BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA, vers. 13-27.

Agrippa and Bernice pay a visit of congratulation to Festus.
Festus states the case of Paul to them.
The court assembles.
Festus states the occasion of the hearing.

TIME. A. D. 59 or 60.

"According to the Roman law Festus sailed by April 15, and would naturally arrive at Caesarea the last of June."

1 Now when Festus was come into ^a the province, after three days ^{he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem}
Festus therefore, having come into ^a the province, after three days ^{he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem}
from Caesarea.

2 Then ^{And} the ^{high priest} chief priests and the ^{chief} principal men of the Jews ^b informed him against Paul; and they besought him,

3 ^{And desired} Asking favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem: ^c laying wait ^{in the way to kill him, to kill him on the way.}

a ch. 23. 34. b ver. 15. c See ch. 9. 24.

THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR, vers. 1-12.

1. Now when Festus. The new governor was in every way a better man than Felix. He "had a straightforward honesty about him which forms a strong contrast to the mean rascality of his predecessor. He certainly did not do all the justice that he might have done; but, allowing somewhat for the natural desire to ingratiate himself with the people of his government, his conduct, on the whole, was exemplary, and his firmness in resisting the unjust demands of the Jews cannot fail to elicit our admiration."¹

Come into the province, ἐμβὰς τῇ ἐπαρχείᾳ,

from ἐπὶ, over, and ἀρχή, a principality, or magistracy. "Ἐπαρχία denotes the administrative province of a magistrate, not province in a local sense; nor could ἐμβάλειν be used with a dative for local entrance into a place; it denotes Festus' entrance on his duties as procurator."²

After three days, from his landing at Caesarea at the end of his voyage from Rome. This allows one day for rest and two for his journey to Jerusalem.

2. Then the high priest. The R. V. follows a plural reading, "the chief priests."

The chief, πρῶτοι, the first, the principal men.

¹ Lewin, St. Paul, 2 : 69.

² Rendall.

4 But ^{Howbeit} Festus answered, that Paul ^{should be} kept in charge at Cæs-ä-rē'ä, and that he himself ^{would} depart ^{shortly} ^{thither}.

5 Let them therefore, ^{said} he, which ^{among you are able,} go down with ^{me,} and ^{accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him,} ^{if there is anything amiss in the man, let them accuse him.}

6 And when he had tarried among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea; and ^{the next day sitting on the morrow he sat} on ^d the judgment seat, and commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews which ^{came} down from Jerusalem stood round about him, ^{and laid} bringing against him many and grievous ^{complaints against Paul,} ^{charges,} which they could not prove;

8 While ^{he answered for himself,} ^{Paul said in his defence,} Neither ^{against} the law of the Jews, ^{neither} against the temple, nor ^{yet} ^{against} Cæsar, have I ^{offended any thing} ^{sinned} at all.

9 But Festus, ⁱ ^{willing to do the Jews a pleasure,} ^{desiring to gain favour with the Jews,} answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 ^{Then said Paul,} ^{But Paul said,} I am standing before Cæsar's ^{stand at} judgment seat, where I ought to be judged : to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou ^{also} very well knowest.

^d vers. 10, 17. ^{See} Matt. 27. 19. ^e ch. 24. 13. ^f Cp. ch. 24. 12 & 28. 17. ^{See} ch. 6. 13. ^g John 7. 5 & 19. 7. ^h John 19. 12. ⁱ ch. 24. 27. ^j vers. 6, 17.

"The ruling oligarchy consisted of a small number of priestly families, together with some influential scribes and elders who were associated with them in the Sanhedrim."¹

3. Desired favour, not justice, against him. We learn more about this from what Festus reported to the great assembly of dignitaries at Cæsarea (ver. 24). "A crowd of the city rabble had followed these dignitaries, and sought to browbeat him into submission to them, by a tempest of voices outside, amidst which he could hear, above all others, a cry that the denounced man was not worthy to live."²

Laying wait . . . to kill him, as they had proposed to do when they had asked Lysias to bring him to trial two years before. They were not sure of convicting Paul, even if they could try him, and therefore they did not hesitate to employ the assassin's dagger.

4. But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cæsarea, since he himself should be at the trial, and he was not intending to remain at Jerusalem.

5. But he would grant a fair trial for all, and hence he invited all who were able, to go down to Cæsarea with him, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

6. More than ten days. The better reading is "not more than eight or ten days." And the next day, showing by his promptness that he considered the case of considerable importance. And he would please the Jews who had come with him from Jerusalem, by paying immediate attention to the case they felt to be important.

Sitting on the judgment seat. For without this formality no legal effect would be given to his decision.³

7. Laid many and grievous, βαρέα, weighty, cruel, unsparing, complaints, probably on the three points which Tertullus had urged against Paul, as we learn from Paul's denial in the next verse.

8. Neither against the law of the Jews. Paul denies every charge.

9. But Festus, willing, desiring, to do the Jews a pleasure, the same phrase as in 24 : 27, wishing to gain favor with the Jews. Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, etc. This was practically an acquittal of Paul from the charge that would come under the cognizance of the Roman law. There remained only such charges as would naturally come before the Sanhedrim. The question was whether Paul would accept an informal acquittal from the Roman court on condition that he submit to a trial before his own people on the other counts. And this trial would be in Festus' presence, who would see that he was treated fairly, as a Roman citizen. "It is not unlikely that Festus anticipated what the reply of Paul would be, but he wished to throw as much responsibility as possible on Paul, and so relieve himself in the opinion of the Jews. He well knew that Paul could plead his privilege of Roman citizenship. As far as he was concerned, the Jewish notables would be able to see that no obstacles were thrown by him in the way of their carrying out their customs and rights."⁴

10. Then said Paul. He knew well that there

¹ Rendall.² Geikie.³ Schürer, *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. ii. p. 15.⁴ Schaff.

11 For if I be an offender, or if then I am a wrong-doer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things is true, whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. ^κ I appeal unto Cæsar.

κ ch. 26. 32 & 28. 19.

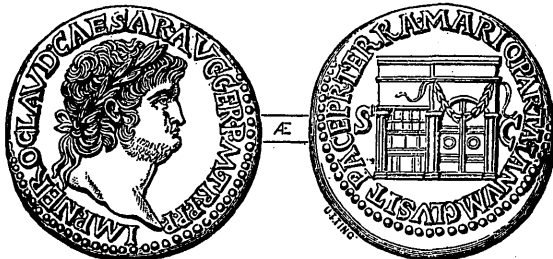
was no justice for him in the court of the Sanhedrim, where the judges were already committed against him, and had plotted to murder him. He therefore frankly claims his rights as a Roman citizen.

I stand, am standing, at Cæsar's judgment seat. The governor was the representative of the Roman government, which had detained him in prison for two years. The Jews charged him with sedition against the Roman government, and he would be tried on that charge, or released. To the Jews have I done no wrong, and, therefore, should not be forced to be tried by them, as thou very well knowest, *καλλιον*, better (in the comparative) *ἐπιγινώσκεις*, thou knowest. "This present cannot be used like the perfect, in the sense of knowing already. The assertion is that Festus is now beginning to know better than before the true state of the case."¹ For until now he had not heard both

sides of the case. On the other hand Plumptre says: "Festus knew this too well to need any further proof. He had heard the random charges, and had seen the worthlessness of the evidence."

11. If I be an offender against Roman law, which is all that you have to do with, I refuse not to die, I am willing to undergo my trial before the Roman court, and accept of their verdict. Refuse not, *οὐ παραιτούμαι*, I do not beg as a favor to escape, I do not seek to avert death by entreaty. "The same verb is used in Luke 14: 18 to describe cowardly excuses for failure in an unwelcome duty; and in Heb. 12: 19 it expresses the cry of the guilty for mercy when threatened by the terrors of a holy Law."¹ But if there be none of these things. If I am found guiltless by the Roman court, I refuse to become the victim of the Jews, my enemies, and no man may deliver me, *χαρίσασθαι*, give me up as a favor, χάρις, unto them. "The dilemma put by Paul is as follows: I am either guilty or not guilty: if guilty, I can be legally tried and condemned, not by them, but by Cæsar, at whose tribunal I stand, and I shall acquiesce in the sentence; but if not guilty, no man can deliver me, a Roman citizen, into their power: and therefore, guilty or not guilty, I shall not be judged by them."²

I appeal unto Cæsar. All Roman citizens had the right of appeal from the court of a subordinate judge to the Emperor at Rome, as a great safeguard against tyranny and oppression on the part of provincial magistrates. "And the *Lex Julia* strictly forbade any unnecessary



COIN OF NERO.

From the British Museum. Lewin.

Obverse: Head of Nero, with the legend "Nero Claud(ius) Cæsar Aug(us-tus) Ger(manicus) Tr. P. P. P. Imp." Reverse: Temple of Janus, with the legend "Face per Terram Marique partis Janum clusit."

impediment to be put in the way of a Roman citizen who had thus appealed. After such an appeal had been admitted, the inferior magistrate had no further power in the case: it became highly penal after that to proceed to extremities. Mere provincials had not this privilege, but were entirely subject to the jurisdiction of their respective magistrates without appeal. Thus Pliny, whilst he punished the provincials, sent to Rome the Bithynian Christians, who were Roman citizens and had appealed to Cæsar."²

Thus he says, concerning them, in his celebrated Epistle to the Emperor Trajan: "Others shared in the like madness, whom, as they were Roman citizens, I noted to be sent to the metropolis."³

"These appeals were generally made in writing; but when it was done in the open court, it was sufficient for the accused to declare his intention of appealing to Cæsar by uttering the single word *Appello*,"⁴ which suspended all further proceedings. Of course such appeals could not all be heard by the emperor in person; and accordingly the Emperor Augustus appointed persons of consular dignity, one for each province, to hear them.⁴

REASONS FOR PAUL'S APPEAL TO CÆSAR. 1.

¹ Rendall.

² Glogg.

³ *Epistles to Trajan*, 10: 97. See discussion of these Letters in Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, ch. 10, "Pliny's Report and Trajan's Rescript."

⁴ Suetonius, *Augustus*, 33. On the whole question of Appeal, see Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, art. "Appeal;" Schürer, *Jewish People*, Div. 1, vol. ii. p. 59.

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, ^{Hast thou}
 appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go. ^{Thou hast}

13 ^{And after} Now when certain days ^{king A-grip'pa} were passed, Agrippa the king ^{came unto} and Bēr-nī'ḡē ^{arrived at} Cæsarea, ^{to salute}
 and saluted Festus.

So long as Paul was in the province of Judea, the pressure from the fanatical Jews would be very great; and "although the character of Festus might have given him a more reasonable anticipation of justice (than under Felix), he had seen enough of the procurator to detect the vacillation which led him also to curry favor with the Jews." So that "there was still the manifest danger that the better judgment of the magistrate would be warped by the selfishness of the politician."¹ And this was the more probable because Festus could learn from the fate of Felix and other governors how dangerous it was to incur the hatred of the Jews.

2. Although "Paul's address may have convinced Agrippa and others, including even Festus, that he had committed no crime, it did not serve to prove that he was not a dangerous character, and that he would not stir up trouble in the future as he had in the past. It was not enough for Paul to prove that his intentions were good, and that there was no valid reason why his teaching should create an excitement and lead to riots wherever he went. The fact that he was the innocent cause of such riots was enough to condemn him in the eyes of the Roman state, and Festus, as a faithful Roman official, could hardly have set him at liberty."²

3. Even if Festus should acquit and release Paul, the Jews could fall upon him by assassins, as they had twice planned to do, at Jerusalem (23: 12) and at Cæsarea (25: 3).

4. Therefore it was plain to Paul that his only safety lay in going to a distant court, which was entirely free from Jewish influence and whither his accusers would not be likely to go.

5. Paul no doubt saw in this appeal an opportunity of accomplishing his long-cherished desire of going to Rome (19: 21) and realizing the Lord's promise to him that he should preach the gospel there (23: 11). Dr. William Smith suggests: "We can but suppose that a sudden inspiration opened his eyes to the path by which he might be carried to the long-desired goal of his hopes at Rome."³

12. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, not the members of the Sanhedrim, who were present, but a council composed of the higher Roman officials or leading citizens, whom Suetonius calls *Conciliarii*, or Advisers,

with whom the governor was to consult in cases of difficulty. "Thus, Josephus informs us that Cumanus took the advice of his friends before he put to death a Roman soldier who had wantonly destroyed the sacred books of the Jews;⁴ and that Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, on receiving contradictory reports from Florus, the procurator of Judea, and from the rulers of Jerusalem, concerning the disturbances among the Jews, consulted with his principal men,⁵ that is, with his council."⁶

The failure to consult with his council in doubtful cases exposed the governor to censure, as is shown by Cicero in his oration against Verres, the governor of Sicily: "Will you deny that you dismissed your council, the men of rank with whom your predecessor and yourself had been wont to consult; and decided the case yourself?"⁷

Unto Cæsar shalt thou go. "The decision of the procurator that the appeal must be allowed, and the words in which it was announced were not meant to frighten Paul, as Bengel supposed, but at the same time they may have been uttered, if not with a sneer, yet with the implication 'thou little knowest what an appeal to Cæsar means.' Moreover, Festus must have seen that the appeal was based upon the prisoner's mistrust of his character, for only if the accused could not trust the impartiality of the governor had he any interest in claiming the transference of his trial to Rome."¹

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HEARING BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA, vers. 13-27.

13. And after certain days, king Agrippa, Herod Agrippa II. He was the son of Herod Agrippa I., who beheaded the apostle James and imprisoned Peter, and whose tragic end at Cæsarea is described in 12: 23. He was king of Chalcis, Trachonitis, Abiléné, Tiberias, Tarichea, and neighboring towns; and held the presidency of the temple and its treasures, and the appointment of the high priest. His capital was Cæsarea Philippi, among the foothills of Lebanon.

He was only 17 when his father died, and was considered too young to become his successor in Judea. Hence as he grew older Claudius Cæsar gave him the principality of Chalcis (A. D. 48)

¹ Knowing.

² McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, 356.

³ N. T. History.

⁴ *Antiquities*, 20: 5, 4.

⁵ *Wars*, 2: 16, 1.

⁶ Gloger.

⁷ Cicero's *Oration in Verres*, 2: 33.

14 And ^{when} ^{as} they ^{had been} ^{there} many days, Festus ^{declared} Paul's ^{cause unto} the king, saying, 'There is a certain man left ^{in bonds} ^{a prisoner} by Felix:

15 About ^m whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed ^{me}, ^{desiring to have judgment} ^{asking for sentence} against him.

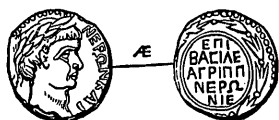
16 To ⁿ whom I answered, ^{that it} is not the ^{manner} ^{custom} of the Romans to ^{deliver} ^{give up} any man, ^{to die,} ^o before that ^{he which is} ^{the} accused have the accusers face to face, and have ^{licence} ^{had opportunity} to ^{answer for himself} ^{make his defence} concerning the ^{crime} ^{matter} laid against him.

17 ^{Therefore, p} ^{when} they were come ^{hither, without any} ^{together here, I made no} delay, but on the ^{morrow} ^{next day} ^{sat} down on the ^q judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought ^{forth.}

l ch. 24. 27. m vers. 2, 3. n vers. 4, 5. o Cp. John 7. 51. See ch. 23. 30. p vers. 7, 24. q vers. 6, 10.

and later the tetrarchy of Herod Philip, with the title of king. He made himself peculiarly obnoxious to the Jews by his capricious changes in the high-priesthood, and by building a magnificent palace in Jerusalem so constructed that one room in it overlooked the temple. When the last war broke out, in which Jerusalem was destroyed, he sided with the Romans. He died at Rome A. D. 99 or 100, at the age of 70, in the fifty-third year of his reign.

And Bernice, the sister of Agrippa, and of Drusilla, the wife of Felix. She was first married



COIN OF HEROD AGRIPPA II. (Lewin.)

Obverse: Head of Nero laureated, with the legend *ΝΕΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ* (Nero Cæsar). Reverse: Within an olive crown is the legend:—

ΕΡΗΒΑΣΙΛΕ	ΑΓΡΙΠΠΗ	ΝΕΡΩΝΙΕ
Under King	Agrippa	Neronias

Neronias is one name of Cæsarea Philippi, given to that city in honor of the Emperor Nero.

when very young to her uncle Herod, prince of Chalcis, and after his death the young widow lived in criminal intimacy with her brother, King Agrippa II., as his wife. "Attracted by her beauty and wealth, Polemo, king of Cilicia, adopted the Jewish religion and made her his wife. But the princess soon deserted him, and again returned to her brother, with whom it is said she lived in illicit intercourse. The Emperor Vespasian allowed himself to be much influenced by her beauty and talents, and grave suspicions were excited that a too close intimacy existed between them. She afterwards became the mistress of Titus, Vespasian's son, who took her to Rome, and is said to have promised to wed her. A storm of public indignation at the bare notion of such

an alliance induced him at the eleventh hour to dismiss her—as Suetonius (*Titus*) pithily puts it,—"Dimisit invitus invitam." (He, unwilling, dismissed her unwilling.) Bernice has earned a place of infamy in the gallery of historical portraits of the first century. Her history, even in that dissolute and wicked age, reads, to use the graphic words of Professor Plumptre, 'like a terrible romance or a page from the chronicles of the Borgias.'"¹ Both Agrippa and Bernice were Jews in religion.

To salute Festus. Agrippa was king of a district partly in Palestine and partly bordering upon it, yet he was completely dependent on the Roman Empire; and therefore it was his interest as a vassal to cultivate a good understanding with the Roman procurators of Judea; and throughout his long life he was always a partisan of Rome. Hence the occasion of his present journey from Cæsarea Philippi to Cæsarea Palestina was to congratulate the new governor Festus on his accession to office.

14. And when they had been there many days, *πλεῖους*, "more days than were necessary for fulfilling the purpose of their visit. They stayed on some days longer."² Festus declared Paul's cause unto, better as R. V., "laid Paul's case before," the king. The Greek, *ἀνέθετο*, being in the middle voice, "the idea is that of relating with a view to consulting." Agrippa being a Jew would be better acquainted than Festus with the points in dispute; and as legal guardian of the temple he would be especially interested in the charge that Paul had attempted to profane the temple.

15. Desiring to have judgment, *δικήν*, evidently here a sentence of condemnation, which they regarded as the true justice or judgment in the case. Several manuscripts have the stronger word, *καταδίκην*, condemnation, a sentence upon the previous conviction of crime, by the Jews.

16. It is not the manner, the custom, the usual mode of procedure. "The facts of the case

¹ Schaff. See Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20 : 7, 3.

² Alford.

18 ^{Against} ^{Concerning} whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought ^{none accusation} ^{no charge} of such ^{evil} things as I supposed;

19 But ^{which} ^{who} had certain questions against him of their own ^{superstition,} ^{religion,} and of 'one Jesus, ^{who} was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

20 And ^{I, because I doubted of such manner of questions, I} ^{being perplexed how to inquire concerning these things,} "asked ^{him} whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.

21 But ["]when Paul had appealed to be ^{reserved unto the hearing of Augustus,} ^{kept for the decision of the emperor,} I commanded him to be kept till I ^{might} ^{should} send him to Cæsär.

22 ^{Then} ^{And} ["]Agrippa ^{said} ^{said} unto Festus, I ^{would also} ^{also could wish to} hear the man myself. Tomorrow, ^{said} ^{saith} he, thou shalt hear him.

23 ^{And} ^{so} on the morrow, when ["]Ä-grip'pä was come, and Bër-ni'cē, with great pomp, and ^{they were} entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and ^{the} principal men of the city, at ^{Festus' commandment} ^{the command of Festus} Paul was brought ^{forth.} ^{in.}

r ch. 18. 15 & 23. 29. *s* Cp. ch. 17. 22 (& for mg.).
x See ch. 9. 15. *y* ver. 13. ch. 26. 30.

t Cp. ch. 17. 18. *u* ver. 9. *v* See ver. 11. *w* ver. 25.

are stated with fair accuracy, but there is a certain measure of ostentation in the way in which Festus speaks of 'the manner of the Romans.' It was, perhaps, natural that a procurator just entering on his term of office should announce, as with a flourish of trumpets, that he at least was going to be rigidly impartial in his administration of justice. It is fair to state that, as far as we know, his conduct was not inconsistent with his profession."¹

To answer for himself. "They (the Romans) became common judges, hearing equally the accusers and the accused, condemning no man unheard, but judging without favor or enmity, according to the nature of the case."²

18. Against whom. Gloag and Meyer prefer to connect this with "stood up," "The accusers standing around whom;" and notwithstanding "brought," "Against whom they brought." None accusation of such things as I supposed. "Paul was accused of treason against Cæsar, and of stirring up the Jews throughout the whole Roman Empire, and the rulers of the Jews were furious against him; and hence Festus naturally supposed that he must be some great criminal, perhaps a leader of one of those bands of robbers with which Judea was at this time infested,"³ or a mover of sedition like "that which had recently given rise to such bloody scenes and a conflict between Greeks and Jews in the streets of Cæsarea."⁴

19. Certain questions . . . of their own superstition, *δαιοδαιμονίας*, fear of the gods. It is used both in the good sense of religion, or the bad sense of superstition. Festus would not call Agrippa's religion a superstition, to his face, any more than Paul would have called the Athenians superstitious, *δαιοδαιμονιστέροις*, on Mars' Hill.

He left Agrippa "to take the word in a good sense, but reserved his own view, which was certainly the Roman one."⁵

The expression, *their own*, may have been used in order not to involve Agrippa in any of these questions, and to imply that Agrippa "was far too enlightened really to believe it, although for political reasons he might outwardly profess it."

Of one Jesus. "These words convey the impression not of mere ignorance, but also of indifference; as if the point of dispute between Paul and the Jews was a matter of no importance."³

20. And because I doubted, *ἀποροῦμενος*, from *ἀ*, not, and *πόρος*, a passage, a way; hence strictly, to be in circumstances where one cannot find a way out, to be perplexed.

21. Till I might send him, *πέμψω*. Several authorities read *ἀναπέμψω*, till I might send him up to a higher authority.

22. I would also hear the man, margin R. V. "I also was wishing to hear." He could better answer the questions of Festus and lead him out of his perplexities, by hearing Paul himself. He may also have had some curiosity, and perhaps a deeper longing, to hear the most distinguished teacher of the Christian religion, and its most noted orator.

THE SCENE AT COURT. 23. In the same magnificent hall in the official palace, which eighteen years before had witnessed the still more stately scene when the father of the present king Agrippa was called a god, and came to his tragic end on account of his pride, the son Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, *φαιρασίαις*, displays, showy appearances, all the splendor of Oriental royalty. Place of hearing, *ἀκροατήριον*. The original term had a very wide

¹ Plumptre.

² Philo, *In Flaccum*.

³ Gloag.

⁴ Knowling.

⁵ Meyer.

24 And Festus ^{said,} ^{said,} King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye ^{see} ^{behold} this man, about whom ^z all the multitude of the Jews ^{have dealt with} ^{made suit to} me, both at Jerusalem and ^{also} here, ^a crying that he ought not to live any longer.

25 But ^{when} I found that ^b he had committed nothing worthy of death: and ^c as he himself ^{hath} appealed to ^a Augustus, ^{the emperor} I ^{have} determined to send him.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, ^o king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I ^{might} ^{may} have somewhat to write.

27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable, ^{to send} ^{in sending} a prisoner, ^{and} not withal to signify the ^{crimes laid} ^{charges} against him.

^z vers. 2, 7.

^a ch. 22. 22.

^b See ch. 23. 29.

^c vers. 11, 12.

^d ver. 21.

application, embracing an ordinary lecture-room, or a royal chamber of audience for state occasions or judicial proceedings. The chief captains, chiliarchs, commanders of Roman cohorts, the highest military officers. "The 5th, 10th, and 15th Legions or regiments of the line, besides five cohorts or auxiliary corps, with accompanying squadrons of cavalry, were usually stationed at Cæsarea, and the gleaming armor and gay attire of the great captains of the Roman army of Judea, with the furred gowns and flowing robes of the municipal authorities, must have presented a most imposing spectacle, and one well calculated to stimulate the energies of the Christian advocate." Paul was brought forth, probably chained to a Roman soldier (26 : 29), "the noblest Roman of them all."

THE QUESTION STATED. 24. And Festus said. Festus arose before this brilliant assembly, and stated the object of their coming together. The prisoner had been vehemently accused as one worthy of death. He had appealed to Cæsar and must be sent to Rome. But Festus, not being well acquainted with Jewish laws and customs, could not make out any definite charge against him that would be a reasonable excuse for send-

ing him as a prisoner to Rome. "Now," he said, "you who are well acquainted with these things, find out what charges should be made against him."

26. To write unto my lord, the Emperor Nero. This expression is regarded as a proof of the accuracy of Luke. The earlier emperors regarded this title as an affront, because it savored of the relation between master and slave, rather than that of Emperor and Roman citizens.

"Thus Suetonius says of Augustus : 'He always abhorred the title Lord, as ill-omened and offensive ; and he would not suffer himself to be addressed in that manner, even by his own children or grandchildren, either in jest or in earnest ;' ¹ and of Tiberius he says : 'Being once called Lord by some person, he desired that he might no more be affronted in that manner.' ² So also Tertullian says : 'Augustus, the founder of the empire, did not wish any to call him Lord.' ³ The emperors who followed, however, accepted the appellation. Caligula accepted the title ; Herod Agrippa I. applied it to Claudius ; in the time of Domitian it was a recognized title ; and Pliny addressed Trajan as My Lord Trajan. Antoninus Pius was the first who put it on his coins." ⁴

¹ Augustus, 53.

² Tiberius, 27.

³ Apologia, 34.

⁴ Gloag.

CHAPTER 26.

PAUL'S ADDRESS BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA.

The graceful introduction, vers. 1-3.
 Paul's position before his conversion, vers. 4-11.
 The story of his conversion, vers. 12-18.
 Paul's life and teaching since then, vers. 19-23.
 Interruption by Festus, ver. 24.
 Paul's reply, vers. 25-27.
 Agrippa "almost persuaded," ver. 28.
 Paul's appeal to him, ver. 29.
 The decision, vers. 30-32.

TIME.
 A. D. 59 or 60.

1 ^{THEN} ^{AND} Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.
 Then Paul stretched forth ^{his} hand, and ^{answered for himself:} ^{made his defence:}
 2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, ^{because I shall answer for myself this day before thee} ^{that I am to make my defence before thee this day}
 touching all the things whereof I am accused ^{of} by the Jews:
 3 Especially ^{because I know thee to be} ^{because thou art} expert in all ^a customs and ^h questions which
 are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

^e See ch. 9. 15.

^f ch. 25. 7, 19. Cp. ver. 7.

^g See ch. 6. 14.

^h See ch. 18. 15.

1. Then Agrippa, who, as the guest of honor for whose sake the assembly had been brought together, sat in the president's seat probably beside Festus, and was the spokesman.

Thou art permitted. "It is noteworthy that the king does not say, 'I permit thee to speak,' but, 'Thou art permitted; ' thus courteously remembering the presence of the Roman procurator Festus, to whom really the power in Cæsarea and Jerusalem belonged."¹ To speak for, ὑπὲρ, in behalf of, thyself. Several manuscripts and some critics support the reading περ, concerning thyself, for Paul was not on trial, but only making a statement of his position.

Then Paul stretched forth the hand, not to ensure silence, as in 12: 17 and 13: 16, but as the common gesture of an orator in opening his address. His right hand, which he would naturally use, was probably chained to a soldier, but Lewin says that though the right wrist was fastened to a soldier's left, it was by a chain of light workmanship, and of sufficient length to allow the wearer the free use of his hand.

Answered for himself, ἀπελογεῖτο. The verb means, properly, "to speak so as to absolve (ἀπό) one's self, talk one's self off of a charge; " hence, to defend or justify one's self in the eyes of another. Paul strove to convince his audience that he was innocent of the charges made against him.

2. I think myself happy. Paul commences his address with a "characteristic union of frank-

ness and courtesy." He appealed to the one good point in Agrippa's bad character and life, not only because it was a courteous and fitting thing to do, but because it was the only way to open Agrippa's heart to the gospel.

The expression also revealed Paul's consciousness of innocence, for "had he been conscious of guilt, he should have feared being tried in the presence of one who knew all the facts; but this is a mark of a clear conscience, not to shrink from a judge who has an accurate knowledge of the circumstances, but even to rejoice and to call himself happy."²

Accused of the Jews. There is no article in the Greek. Paul was accused by Jews, some Jews, and by leaving out the article he is "careful not to identify his accusers with the nation of the Jews" to which both Paul and Agrippa belonged.

3. Especially because I know thee to be expert, γνώστην, lit., a knower, an expert, a connoisseur. The R. V. margin connects "especially" with "expert," as in the Greek, and reads, "because thou art especially expert." So Rendall, Plumptre, Wendt, and others. "The unfortunate transposition of the word especially in the A. V. from its proper position before expert imports a tone of personal flattery into the pre-amble. Paul had one good and sufficient reason for satisfaction in pleading before Agrippa rather than the Roman governor, and one only, that he

¹ Schaff.

² Chrysostom, *Homilies*, 52.

4 My ⁱ manner of life ^{then} from my youth ^{up}, which was ^{at} from the ^{first} beginning among ^j mine own nation, and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;

5 ^{Which knew} Having knowledge of me from the ^{beginning,} first, if they ^{would} be willing to testify, ^{how} that ^k after the ^{most} straitest ^l sect of our ^m religion I lived ⁿ a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand ^{and am} here ^{to be} judged for the hope of ^o the promise made of God unto our fathers;

7 Unto ^p which ^{promise} ^q our twelve tribes, ^{instantly} earnestly serving God ^{day} and ^{night,} night, day, hope to ^{come.} For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, ^r I am accused ^{of} by the Jews; ^{O king!}

8 Why ^{should it be thought a thing} ^{is it judged} incredible with you, ^{that} if God ^{should} doth ^{raise} the dead?

ⁱ Cp. Gal. 1. 13. ^j ch. 24. 17 & 28. 19. ^k ch. 22. 3. ^l See ch. 24. 5. ^m James 1. 26, 27. ⁿ ch. 23. 6.
^o See ch. 13. 32. ^p Cp. ch. 2. 33 & Heb. 10. 36 & 11. 13, 39. ^q Matt. 19. 28. Luke 22. 30. James 1. 1. Rev. 21.
12. Cp. Ezra 6. 17. ^r Phil. 3. 11. ^s ver. 2. ^t Cp. ch. 17. 33 & 1 Cor. 15. 12.

was a Jew, thoroughly cognizant of Jewish questions and customs."¹

"The Rabbinic writers speak of Agrippa as having excelled in a knowledge of the law. As the tradition which they follow could not have flowed from this passage, it confirms the representation here by an unexpected agreement."²

Customs, practical matters, established by law or usage.

Questions. Theoretical opinions, subjects of debate and controversy between different parties, "*consuetudinum in practicis, questionum in theoreticis*."³

4. My manner of life from my youth. He probably came to Jerusalem to study under Gamaliel when he was about 12 years old. He lived in Jerusalem 15 or 20 years after that, was probably a member of the Sanhedrim, and became prominent as a persecutor, and as a most strict observer of the law, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. And all this not in some remote district, but at Jerusalem.

Know all the Jews. His whole life was a matter of public knowledge. He states (1) *how long* they had known him; (2) *where* they had known him so long; and (3) *what* they had known about him.

5. After the most straitest, ἀκριβοτάτην. The superlative of ἀκριβής, which is derived from ἔκρον, the point, the extremity. It designates those who were careful and exact to the last degree, to the minutest point.

The most straitest sect, was that division of the Jews who were the most strict and punctilious, even to "mint, anise, and cummin." "The Pharisees were divided into two classes, the followers of Hillel and the followers of Shammai, the former liberal and catholic, the latter rigid and narrow in their spirit. See Matt. 3: 7. Paul belonged to the straiter or more rigorous faction, not to that which embraced such men as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Gamaliel. Com-

pare his description of his character and experience in Phil. 3: 4-6."⁴ Of our religion, θρησκείας, religious worship, especially the external, which consists in ceremonies.

6. And now I . . . am judged for the hope of the promise, etc. Instead of being a profaner of the temple and the religion of the Jews, I bear witness to the fulfilment of the hopes they cherish, and of the promises for whose realization they are ever looking, and which the temple and its services continually symbolize. The promise made by God to their fathers included not only the resurrection and a glorious future life, but the Messiah and his kingdom.

7. Our twelve tribes, instantly, ἐν ἐκτελειᾷ, from ἐκτελεῖν, to stretch out, hence, with outstretched looking, intently, earnestly. Serving God. However mistaken the Jews were as to the way of serving God, they were deeply in earnest, and their very frenzy of persecution bore witness to the fact. They were day and night looking for the Messiah as a temporal deliverer.

For which hope's sake . . . I am accused. That Jesus was the Messiah and had fulfilled the promise of the Father, was the very heart of Paul's preaching. The gospel was the glorious blossoming and fruitage of the Old Testament promises and hopes. The Pharisees did not recognize in this new development the bare plant they had looked at so long and expected to develop in an entirely different way.

8. Incredible with you, that God should raise the dead. Of course this report of Paul's address is the barest outline of what was actually spoken, touching only on the prominent points. The question in this verse implies that an objection had arisen in word or thought, to the effect that Jesus had been crucified and buried, and therefore could not be the Messiah. But Paul affirmed that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and was now living and doing wonderful works through the apostles. And why should

¹ Rendall.² Hackett.³ Bengel.⁴ Lyman Abbott,

9 I "verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of " Jesus of Nazareth.

10 ^{Which thing} ^{And this} " I also did in Jerusalem: and ^{many of the saints did I shut up} ^{I both shut up many of the saints} in ^{prison,} ^{prisons,} having received authority " from the chief priests; and " when they were put to death, I gave my ^{voice} ^{vote} against ^{them.} ^{them.}

11 And ^{I punished} ^{punishing} them ^{oftentimes} ^{often} in ^{every synagogue, and compelled them to} ^{all the synagogues, I strove to make them} " blaspheme; and ^b being exceedingly mad against them, I ^c persecuted ^{them} ^{even} unto ^{strange} ^{foreign} cities.

" 1 Tim. 1. 13. Cp. John 16. 2. See ch. 3. 17. v ch. 22. 8. w See ch. 8. 3. z ver. 12. ch. 9. 1, 2, 14, 21 & 22. 4, 5. y See ch. 22. 20. z ch. 22. 19. α See ch. 13. 45. b ch. 9. 1. c ch. 22. 5.

you hesitate to believe this? What is there impossible in it? Then Paul goes on to show in the following verses that he had actually seen Jesus and heard him. Therefore Jesus must be alive. Indeed God had done a far more wonderful thing than raising the dead, in raising the persecutor Saul into the new life of the gospel; the most difficult of all the known works of God, the most wonderful transformation. It is easy to believe that he who can remove a mountain can move a mole hill; he who could build St. Peter's could build a house.

9. I verily thought with myself, just as my accusers are thinking now. I can excuse them more readily, because I was then sincerely doing the same kind of wrong to others which I am suffering now.

10. When they were put to death. This implies that others besides Stephen were made martyrs. I gave my voice, ψῆφον, vote; literally, the pebble used in voting. "In the ancient courts of justice the accused were condemned by black pebbles, and acquitted by white,"¹ just as now in some societies black and white balls are used. One who was acquitted was called νικησας, a conqueror. Thus in Rev. 2: 17, those who overcame temptation received a white ψῆφον, pebble, stone, in token that they were delivered from evil and welcomed into eternal life. This word "vote" indicates with great probability that Paul was a member of the Sanhedrim, the court presided over by the chief priests who condemned Christians to death. On the other hand many critics regard the word "vote" as used in the metaphorical sense of casting his influence on that

side, or as voting in a lower tribunal, or in some popular assembly which confirmed the vote of the Sanhedrim.²

"Some insist on the literal sense of the phrase, and infer from it that Paul was a member of the Sanhedrim and voted with the other judges to put the Christians to death. But the Jews required, as a general rule, that those who held this office should be men of years; and Paul, at the time of Stephen's martyrdom, could hardly have attained the proper age. It is said too, on the authority of the later Jewish writers, that one of the necessary qualifications for being chosen into the Sanhedrim was that a man should be the father of a family, because he who is a parent may be expected to be merciful—a relation which, from the absence of any allusion to it in the apostle's writings, we have every reason to believe that he never sustained. The expression itself affords but slight proof that Paul was a voter in the Sanhedrim. *Psephos* (ψῆφος), a stone used as a ballot, like our 'suffrage,' signified also opinion, assent, and accompanied various verbs, as *to place* and *to cast down*, as meaning to think, judge, sanction, with a figurative allusion to the act of voting. Plato uses the term often in that sense."³

11. And compelled them, ἡνάγκαζον, were compelling, the imperfect leaving it doubtful whether he succeeded in his attempts or not. He attempted to compel.⁴

"The change from aorists to imperfects, ἡνάγκαζον and ἐβίβαλον, marks a transition in the narrative from definite acts to unavailing efforts. The attempts to force Christians into a denial of their faith proved fruitless."⁵

¹ Thayer, *N. T. Gr. Lexicon*.

² See Rendall, p. 336.

³ Hackett. See Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul; Farrar's St. Paul*, 1: 78, etc., for the view that Paul had been married. Also *Expositor*, June, 1897. Schürer's *Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. i. p. 194, on voting in the Sanhedrim.

⁴ An interesting parallel is found in Pliny's letters to the Emperor Trajan, from Bithynia, Asia Minor, A. D. 112. "Pliny's procedure was to put three times to them the question whether they were Christians, at the same

time threatening them with punishment. When they persisted in declaring themselves Christians, Pliny condemned to death those who were provincials, while those who were Roman citizens he ordered to be transported to Rome to await the Emperor's decision. The first who were accused—they were no doubt the boldest and most prominent adherents of the faith—appear to have all, without exception, persisted in avowing their religion." Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. 10. Pliny's *Epistles to Trajan*, 96, 97. Hardy's Edition.

⁵ Rendall.

12 Whereupon ^{as I} ^{went} journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission ^{from} of the chief priests,

13 At midday, O king, I saw ⁱⁿ on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them ^{which} ^{that} journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice ^{speaking} unto me; ^{saying} and saying ^e in the Hebrew ^{tongue,} ^{language,} Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ^{it is} ^{hard} for thee to kick against the ^{pricks.} ^{goad.}

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And ^{he} the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But ^{rise,} ^{arise,} and ^f stand upon thy feet; for ^{I have appeared unto thee for this purpose,} ^{to} ^{to this end have I appeared unto thee,} ^{to} make appoint thee a minister and a witness both of ^{these} ^{the} things ^{which} ^{wherein} thou hast seen^t me, and of ^{those} ^{the} things ^{in the which} ^{wherein} I will appear unto thee;

17 Delivering ^h thee from the people, and ^{from} the Gentiles, 'unto whom ^{now} I ^f send thee,

d For vers. 12-18, see ch. 9. 3-8 & 22. 6-11. *e* ch. 21. 40 & 22. 2. *f* Ezek. 2. 1. Dan. 10. 11. *g* See ch. 22. 14, 15. *h* Cp. ch. 12. 11 & 1 Chr. 16. 35 & Jer. 1. 8, 19 & 15. 20. *i* See ch. 9. 15. *j* Cp. Rom. 11. 13 & 1 Tim. 2. 7.

Even unto strange cities. This implies that the persecution under Paul had extended to other cities besides Damascus.

13. **Above the brightness of the sun,** a vivid expression in addition to the accounts given in chapters 9 and 22. These variations impress us with the truthfulness of the narrative, because they are so natural as to be a certain accompaniment of the same story told at different times.

14. **It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.** The sharp points of goads. 'This is "a proverb which finds expression both in Greek and Latin literature; and there may have been a similar proverb current among the Hebrews. Blass, *Gram.* pp. 5, 6, thinks that the introduction of the proverb on this occasion before Festus and Agrippa points to the culture which Paul possessed, and which he called into requisition in addressing an educated assembly. It is not wise to press too closely a proverbial saying with regard to Saul's state of mind before his conversion; the words may simply mean to intimate to him that it was a foolish and inefficacious effort to try to persecute Jesus in his followers, an effort which would only inflict deeper wounds upon himself, an effort as idle as that described by the Psalmist, Ps. 2: 3, 4. At all events Paul's statement here must be compared with his statements elsewhere (1 Tim. 1: 13).'"² But Rendall lays more stress on the other view, that "Saul is warned that by rebelling against God's will he is

only wounding his conscience the more deeply, and will in the end be forced to yield. This throws an interesting light on the state of Saul's mind before his conversion: it seems that he was already stifling conscientious doubts and scruples. The language of heartfelt penitence in which he elsewhere deplores his guilty share in the persecution leads to a corresponding inference."

15. Verses 15-18 evidently contain a summary of what was spoken through Ananias, and revealed by the Lord in a vision, as given in the two other accounts of Paul's conversion. In both cases we have but an epitome, and it is impossible to tell how much was revealed to Paul in each one. It is not at all improbable that on each occasion the substance of both, as here given, was made known to Paul.

16. **But rise.** Calvin says that "Christ made Paul to fall in order to make him humble; now he lifts him up and commands him to be of good courage." **And of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.** "Notably these future revelations referred in the first instance to those special appearances of the Lord to Paul in visions, trances, or ecstasies, such as are chronicled in chap. 22: 17-21, when he fell into a trance as he was praying in the temple, and in the Second Epistle to the Corinthian church (2 Cor. 12: 1-5). Secondly, to those great summaries of divine truth which Paul the apostle put out in after days, in the form of epistles to the Gentile churches —

¹ Compare the Scolia on Pindar's *Pythians*, 2: 173, who explains the origin of the expression; Eschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1633, *Prometheus*, 323; Euripides, *Bacchæ*, "The Female Bacchanalians," 791, "Being enraged, I would kick against the goads, a mortal against a god;"

Terence, *Phormio*, 1: 2, 27; Plautus, in his comic play, *Truculentus*, 4: 2, 55, "If you strike the goads with your fists, you hurt your hands more than the goads."

² Knowing.

18 To ^k open their eyes, ^{and to} that they may turn ^{them} ^m from darkness to light, and ^{from} ⁿ the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive ^o forgiveness ^{remission} of sins and ^{an} ^p inheritance among them ^{which} ^{that} are sanctified ^q by faith ^{that is} in me.

^k Isai. 35. 5 & 42. 7. ^q Cp. Isai. 29. 18 & 32. 3 & Luke 4. 18 & Eph. 1. 18, *al.* ^l Cp. Luke 1. 16 & James 5. 19, 20 (for mg.). ^m Cp. Ps. 36. 9 & Isai. 9. 2 & 42. 16 & John 8. 12 & 2 Cor. 6. 14 & Eph. 5. 8 & Col. 1. 12, 13 & 1 Thess. 5. 5 & 1 Pet. 2. 9, *al.* ⁿ See Luke 22. 53 & 1 Cor. 5. 5. ^o See ch. 5. 31. ^p Cp. Wisd. 5. 5. See ch. 20. 32. ^q Cp. ch. 15. 9 & 2 Thess. 2. 13.

those divine handbooks to Christian doctrine and Christian life. It was really in those lonely hours, perhaps in the still eventide or quiet night, after the day's hard toil spent in the workrooms of men like Aquila the tentmaker, that God indeed appeared to Paul and guided his thoughts."¹

17. Delivering thee, *ἐξαγορεύεως*. The verb means both to choose out, to select one from many, and also to rescue, to deliver. Most commentators take it here in the latter sense. "Though they may and will seize upon thee and persecute thee, yet I am with thee and will save thee from their hands. From the first the Apostle knew that in every city persecution was to be his lot."² "It pledged to him the security which he needed for the accomplishment of his work until his work was done."¹ "This promise no doubt helped to encourage Paul in the midst of the most urgent perils. Strong in the conviction that he had a mighty work to work, and that while engaged in it — like Elisha of old — he would be encompassed with a heavenly guard and directed by a heavenly guidance, he resisted the repeated warnings of dear friends — some of them endowed with the gift of prophecy — who tried to dissuade him from the dangerous journey to Jerusalem (Acts 21: 11) which had resulted in this present captivity, and brought him in the end a prisoner to Rome. How often in that harassed life of his, so touchingly described in his own words in 2 Cor. 6: 4-10; 11: 23-27, must this sure promise have cheered him with a voice not of this world!"³ Hackett objects to the other interpretation, selecting, or, choosing thee, because while it "would suit from the people, yet, as De Wette and Meyer remark, it is inappropriate to from the heathen. Paul was not one of the heathen, and could not be said to be chosen from them."

On the other hand, Overbeck, Page, Conybeare and Howson, Rendall, prefer the meaning "choosing thee." Thus Rendall says, "The Authorized Version delivering is inconsistent with the circumstances as well as incorrect. Saul's urgent need at that time was not deliverance from enemies, for he was not yet subject to persecution, but relief from an accusing conscience. Nor was he in fact delivered from enemies, being persecuted all his life long till his final imprisonment

and martyrdom. The true version choosing reproduces the central point of the revelation made to Ananias; *He is a chosen vessel unto me, . . . while that of delivering runs counter to it; for it was said, I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

"It is worthy of note that Paul is here described as chosen out of the people and the Gentiles — a marked combination of his two special antecedents. He was by birth at once a Jew and a Greek, a true representative of those Jews of the Dispersion to whose number he belonged," and united in his person the varied elements of Greek and Hebrew culture.

18. To open their eyes. For both Jews and Gentiles were like blind men feeling their way while the sunlight was all around them; or like those who close their blinds and draw their curtains to shut out every ray of light from their homes. "Both Jews and Gentiles were blinded (*oûs*, above, referring to both), the former because seeing they saw not, Matt. 13: 13; Rom. 11: 8; the latter in that knowing God in his creation they glorified him not as God, and their senseless heart was darkened, Rom. 1: 21; and to both St. Paul proclaimed the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4: 6; Ephes. 1: 18."⁴ To turn them from darkness to light. This was the first effect of opening their eyes. Paul was God's instrument for the opening of their eyes, through the Holy Spirit. They were in the darkness of ignorance. They did not see God, nor holiness, nor true life, nor true morality, nor eternal life, nor the way to heaven. Christ opened their eyes to see these glorious truths. They were in the darkness of sin, which kept them from opening their eyes, which hindered them from seeking or understanding the great truths of eternal life. Christ came to change their sinful natures, and give them spiritual eyes that could see and love these truths. Paul's enthusiasm would be kindled anew as he remembered how all this had taken place in his own experience of deliverance from physical and spiritual blindness.

From the power, *ἐξουσίας*, both authority and power. (1) "The power of one whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and

¹ Hackett.² Cambridge Bible.³ Schaff.⁴ Knowing.

19 ^{Whereupon,} ^{Wherefore,} O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the "heavenly vision:
 20 But ^{shewed first unto} ^{declared both to} 'them of Damascus' ^{first,} and "at Jerusalem, and through-
 out all the ^{coasts} ^{country} of Judæa, and ^{then} ^{also} ^v to the Gentiles, that they should "repent
 and "turn to God, ^{and do} ^{doing} works ^y ^{meet for} ^{worthy of} repentance.

r ver. 13. s ch. 17. 30 (mg.). t ch. 9, 19, 20. u ch. 9. 26-29 & 22. 17-20. v See ch. 13. 46. w See ch. 2.
 38. z See ch. 14. 15. y Matt. 3. 8. Luke 3. 8.

obeyed (generally translated *authority*);¹ and, (2) physical and mental power, as of a despot who can force others to do what he wills.

Satan, *Σατανᾶ*, Adversary, the inveterate adversary of God and all good, the head of the kingdom of evil, and of the whole hierarchy of evil spirits and evil influences. See Eph. 1: 21; 6: 12; Col. 2: 15; 2 Thess. 2: 9; 2 Cor. 11: 14.²

Of Satan unto God. They were members of Satan's kingdom, serving him, living according to his principles, and going on to his reward. The gospel Paul preached was to lead them into the kingdom of God, to love God with all their hearts, and their neighbor as themselves; to live according to God's laws, to receive his nature, to be endowed with his spirit and his glory.

That they may receive forgiveness of sins, *ἀφεσις*, release as from bondage; *forgiveness of sins*, the letting them go, as if they had not been committed; *deliverance from the penalty of sin*; deliverance from the sin itself, the love of sin, the tendency to sin. "Probably the year of jubilee, called constantly the year of *ἀφεσις*, release, or simply *ἀφεσις* (Lev. 25: 31, 40; 27: 24), and in which all debts were to be forgiven, suggested the higher application of the word."³ This was the first condition of the higher blessing. For till the past sin is blotted out, and we are penitent and conscious of the forgiving love of our heavenly Father, we can never be at peace in his presence.

And inheritance among them which are sanctified, made holy, and thus fitted for their inheritance. A faith that does not sanctify cannot save. "We are saved not in sin, but from sin." See on 20: 32. "And here 'sanctified,' as so often 'saint' in St. Paul's Epistles, is applied to those who have been set on the way of salvation, and not to those who are perfect in holiness. To that they will be brought if they persevere."⁴

THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS. (1) It is not earned, but inherited by becoming a child of God. (2) It is an inheritance of God's nature. (3) It is an inheritance of his fatherly love and care. (4) It is an inheritance of his possessions and his home. (5) It is an inheritance with the

glorious company of his saints. (6) It is the richest, the happiest, the most glorious, the most desirable of all conceivable possessions.

By faith that is in me. These words may be connected with "receive;" the forgiveness and inheritance being received through faith, the condition being placed for emphasis at the end; or they may be connected with "the sanctified," as the means by which they were made holy.

19. Whereupon. That is, after seeing Christ, and hearing his call, and perceiving the grand work to be done by the gospel for men as described in verses 13-18.

I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. He yielded his will, and gave himself up to the truth and to the love and service of Jesus Christ. He was convinced that his former life was wrong and the new life was right; that the gospel was the divine fulfilment of the hopes of the Jews and the promises of God to them; and that it was the true means of benefiting his fellow-men. "The language of the Apostle is significant in its bearing on the relations of God's grace and man's freedom. Even here, with the 'vessel of election' (chap. 9: 15) 'constrained' by the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5: 14), there was the possibility of disobedience. There was an act of will in passing from the previous state of rebellion to that of obedience."⁵

The heavenly vision, *ὁρασις*, "a sight, a vision, an appearance presented to one whether asleep or awake."¹ "The noun is used of Zachariah's vision in the temple (Luke 1: 22), and again by St. Paul, in reference to this and other like manifestations (2 Cor. 12: 1). It is distinctly a 'vision,' as contrasted with a 'dream.'"⁵ "Here and here only Paul himself apparently speaks of the appearance of Christ vouchsafed to him before Damascus by this word, but *ὁρασις*, as Beyschlag shows, is not confined to appearances which the narrators regard as visions, compare Luke 1: 22; 24: 23, and its meaning must be explained from the entire 'objectivity' with which St. Paul invests the whole narrative of his Conversion."⁶

20. Throughout all the coasts, borders, coun-

¹ Thayer, *N. T. Gr. Lexicon*.

² See Ederstein's *Jesus the Messiah*; Sanday and Headlam on *Romans*, p. 145; Whately's *Good and Evil Angels*.

³ Trench, *Synonyms of the N. T.*, 151-164.

⁴ Cambridge Bible.

⁵ Plumptre.

⁶ Knowing. See Beyschlag's *Witness of the Epistles*, 303.

21 For ^{these causes} ^z the Jews ^{caught} ^{me} in the temple, and ^{went about} ^{to kill} ^{me.}
 22 Having ^a therefore obtained the help ^{that is from} God, ^b I ^{continue} ^{unto this day}
 witnessing ^{both to small and great, saying} ^{none other things than those which} ^c the prophets
 and Moses did say should come;
 23 ^d How ^{That} ^{the} Christ ^e should ^{suffer, and} ^{how} ^{that} ^{he} should ^{be the first that should rise from}
 the dead ^{and} ^h should ^{proclaim} ^{light} ^{unto} ^{both to} the people and to the Gentiles.

z ch. 21. 27, 30, 31 & 24. 18. a 2 Cor. 1. 10. Cp. Heb. 13. 5, 6. b Cp. Eph. 6. 13. c See ch. 10. 43 & 24. 14.
 d Cp. Luke 24. 26 & Heb. 2. 10. See ch. 3. 18. e Cp. Matt. 26. 42 (for ing.) & John 12. 34. f 1 Cor. 15. 20, 23.
 Col. 1. 18. Rev. 1. 5. g Rom. 1. 4. h Cp. Eph. 2. 17. i ver. 18. See Luke 2. 32.

try, of Judæa. The exact time of this preaching is not known, for there is no record of it. Ramsay regards this statement as contradictory to other authorities (as Gal. 1: 22), and with Blass adopts the reading of another text, "in every land to both Jews and Gentiles."¹

Rendall finds a place for this preaching, as does Hackett, during Paul's return from his second visit to Jerusalem, after carrying help there on account of the famine. "Paul here intimates that at an early period of his ministry before commencing his mission to the Gentiles he had traversed all Judea, preaching the gospel as he went. Now before that time he had paid but two visits to Judea: the hasty flight from Damascus to Jerusalem and thence through Samaria to Tarsus excludes the idea of systematic preaching by the way; but his second visit in A. D. 43, when he went up with Barnabas from Antioch, furnished occasion for it during the return to Antioch."²

The three stages of the spiritual life are accurately noted. (1) **That they should repent.** This is the first duty of every one. (2) **And turn to God.** Hating sin or even turning from it is not enough. There must be a choice of good; a turning to God, against whom we have rebelled, to be his obedient and loving subjects and children. (3) **And do works meet for repentance.** The works which are the natural fruit of true repentance. The fruit is the *proof* of the tree. With Paul, as with James, faith and works went together. They are inseparably joined.

Without any direct reference to Agrippa and his audience, no appeal could be more effective than these statements.

21. For these causes, not because of the charges made against him, but (1) because he called on these Jews to repent. He troubled their consciences. (2) Especially because he delivered the gospel message to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, placing them on an equality before God, which was his unpardonable sin in the eyes of the Jews, but a reason why the Romans should acquit him.

22. Having therefore obtained help of God,

the help that is from God. *Help*, *ἐπικουπίας*, originally an *alliance* against enemies, such *aid* as a warrior receives from auxiliary or allied forces. God was Paul's powerful ally. Paul was on God's side, and therefore could not insult him by profaning his temple, or opposing his religion.

Witnessing both to small and great, referring to age, rank, and position. Paul treated all alike, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, obscure and famous, despised and honored. This is the glory of Christianity, that it ignores class distinctions, and gives hope to the poorest and weakest.

Saying none other things, etc. He was true to the Jewish Scriptures, simply explaining them, and showing how they were fulfilled in Jesus, the Messiah.

23. **That (the) Christ**, the promised Messiah, **should suffer** must be *παθητός*, *liable to suffer*, *capable of suffering*. Therefore the fact of Jesus' suffering on the cross, which was one of the chief obstacles to the Jews' reception of him as their Messiah, was yet exactly in accordance with the Scripture teaching concerning the Messiah.

THE TWO VIEWS OF THE CHRIST. Ancient art represents Christ in two aspects, one as old and sad, bowed down; the other young, beautiful, triumphant. This is but a representation of the Scripture descriptions of him. (1) On the one hand as "a root out of dry ground," "no form nor comeliness in him," "his visage was so marred more than any man" (Isa. 52: 14; 53: 1-5). (2) On the other hand, he was to be triumphant, to bring light to the Gentiles, "anointed with the oil of gladness" (Ps. 45: 7). "The Wonderful, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9: 6). "Exalted and extolled very high" (Isa. 52: 13). "Divine" (Dan. 7: 9, 10). "Victorious" (Dan. 7: 27; see Isa. 52: 7). The Jews liked to look only on the princely, victorious, glorious Messiah. But the suffering was the means by which he attained it. Even the disciples of Jesus had been "reluctant to entertain any other thoughts concerning the Master than those colored with the rich hues of glory and triumph (Matt. 16: 22, etc.)."

¹ St. Paul, 382.

² Rendall, p. 339. See, also, Farrar, *St. Paul*, 1: 288.

24 And as he thus ^{spake for himself, made his defence,} Festus ^{said} with a loud voice, Paul, ^{beside thyself; mad; thy} thou art much learning doth ^{make thee to madness.} turn thee ^{mad.}
 25 But ^{he said, Paul saith,} I am not mad, ^{most} ^{noble} Festus; but speak forth ^{the} words of truth and ^{soberness.}

j ch. 12. 15. Cp. ver. 8 & ch. 17. 32 & 2 Kin. 9. 11 & Jer. 29. 26 & Mark 3. 21 & John 10. 20 & 1 Cor. 1. 23 & 2. 14 & 4. 10. & See ch. 24. 3. l Cp. 2 Pet. 1. 16. m Cp. 2 Cor. 5. 13.

At the same time the Jewish view of the Messiah was also true, and was made possible by the resurrection of Jesus. And that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light. The R. V. gives a better representation of the original, thus, "and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light."

The absence of the article in the Greek, before "resurrection," *ἀναστροφῆς*, shows that Paul does not refer to the general resurrection, but to the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. Moses and the prophets foretold, not directly the resurrection of Christ, but that the Messiah should bring light to the Gentiles (Gen. 22: 18; Isa. 42: 6, 7; 60: 1-3), and the resurrection was one of the means by which he did it. His resurrection proclaimed that there was existence beyond the grave, and that God had sent Jesus to bring men to heaven. **Unto the people.** The Jews. Christ was to be the Saviour of all, both Jews and Gentiles.

"No more alone to sage or monarch given,
 For all his nail-pierced hand flung back the gates of heaven."

Thus Paul answered another objection which the Jews raised against him, by showing that their Scriptures had promised to the Gentiles exactly what he was doing for them.

24. As he thus spake, was speaking, "the present participle indicating that Festus broke in upon the speech."

With a loud, *μεγάλῃ, great, voice*, "raising his voice, because interrupting in surprise and astonishment, and no doubt with something of impatience if not of anger."¹

Thou art beside thyself, *μαλῇ, mad, insane, raving*; the same word that is translated mad in the next verse. From Festus' standpoint, a crucified Messiah bringing light to the Gentiles, the resurrection of the dead, an unseen King over a spiritual kingdom, could be but the delirious fancies of a disordered brain.

Much learning, *πολλὰ γράμματα, many writ-*

ings, or much learning which comes from the many writings. These may refer to the sacred Scriptures to which Paul had been referring, for, as a religious literature, no nation, not even the polished Greeks, had anything to place in comparison with the sacred books of the Jews. Or it may refer to the rolls which Paul had been studying during his long confinement, or to the learning which Paul was reputed to have, and which was shown in his address.

Doth make thee mad. You are a dreamer, in the fanciful land of books, in the realm of speculation, and far from the realities of daily life. Either Paul or Festus was beside himself. They lived in different worlds, and one or the other was wrong. If Festus was sane, Paul was mad. If Paul was sane, Festus was mad. "The tenants of a mad-house often think all others deranged but themselves; but there is no madness so great, no delirium so awful, as to neglect the eternal interest of the soul for the sake of the poor pleasures and honors which this life can give."²

25. I am not mad, etc. "This reply of Paul is unsurpassed as a model of Christian courtesy and self-command. Doddridge takes occasion to say here, that 'if great and good men who meet with rude and insolent treatment in the defence of the gospel would learn to behave with such moderation it would be a great accession of strength to the Christian cause.'"³

Most noble Festus. "Oh! I love the great missionary for that word. I think I hear his voice thrilling as he utters it. Right well he knew that, other things being equal, it was harder for the Roman governor than for a meaner man to obey the gospel and cast in his lot with the Christians. He will not flatter the august stranger; he will not suggest that the elevated and refined may have a private door opened to admit them into heaven, and so escape the humiliation of going in by the same gate with the vulgar throng. This missionary is faithful, but he is never harsh. In the polite, respectful address of the Christian apostle to the Roman magistrate

¹ Knowing.

² Albert Barnes. "'Heretic!' 'Fool!' 'Fanatic!' 'Madman!' 'Antichrist!' those and many more such like epithets of choice, ecclesiastical Billingsgate were shot at Luther from the catapults of the Pope and the priests of Rome. John Wesley, the great religious re-

former of the last century, did not escape being placed in 'shame's high pillory;' while the great leaders and pioneers of the modern missionary movement, as we know, took very high rank in the category of reputed 'fools and madmen.'" J. Cuttall.

³ Hackett.

26 For "the king knoweth of these things, ^{before} ^{unto} whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things ^{are} hidden from him; for this ^{thing was not} ^{hath not been} done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28 ^{Then} ^{And} Agrippa ^{said} unto Paul, ^{Almost thou persuadest me to be} ^{With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me} "a Christian.

n Cp. ver. 3. o ch. 11. 26. 1 Pet. 4. 16.

lies a principle that is permanent, precious, practical. Let us endeavor to understand and apply it."¹

But speak forth the words of truth and soberness. What Paul had said was not fancy, but solid fact; not wild flights of the imagination, but literal and exact truth.

26. For the king. Paul appeals from Festus to Agrippa. Whatever Festus thought of Paul, he would never dream of accusing the king of delicious fancies. Therefore Paul assures Festus that Agrippa knoweth of these things.

None of these things are hidden from him. That is, what he had been quoting from the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the Messiah; and the hopes and expectations of the Jews; and also the facts which were the fulfilment of these prophecies and hopes, i. e., the history of the life and works and death of Jesus, and the history of the gospel since his resurrection. This thing was not done in a corner. Obscurely, known but to a few; but the very enemies of Jesus caused it to be proclaimed all over the land, by their opposition.

27. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? Agrippa, as a Jew, had been instructed in the Scriptures, and accepted them intellectually, however little effect they had upon his conduct. But if he believed the Scriptures, then Paul could prove from those premises the truth of the gospel he was preaching. "He might, of course, dispute St. Paul's interpretation of prophecy, but he could not, as a Jew, in the presence of other Jews, speak of the Law and the Prophets as Festus had spoken of St. Paul's 'learning,' and so the way might have been opened to that argument from prophecy which, when the apostle was reasoning with his own countrymen, was (as in chaps. 13: 16-41; 18: 2, 3) his favorite method of producing conviction."²

28. Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. The Greek for "almost" is *ἐν ὀλίγῳ*, in or with a little, talk, or time, or effort, or persuasion, being understood; or the phrase may be taken adverbially, in brief. There are two quite divergent opinions as to the meaning of these words. (1) Modern critics agree with the R. V. in

taking them as ironical. *Πείθεις, persuadest*, "is rather thou art for persuading; thou attemptest to persuade; a force which both the present and the imperfect sometimes have."³ The meaning would then be the sarcasm, "You are trying to persuade me offhand to be a Christian." Farrar says: "Agrippa's answer was expressed in a tone of kindly scornfulness, as if he had said, 'A cheap and easy style of conversion is this! I am a Jewish king, and are you trying in an epitome (*in petto*) to make me that despised and foolish thing—a Christian!'" Maclaren interprets it thus: "You seem to think that with a little effort you can make me—so great a man as I am—a Christian,—that miserable set of fanatics." Alford regards the words as a "cynical sneer. Thou art trying to make a Christian of me with very few words on very slender grounds, would be the nearest paraphrase of his derisive answer to St. Paul's appeal." Do you expect in one brief speech to make me a Christian? *Μὲν a Christian! (with a capital M).*

There were many hindrances in the way of Agrippa's becoming a Christian,—his wealth, his life of sin, his companions, all the associations of his life, his throne itself. We see here a living proof of Christ's saying (Matt. 19: 23, 24), that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Rendall's argument is as follows: "The A. V. is clearly wrong in giving *πείθεις* the force of successful persuasion, and rendering *ἐν ὀλίγῳ* and *ἐν μεγάλῳ* as *almost* and *altogether*. Their real meaning depends on what substantive is understood. Now this must be the same in both cases and be equally appropriate with *ὀλίγῳ* and *μεγάλῳ*. Neither *λόγῳ* (word), nor *ἐργῳ* (deed), nor *χρόνῳ* (time), can stand this test. But *ὀλίγῳ πόνῳ*, *μεγάλῳ πόνῳ* (labor), are both common in Greek and make excellent sense: Agrippa is deriding the hope that he might be made a Christian at the cost of a little effort at persuasion; and Paul replies that he grudges no effort, whatever it might cost, for his and their conversion."

(2) The view taken in the common version, that

¹ William Arnot.

² Plumptre.

³ M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, who illustrates this use of the tenses in the following note: "As in John 10: 32: 'For which of these works are you for stoning me (*ἀθά-*

ζετε)?' John 13: 6: 'Dost thou mean to wash (*νίπτεις*) my feet?' Luke 1: 59: 'They were for calling (*ἐκάδουν*) him Zacharias.' Matt. 3: 14: 'John tried to prevent (*δυσκόλουν*).'"

29 And Paul ^{said,} I would to God, that ^{whether with little or with much, not only thou, but} also all that hear me this day, ^{were both almost, and altogether} ^{p might become} such as I am, except ^a these bonds.

30 And ^{when he had thus spoken,} the king rose up, and "the governor, and Bēr-nī'qē, and they that sat with them:

31 And when they ^{were gone aside, had withdrawn,} they ^{talked between themselves, spake one to another,} saying, "This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

p Cp. 1 Cor. 7. 7.

q See ch. 21. 33.

r See ch. 23. 24.

s See ch. 23. 29.

Agrippa's better nature was touched, and that he spoke sincerely, saying in effect, if you go on a little longer, and speak many more such words, you will persuade even me, is that of most older commentators, as Bengel, Ewald, Schaff (in *Popular Commentary*). Among moderns, Wendt maintains that ἐν ὀλίγῳ may still be rendered "almost," expressing the thought that little was wanted to attain the aim. "Neander, De Wette, Lange, Hackett, Conybeare, etc., render the clause, 'In a little time thou persuadest me;' which may either be understood as spoken in earnest, 'If thou go on speaking as thou art doing, thou wilt soon persuade me to become a Christian' (in which case the meaning does not greatly differ from that of the present English version, *almost*)."¹ The same turn of the expression may be given if we supply *words* instead of *time*. To this best agrees Paul's reply. "Our hymn, 'Almost persuaded,' is based on this interpretation. Whether this be right or no, the truth remains the same, that there are often cases where a man is almost persuaded to become a Christian, who yet stops there, and never goes any farther."

29. I would to God. I earnestly desire of God, the only source of such a blessed good. Were both almost, and altogether, ἐν ὀλίγῳ καὶ ἐν μεγάλῳ. (1) This is the natural rendering if we adopt the translation of our Authorized Version in verse 28. (2) If we adopt the R. V. of verse 28, then Paul's answer is, "I would that you were persuaded, whether with little trouble or with great." Alford and Professor Riddle suppose that Paul takes up the words of Agrippa in a sense slightly different from that in which Agrippa used them, to give point to his reply: "I could pray God that both in little and in great measure (*i. e.*, in everything), not only thou," etc. Such as I am, except these bonds. The chains he had upon him while he was speaking. He would have them free to exercise their religion for the good of others. So Shadrach and his friends could have said to Nebuchadnezzar, "such as I am, save this fiery furnace."

SUCH AS I AM. Paul the prisoner had much

more than the brilliant assemblage before him.

(1) They had worldly wealth; he had treasures in heaven, spiritual riches. (2) They had honor and applause from men; he had the approval of God. (3) They had luxury and sensual delights; he had joys, and peace, and delights beyond their highest dreams. (4) They had worldly crowns; he had a crown of glory in the heavens. (5) They had hearts of unrest, and consciences ill at ease; he was abiding in perfect peace as a child of God. (6) They had a Roman tyrant for their master, whom they feared; he had the blessed Jesus, whom he loved. (7) Their possessions would last but a little time; his forever and ever.

SAVE THESE BONDS. Like Paul, we wish all men to have the blessings of our religion "save these bonds:" (1) the bonds of ignorance; (2) the bonds of imperfection; (3) the bonds of our old nature; (4) the bonds of error and mistakes.

30. The king rose up, and the governor, etc. "Thus leaving the court in order of their precedence. Such an exact detail evidently proceeds from one who had been an eye-witness of the day's proceedings. They that sat with them were the council of the Procurator Festus."²

31. They talked between themselves. They consulted together. "The act indicated, as far as it went, that the Apostle's words had made a favorable impression. This, they felt, was no common criminal, no fomenter of sedition. The question how he was to be dealt with was one that called for serious consideration; but the result showed that he was treated from this time forward with more respect and courtesy than before."³

This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. The result of this trial was (1) a complete vindication of Paul before the world. (2) Festus no doubt wrote such a favorable view of the prisoner's case as eventually brought about his acquittal and freedom from his first Roman imprisonment. (3) It certainly procured him kindly treatment after his arrival in the capital (chap. 28: 17-23, 30, 31). (4) "From this time a kindly feeling seems to have sprung up in the king's heart towards that strange Nazarene sect.

¹ Glogoc.

² Schaff.

³ Plumptre.

32 ^{Then said Agrippa} unto Fēs'tūs, 'This man might have been set at "liberty, if he had not appealed" unto Cæsar.

t ch. 28. 18. u ch. 25. 11 & 28. 19. v See ch. 9. 15.

Stier, in his *Words of the Apostles*, calls attention to the fact of this Agrippa at the outbreak of the great Jewish war, some eight or nine years after the scene at Cæsarea, protecting the Christians, giving them succor, and receiving them kindly into his territory."¹

32. This man might have been set at liberty. "It is well that his appeal to Cæsar prevented this; for (1) if the apostle had been liberated, he

would have been exposed, and probably fallen a victim to the malice of the Jews." (2) He could not have gone so easily to Rome, under such favorable circumstances, and have been enabled to teach for two years protected by the Roman government. (3) "The very circumstances of his arrival as an imperial prisoner assisted him in his work of telling out his master's message; so all things worked together for the glory of God."

¹ Schaff. See note on p. 356 of McGiffert's *Apostolic Age*.

CHAPTER 27.

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME. THE SHIPWRECK.

		LEWIN. A. D. 60.	RAMSAY. A. D. 59.
IN THE SHIP OF ADRAMYTTIUM, vers. 1-5.	The company on board.		
	From Cæsarea to Sidon.	Left Cæsarea,	Aug. 21.
	Along the coast of Cyprus.	Sidon,	Aug. 22.
	To Myra in Lycia.	Myra,	Sept. 4.
IN THE SHIP OF ALEXANDRIA, vers. 6-13.	From Myra to Crete.	Left Myra,	Sept. 4.
	To the port of Fair Havens in Crete.	Cnidus,	Sept. 19.
	Paul's advice to the captain.	Fast day,	Sept. 23.
	They sail for the port of Phenice in Crete.	Arr. Fair Havens, Sept. 26.	Oct. 5.
THE STORM, vers. 14-29.		Left " " Oct. 18.	Sept. 25.
			Between Oct. 5 and 10.
	The hurricane.		
	Undergirding the ship.		
THE SHIPWRECK, vers. 30-44.	Lightening the ship.	Oct. 19	
	Paul's vision brings cheer to all.	to	October.
	Nearing an unknown shore.	Nov. 1.	
	Casting anchor. Night.		
	The sailors attempt to desert the ship.		
	Paul persuades the company to eat and be of good courage.		
	They cast the wheat cargo overboard.		
	Morning. They make for the shore.		
	The wreck.		
	All escape to the shore of Malta.		
			Before the middle of November.

"The last two chapters of the Acts contain a very clear description of the voyage made by Paul into Italy; which description, in the judgment of a man skilled in such things, is the most

precious monument of all things pertaining to naval affairs that has been left us from all antiquity."¹

¹ Blass. The most thorough discussion of this voyage is by James Smith, of Jordanhill, Eng., in his *Voyage*

and *Shipwreck of St. Paul* (1880). Conybeare and Howson, and Lewin, in his *St. Paul* and in his *Fasti Sacri*,

1 AND when it was determined ^w that ^x we should sail ^{into} for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners ^{unto one} to a centurion named Jū'li-ūs, ^{a centurion} of ^y An-gus-tus' the Augustan ^{band.}

^w ch. 25. 12, 25.

^x See ch. 16. 10.

^y Cp. ch. 25. 25 (mg.).

^z See ch. 10. 1.

THE VOYAGE FROM CÆSAREA TO MYRA, vers. 1-5.

1. That we. Paul's party consisted of himself, Luke, the author, and Aristarchus (ver. 2). These were old and tried friends (Acts 20: 4). But there were other prisoners besides Paul. Ramsay thinks that these two must have accompanied Paul as his servants, because (1) "Paul enjoyed much respect during the voyage, such as a penniless traveller without a servant to attend on him would never receive either in the first century or the nineteenth." (2) Because "it is hardly possible that the prisoner's friends were allowed to accompany him. Pliny mentions a case in point.¹ Pactus was brought a prisoner from Illyricum to Rome, and his wife Arria vainly begged leave to accompany him; several slaves were permitted to go with him as waiters, valets, etc., and Arria offered herself alone to perform all these duties; but her prayer was refused."² But as Wendt points out in reply to Ramsay, the vessel was not a government transport, but a private vessel, in which Luke and Aristarchus could have travelled as independent passengers. And Professor Gilbert argues that the case of Arria, Pactus' wife, who was refused permission to accompany her husband, does not prove that no prisoner sent to Rome was allowed to have friends with him; and that Paul did gain the highest respect at a time when he not only had no servants, but worked for a living with his own hands.³ Luke may have travelled in his capacity as a physician.

One named Julius. This name, like Cornelius (10: 1), belonged to an illustrious family, but was too common for any certain identification; though it is possible that this centurion was the Julius Priscus mentioned by Tacitus, a centurion who afterwards became Prefect of the Prætorian Guard under Vitellius.⁴

A centurion of Augustus' band. R. V. "The Augustan band." This expression has caused considerable discussion and difference of opinion. (1) Modern criticism inclines to the view that the Augustan band was a corps of legionary centurions, called *Frumentarii*, "dealers in grain,"

who had charge of the commissariat department, furnishing transport provisions, and general supplies to the army; to which duties were added those of couriers and police, and the custody of prisoners. "They all belonged to legions stationed



ROMAN CENTURION.

in the provinces, and were considered to be on detached duty when they went to Rome, and hence in Rome they were called *Peregrini*, "soldiers from abroad."⁵ It was to the commander of these, *Princeps Peregrinorum*, that Paul was delivered by Julius when they reached Rome (28: 16). This body of legionary centurions, being employed by the Emperor on confidential business between the provinces and the imperial city, received the title of Augustan as a mark of favor and distinction; and Luke, "who regularly uses the terms of educated conversation" rather than strict technical names, uses the term Augustan to describe "the troop of the Emperor," as it would be naturally employed by persons in whose society Luke moved at the time. "The corps was probably recruited out of veterans who had served their time in the Prætorians or the Le-

are very complete. Lucian's *Dialogues*, "The Ship," describing the voyage of a grain ship from Egypt to Myra, with a terrible storm, driving it to Greece, gives a good account of circumstances similar to St. Paul's. Josephus writes the story of his own shipwreck on a voyage to Rome two years later, about the time Paul was released from prison, A. D. 62. Ramsay's *St. Paul*, chap. 14, is

the best modern book in English on this subject. Blass refers to *Die Nautik der Alten* by Breusing, formerly director of the School of Navigation in Bremen, 1886.

¹ *Epistles*, 3: 16.

² *St. Paul*, 315, 316.

³ *Student's Life of Paul*, 201, 202.

⁴ *History*, 2: 92; 4: 11.

⁵ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, pp. 315, 348.

2 And ^{entering into} ^{embarking in} a ship of Ād-rā-mýt'ti-ūm, ^{we launched, meaning} ^{which was about} to sail ^{by} unto the places on the ^{coasts} ^{coast} of Asia; ^{we put to sea,} ^{one} "Ār-is-tār'chūs, a Māç-ē-dō'nī-ān of Thēs'sā-lō-nī-cā, being with us.

a See ch. 19. 29.

gions; the officers were confidential agents of the emperor; the name Augustan may have been a title of honor and mark of imperial favor, as it was at various times bestowed on certain legions by way of distinction."¹

(2) The Augustan band may have been "an independent cohort assigned to that particular service, and known as the Augustan or imperial, because, with reference to its relation to the procurator, it corresponded in some sense to the

emperor's life-guard at Rome. It may have taken the place of the Italian cohort, which was mentioned in 10: 1, or very possibly, as Meyer suggests, may have been identical with it. The two names are not inconsistent with this latter opinion. *Augustan* may have been the honorary appellation of the cohort, while it was called *Italian* by the people, because it consisted chiefly of Italians or Romans."²

(3) Julius may have been a centurion of a cohort



ROMAN GALLEY, WITH SOLDIERS. Such as was used by Cæsar.

From the Præneste relief (Baumeister).

From Cæsar's *Gallie War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

raised at Samaria (which was called Augusta (Greek Sebaste) in honor of Augustus), which was one of the five cohorts stationed at Cæsarea.³

(4) "Nero about this time had formed a kind of body-guard, consisting of some 3000 young men of the equestrian order, who accompanied him to games and spectacles, and whose chief business it was to applaud him in his speeches and recitations. To these he gave the name of *Augustani*."⁴ It may have been that Julius was "a centurion in that cohort, whose station of course was at Rome, and that having been sent to the East for the execution of some public ser-

vice, he was now returning to Italy with these prisoners under his charge."

2. And entering into a ship of Adramyttium. A ship belonging to Adramyttium, a seaport of Mysia on the western coast of Asia Minor, probably on its return journey from Cæsarea. It must sail by (along) the coasts of Asia, the province of Asia of which Ephesus was the capital, in order to reach Mysia, which lay to the north. Adramyttium was a flourishing city at this time, a commercial centre, and metropolis of the north-west district of Asia Minor. Pliny speaks of it as one of the most considerable towns in that

¹ Rendall.

² Hackett.

³ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20: 8, 7; 19: 9, 2.

⁴ Plumptre. See Tacitus, *Annals*, 14: 15; Suetonius, *Nero*, 20, 25.

1 AND when it was determined " that " we should sail ^{into} for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners ^{unto one} to a centurion named Jū'li-ūs, ^{a centurion} of " ^{the Augustan} band.

w ch. 25. 12, 25.

x See ch. 10. 10.

y Cp. ch. 25. 25 (mg.).

z See ch. 10. 1.

THE VOYAGE FROM CÆSAREA TO MYRA, vers. 1-5.

1. That we. Paul's party consisted of himself, Luke, the author, and Aristarchus (ver. 2). These were old and tried friends (Acts 20: 4). But there were other prisoners besides Paul. Ramsay thinks that these two must have accompanied Paul as his servants, because (1) "Paul enjoyed much respect during the voyage, such as a penniless traveller without a servant to attend on him would never receive either in the first century or the nineteenth." (2) Because "it is hardly possible that the prisoner's friends were allowed to accompany him. Pliny mentions a case in point.¹ Pactus was brought a prisoner from Illyricum to Rome, and his wife Arria vainly begged leave to accompany him; several slaves were permitted to go with him as waiters, valets, etc., and Arria offered herself alone to perform all these duties; but her prayer was refused."² But as Wendt points out in reply to Ramsay, the vessel was not a government transport, but a private vessel, in which Luke and Aristarchus could have travelled as independent passengers. And Professor Gilbert argues that the case of Arria, Pactus' wife, who was refused permission to accompany her husband, does not prove that no prisoner sent to Rome was allowed to have friends with him; and that Paul did gain the highest respect at a time when he not only had no servants, but worked for a living with his own hands.³ Luke may have travelled in his capacity as a physician.

One named Julius. This name, like Cornelius (10: 1), belonged to an illustrious family, but was too common for any certain identification; though it is possible that this centurion was the Julius Priscus mentioned by Tacitus, a centurion who afterwards became Prefect of the Prætorian Guard under Vitellius.⁴

A centurion of Augustus' band. R. V. "The Augustan band." This expression has caused considerable discussion and difference of opinion. (1) Modern criticism inclines to the view that the Augustan band was a corps of legionary centurions, called *Frumentarii*, "dealers in grain,"

who had charge of the commissariat department, furnishing transport provisions, and general supplies to the army; to which duties were added those of couriers and police, and the custody of prisoners. "They all belonged to legions stationed



ROMAN CENTURION.

in the provinces, and were considered to be on detached duty when they went to Rome, and hence in Rome they were called *Peregrini*, 'soldiers from abroad.'⁵ It was to the commander of these, *Princeps Peregrinorum*, that Paul was delivered by Julius when they reached Rome (28: 16). This body of legionary centurions, being employed by the Emperor on confidential business between the provinces and the imperial city, received the title of Augustan as a mark of favor and distinction; and Luke, "who regularly uses the terms of educated conversation" rather than strict technical names, uses the term Augustan to describe "the troop of the Emperor," as it would be naturally employed by persons in whose society Luke moved at the time. "The corps was probably recruited out of veterans who had served their time in the Prætorians or the Le-

are very complete. Lucian's *Dialogues*, "The Ship," describing the voyage of a grain ship from Egypt to Myra, with a terrible storm, driving it to Greece, gives a good account of circumstances similar to St. Paul's. Josephus writes the story of his own shipwreck on a voyage to Rome two years later, about the time Paul was released from prison, A. D. 62. Ramsay's *St. Paul*, chap. 14, is

the best modern book in English on this subject. Blass refers to *Die Nautik der Alten* by Breusing, formerly director of the School of Navigation in Bremen, 1886.

¹ *Epistles*, 3: 16.

² *St. Paul*, 315, 316.

³ *Student's Life of Paul*, 201, 202.

⁴ *History*, 2: 92; 4: 11.

⁵ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, pp. 315, 348.

2 And ^{entering into} a ship of Ἀδ-ρᾱ-μῑτ'τι-ῡμ, ^{we launched, meaning} ^{which was about} to sail ^{by} into the places on the ^{coasts} ^{coast} of Asia; ^{we put to sea,} ^{one} "Ἄρ-ἰς-τιῡρ'chūs, a Μᾶç-ε-δῶνι-ἄν of Θῑς's-sᾱ-lῶ-nῑ-cᾱ, being with us.

a See ch. 19, 29.

gions; the officers were confidential agents of the emperor; the name Augustan may have been a title of honor and mark of imperial favor, as it was at various times bestowed on certain legions by way of distinction."¹

(2) The Augustan band may have been "an independent cohort assigned to that particular service, and known as the Augustan or imperial, because, with reference to its relation to the procurator, it corresponded in some sense to the

emperor's life-guard at Rome. It may have taken the place of the Italian cohort, which was mentioned in 10: 1, or very possibly, as Meyer suggests, may have been identical with it. The two names are not inconsistent with this latter opinion. *Augustan* may have been the honorary appellation of the cohort, while it was called *Italian* by the people, because it consisted chiefly of Italians or Romans."²

(3) Julius may have been a centurion of a cohort



ROMAN GALLEY, WITH SOLDIERS. Such as was used by Caesar.

From the Praeneste relief (*Baummeister*).

From *Caesar's Gallic War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

raised at Samaria (which was called Augusta (Greek Sebaste) in honor of Augustus), which was one of the five cohorts stationed at Caesarea.³

(4) "Nero about this time had formed a kind of body-guard, consisting of some 3000 young men of the equestrian order, who accompanied him to games and spectacles, and whose chief business it was to applaud him in his speeches and recitations. To these he gave the name of *Augustani*."⁴ It may have been that Julius was "a centurion in that cohort, whose station of course was at Rome, and that having been sent to the East for the execution of some public ser-

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¹ Rendall.

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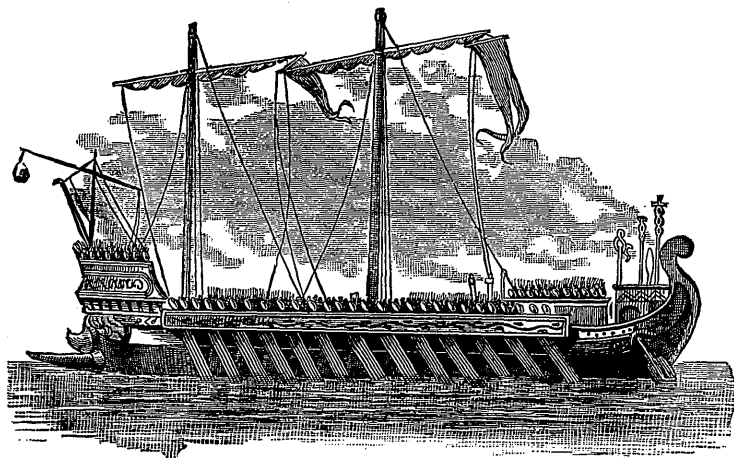
6 And there the centurion found 'a ship of Ἀλ-ἔξ-ἄν'δρῖ-ᾱ sailing ^{into} for Italy; and he put us therein.

e ch. 28. 11.

cia and Pamphylia. The westerly wind would force them to continue their voyage toward the north till they reached the coast of Cilicia, when they would be compelled to steer toward the west. Here the winds were contrary, but there was a favoring current constantly running to the westward along the southern coast; and the ship, making use of the land breezes which blow at intervals, "crept on from point to point up the

coast, taking advantage of every opportunity to make a few miles, and lying at anchor in the shelter of the winding coast, when the westerly wind made progress impossible." "Modern sailing ships, even with their superior rig, have several times been forced by the steady westerly wind toward the north, keeping east of Cyprus."¹

We came to Myra, a city of Lycia, the province joining Pamphylia on the west. According



AN ANCIENT TWO-MASTED SHIP.

Like the Alexandrian merchantman in which Paul sailed. The vessel was steered, not by a rudder, but by two broad oars, one on each side of the stern. Flags floated from the top of the mast, as in modern vessels. The ancients had no compass, and all charts and instruments were very imperfect. Their rig was specially favorable for running with the wind, but they could sail within seven points of the wind. They could make about seven knots an hour.

to an addition in the Later Syriac Version, "the ship is said to have spent fifteen days in beating along the Cyprio-Pamphylian coast." Accordingly Ramsay, regarding the year to be 59, thinks that Paul sailed from Cæsarea, August 17, and reached Myra, September 1. Lewin, making the year to be 60, dates the departure from Cæsarea, August 21.

THE VOYAGE FROM MYRA TO CRETE, vers. 6-13.

6. Found a ship of Alexandria. This was an Egyptian merchantman bringing grain from Egypt to Rome (ver. 38). Myra was one of the

great harbors of the Egyptian service at certain seasons of the year, on account of the strong west winds, so that this vessel was not driven out of her course, but was on her regular route.

It was a large ship, having on board 276 persons (ver. 37) besides the freight. The size of ships in those days may be estimated from the fact that "these persons were conveyed (28: 11) from Melita to Italy in the *Castor* and *Pollux*, in addition to her own crew and passengers. Now it is customary for transport ships, which are prepared for carrying soldiers, to allow a ton and a half per man. This at once gives us a test for estimating the size of Alexandria corn ships."

¹ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 317. "The description given in the *Pertodoi* of Barnabas of a voyage from Seleucia in Syria to Cyprus in the face of a prevailing steady westerly wind, the work of a person familiar with the cir-

cumstances, illustrates perfectly the voyage on this occasion." James Smith, *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, gives several examples of ships adopting this course.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and ^{scarce} were come with difficulty over against Cnīdūs, the wind not further suffering us, we sailed under the lee of Crēte, over against Sāl-mō'nē;

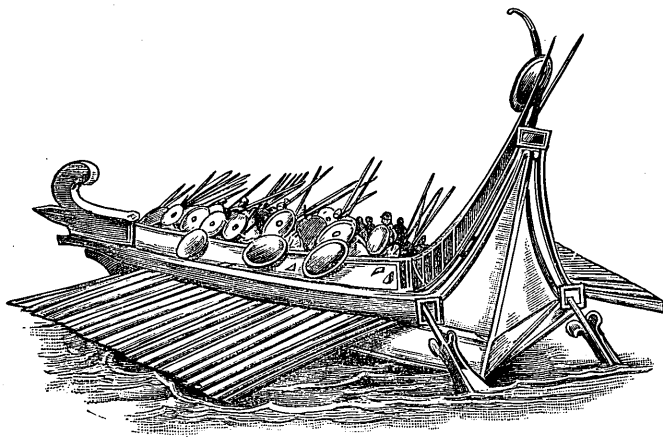
8 And ^{hardly passing it,} with difficulty coasting along it we came unto a certain place ^{which is} called ^{The fair havens; Fair Havens;} nigh whereunto was the city of Lā-sē'ā.

In Lucian's *Dialogues*, "The Ship," the great ship of Ptolemy Philadelphus is reckoned at ten hundred to eleven hundred tons. Her length was 120 cubits, or 180 feet, and her breadth 45 feet. Josephus states that the ship in which he was wrecked had six hundred persons on board.¹

7. Sailed slowly many days. The distance to Cnidus is only 130 miles, but they were apparently

two or three weeks in going, on account of the strong westerly winds. The general direction of the coast till they reached Cnidus was westward; "they were therefore screened from the north, but open to head winds from the west, against which they struggled slowly on."²

"With northwest winds the ship could work up from Myra to Cnidus; because, until she



ROMAN BATTLE-SHIP.

From a wall painting at Pompeii.

From *Cæsar's Gallic War*, by per. of Ginn & Co.

reached that point, she had the advantage of a weather shore, under the lee of which she would have smooth water, and, as formerly mentioned, a westerly current; but it would be slowly and with difficulty. At Cnidus that advantage ceased."³

And scarce were come, *μολίς, with difficulty.* Over against Cnidus. A famous seaport in ancient times, at the southwest point of Asia Minor, where the coast line turns northward, and they would meet the full force of the northerly winds which were sweeping down the Egean Sea, from which they had hitherto been protected by the land.

The wind not suffering us, *μη προσεῶντος, not permitting further*, to go on the straight course onward, which would continue their voyage westward on the north of Crete. They therefore

turned their course southward till they came over against Cape Salmone at the eastern end of that island, and then turning westward again they sailed under the lee of Crete, and were again protected from the northerly winds by its shore, as they had hitherto been by the shores of Asia Minor.⁴

8. And hardly, *μολίς, with difficulty, passing it, rather, coasting along, παραλεγόμενοι*, on the southern side of the island. "As the first half of this trends a little to the south, they were able to creep slowly along as far as Cape Matala; but from that point the northward trend of the coast rendered it impossible to proceed in the teeth of a northwest wind. So they put into a roadstead called Fair Havens, on the eastern side of Cape Matala."² James Smith says: "This is the far-

¹ *Vita*, 3.

² Rendall.

³ James Smith, 37.

⁴ So Ramsay, Smith, and others.

9 ^{Now} ^{And} when much time was spent, and ^{when sailing the voyage} was now dangerous, because ^{the fast} was now already ^{past,} ^{gone by,} Paul admonished ^{them,} ^{them,}
 10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that ^{this the} voyage will be with ^{hurt} ^{injury} and much ^{damage,} ^{loss,} not only of the lading and the ship, but also of our lives.
 11 ^{Nevertheless} ^{But} the centurion ^{believed} ^{gave more heed to} ^h the master and ^{to} the owner of the ship, ^{more} than ^{to} those things which were spoken by Paul.

f Lev. 16. 29-31 & 23. 27-29. Num. 29. 7.

g ver. 21.

h Rev. 18. 17 (Gk.).

the point which an ancient ship, navigating under the lee of Crete, could reach with north-west winds."

The city of Lasea. "The ruins of Lasea, after having completely escaped discovery, have recently (1856) been found about two hours' walk from Fair Havens. This curious discovery of a Scotch yachting party may be classed among the really valuable geographical evidences of the truth of the Bible which have been accumulating of late years."¹

9. Now when much time was spent at Fair Havens waiting for a more favorable wind.

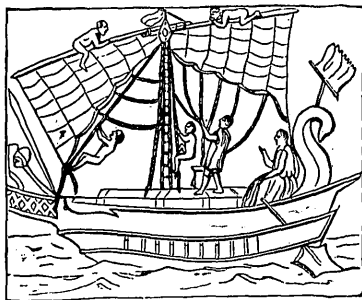
And when sailing was now dangerous. "The dangerous season for navigation lasted from Sept. 14 to Nov. 11, when all navigation on the open sea was discontinued"² till March 5. "According to Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 619, navigation ceased after the setting of the Pleiades about 20th October. The Jewish period for navigation ended 28th September."³

Because the fast was now already past. The great Day of Atonement, which occurred on the 10th of Tisri (Sept.-Oct.). Lev. 16: 29; 23: 27; Num. 29: 7. "Compare Josephus, 3: 10, 3. It was the only fast of Divine appointment for the Jews. According to Philo, in his 'Life of Moses,' no prudent man went to sea after that."⁴ This fast occurred in A. D. 59, Oct. 5; in 60, Sept. 23. Since Paul and his companions observed the fast, as good Jews, it would be natural for Luke to reckon time from it. Paul admonished them. Ramsay thinks Paul's advice was given in a council of the leaders, of which the centurion was president, while the captain and sailing master were merely advisers (ver. 11).⁵

10. And said. "How far he spoke from prophetic enlightenment on this occasion, and how far from instinctive judgment of the risks that were in prospect, we cannot determine. There is always mystery in what relates to inspiration; and certainly St. Paul had had very large experience of the sea and its changes (see 2 Cor. 11: 25,

which was written some years before the present occasion). Still the more reverential view is that he did speak under a consciousness of Divine teaching (see below, ver. 23)."⁶

With hurt, ἔβρεως, from ἐπέρ, above, as one looking down upon another; hence, insolence,



A SHIP OF PAUL'S TIME.

From a wall painting at Pompeii.

From Dr. Davis' *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

Rigged with a square sail fitted to a yard of great length. The sail was strengthened by ropes sewed across vertically and horizontally.

haughtiness, of the winds and waves, as if in the pride of their power and fury, they made sport of ships and men. So we speak of the "riot" of the elements. Horace has the same idea in his "ventis debes ludibrium," "sport for the winds."⁷

Much damage, as the result of the insolence of the winds.

11. Nevertheless the centurion. "To our modern ideas the captain is supreme on the deck of his ship. Here the centurion is represented as the commanding officer, which implies that the ship was a government ship."⁸ Believed the master, the pilot, or steersman; and the owner of the ship, ναυκλῆρος, shipowner, or shipmaster, one who hires out his vessel for purposes of trans-

¹ Schaff. See Smith's *Voyage and Shipwreck*, p. 82, and Appendix, pp. 262, 263. Alford's *Prolegomena to Acts*, p. 27, and Appendix to recent edition of *Horæ Paulinæ* issued by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

² Ramsay.

³ Knowing.

⁴ Cook.

⁵ St. Paul, 323-325.

⁶ Schaff.

⁷ Odes, 1: 11, 14. See, also, description of storm among the Alps in Sheridan Knowles' *William Tell*.

12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to ^{depart} ^{put to sea from} thence, ^{also,} if by any means they ^{might attain to Phœ-ni'ce, and there could reach Phœ'nix, and winter there;} ^{which is an} haven of Crête, ^{and lieth toward the south west looking north-east} and ^{north west.} south-east.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained ^{their} purpose, ^{loosing thence, they weighed anchor and} sailed ^{close by} ^{along} Crète; ^{close in shore.}

14 But ^{not} after no long time there ^{arose against} it a tempestuous wind, which is called ^{Eu-ro-cy'lon.} ^{Eu-ra'qui-lo:}

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not ^{bear up into} ^{face} the wind, we ^{let her drive.} gave way to it, and were driven.

i Cp. Mark 4. 37.

portation. This man might well be the owner, even though it was a corn ship, and belonged to the imperial service and was one of the Alexandrian fleet. "In imperial times the word designated the master who represented the owner and exercised his authority on board, whether owner or not." ¹ **Than . . . Paul.** This would be perfectly natural, for the captain and pilot, continually on the sea, ought to know more about the sea than any landmen. No one could tell what the weather was to be. Only if they saw in Paul a divinely enlightened and inspired man, could they act upon his judgment against that of the sailors. "What would be said of him in Rome, where provision ships for the winter were so eagerly expected, if out of timidity he, though a soldier, had hindered the captain from continuing his voyage?" ²

12. Because the haven was not commodious to winter in. "The supply of provisions, as well as the soundings and the shelter, had to be taken into account. The exact knowledge of this roadstead, which we now have through the surveys of British officers, shows that the case might have been reasonably argued on both sides." ³

Might attain to, reach, Phenice, Phœnix, the modern Lutro (Sutro), about 40 miles west of Fair Havens, "the only secure harbor in all winds on the south coast of Crete."

Lieth toward the south west and north west. The meaning of this is determined by the point of view. To one at sea, sailing into the harbor, the two sides of the bay are on the southwest and northwest, sheltering vessels in the harbor from those winds.

To one in the town, the shores lie toward the northeast and the southeast, as in the R. V. This is a correct interpretation from this point of view. The Greek for *lieth toward* is βλέποντα κατὰ, looking down the wind in the direction toward which it is blowing. The wind being from the northwest, looking down the wind would be looking toward the east.

13. When the south wind blew softly. They waited for some time, Lewin calls it a week, for a favorable change of wind.

Supposing that they had obtained their purpose. It was natural to hope that the south wind would last long enough for them to sail 40 miles, especially as after they had gone a few miles to Cape Matala, the shore retreated northward and they could sail almost before the wind.

Sailed close by Crete, ἄσπον, the comparative of ἄσχι, near. They sailed even closer to the shore than before. The shore at first trends to the southwest, so that a very slight change of the wind towards the west before they reached the cape would cause them to fail.

THE STORM, vers. 14-29.

14. There arose against it, the ship. Or it may mean as in R. V., "there beat down from it," that is, from Crete, a tempestuous wind, τυφωνικός, typhonic, tempestuous, like a whirlwind; from τυφῶν, a hurricane, a typhoon, a cyclone. "There struck down from the Cretan mountains, which towered above them to the height of over 7000 feet, a sudden eddying squall from the east-north-east. Every one who has had any experience on lakes or bays overhung by mountains will appreciate the epithet 'typhonic' which Luke uses." ⁴

Called Euroclydon. From euros, east, and Clydon, a wave, "an east wind raising great waves." The better reading is that of R. V., *Euraquilo*, "i. e., between Eurus, the E. S. E. wind, and Aquilo the north wind, or strictly N. + E." Hence the wind was East-North-East. The similar wind is now called the Levanter.

15. When the ship was caught. A very strong expression implying that the wind seized hold of the ship, as it were, and whirled her out of her course. "A ship captain recently said to me in relating an anecdote of his own experience in Cretan waters, 'the wind comes down from these mountains fit to blow the ship out of the

¹ Rendall.

² Knowing. "Breusing, pp. 161, 162, and quotations from Suetonius, Claudius, 18, as to the compensation

offered by the emperor to merchants for losses in winter and storm."

³ Schaff.

⁴ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 327.

16 And running under the lee of a certain small island which is called Clandā, we had much work to come by difficulty, to secure the boat:

17 Which And when they had taken hoisted it up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

j vers. 26, 29.

"water."¹ Could not bear up into the wind. Literally, "could not look the wind in the eye." The figure is a sufficiently natural one in all languages; but it perhaps received additional vividness from the fact that a large eye was commonly painted on the prow of Greek vessels. The practice is still not unusual in Mediterranean boats.² We let her drive. Literally, *having given up to it, we were borne along*. "We scudded before the wind."

16. A certain island (the Greek is diminutive, "small island") which is called Clandā (the better reading is *Cauda*). "The suddenness and fury of the blow left the sailors not one moment to furl the mainsail, or to do anything but leave the ship to be driven madly forward before the gale, until after a fearful run of twenty-three miles, they neared the little island of Clandā, and ran in under its lee."³ Here in calmer waters they were able to attend to a duty on which their future safety might depend.

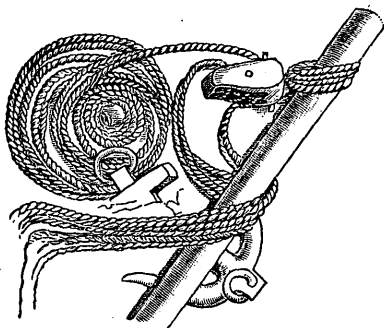
We, the first person here, compared with the change to "they" in the next verse, implies that Luke may have joined in the work.

Had much work, *μᾶλιν, with difficulty* were able to come by, to secure, the boat. The boat had been towed behind the larger vessel during the calm weather, and had not been hauled in, as the storm was so sudden; and now as it was nearly filled with water, and battered by the waves and storm, it was hard work to haul it in at all.⁴

17. They used helps, ropes, chains, and other apparatus for the purpose. "An ancient ship with one huge sail was exposed to extreme danger from such a blast; the straining of the great sail on the single mast was more than the hull could bear; and the ship was exposed to a risk which modern vessels do not fear, of foundering in the open sea."¹

Undergirding the ship. By ropes or chains passing around the vessel, on account of the strain of the mast with its great sail. The vessel was probably springing a leak. In 1837 Capt. George Bock, from the Arctic regions, passed a chain cable "under the bottom of the ship four feet before the mizzen mast, hove tight by the capstan, and finally immovably fixed to six ringbolts on

the quarter deck. The effect was at once manifest by a great diminution of the working of the parts already mentioned."⁵ "The practice has always been a common one. Thucydides (i. 29) mentions the Coreyreans as having recourse to it.



ANCHOR AND TACKLE.

From the Arc de Triomphe at Orange, by per. of Ginn & Co.

The Russian ships taken in the Tagus in 1808 were kept together in this manner in consequence of their age and unsound condition (Arnold on *Thuc.* i. 29). We have probably an allusion to it in the lines of Horace (*Od.* I. 14):—

'Ac sine funibus,
Vix durare carinæ
Possint imperiosius
Æquor.'

'And scarcely can our keels keep sound,
Without the ropes that gird them round,
Against the imperious wave.'"²

Let them should fall into the quicksands. The Syrtis Major, on the coast of Africa. They were a long distance away, but the wind was blowing them directly towards those dangerous shoals. "Here Virgil placed the shipwreck of Æneas." These quicksands were the terror of all Mediterranean sailors.⁶ A fine description of them is given by the Evangelist's namesake, Lucan, in his *Pharsalia*:⁷—

¹ Ramsay.

² Plumptre.

³ Farrar.

⁴ James Smith.

⁵ James Smith, *Voyage and Shipwreck*.

⁶ Josephus, *Wars*, 2: 16, 4.

⁷ *Pharsalia*, 9: 303-310.

18 And as we ^{being} exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next ^{day} they ^{lightened the} began to throw the freight overboard;

19 And the third ^{day} we cast out with ^{our} own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars ^{shone upon us} for many days, appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was ^{then} ^{now} taken away.

k Jonah 1. 5. Cp. ver. 38.

"When Nature gave the world its primal form,
She left the Syrtes neither sea nor land.
There neither sinks the shore and welcomes in
The deep sea's waters, nor the coast can hold
Its own against the waves, and none can track
Their way within the uncertain region's bounds:
The seas are marred with shallows, and the land
Is broken by the billows, and the surge
Beats on the shore loud-sounding. Nature leaves
This spot accursed, and of use to none."

Compare Milton's

"Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea
Nor good dry land."¹

Strake sail, *χαλάσαντες τὸ σκεῦος*, lowered the gear. "Gear" means appurtenances of every kind, such as spars, sails, rigging. "Every ship situated as this one was, when preparing for a storm, sends down upon deck the 'top-hamper,' or gear connected with the fair-weather sails, such as the topsails. A modern ship sends down top-gallant masts and yards; a cutter strikes her topmast when preparing for a gale."² The gear lowered was probably that connected with the fair-weather sails. The yard with the sails attached to it was lowered, at least so far as to reef it into a storm sail. For sail of some kind they must have, or they would drift into the dreaded quicksands, or have foundered before they reached them. "A sea striking the ship violently on the stern (as it would if driven by the wind without sails set) may dash it inwards, by which she must inevitably founder; in broaching-to suddenly, she is threatened with being immediately overset; and for want of sea-room she is endangered with shipwreck on a lee shore."³ "This last must have been the inevitable consequence had the ship been allowed to be driven at the mercy of the winds, as is generally supposed."² Hence "they left just enough of the sail to keep the ship's head to the wind."⁴

And so were driven, i. e., in this state, viz., undegirded, mainsail lowered, storm sail set, and on the starboard tack.

18. And we being exceedingly tossed with

a tempest, or as R. V., "We labored exceedingly with the storm," which increased in violence. Note the return to the first person "we," because all had a part in what was now suffered.

The next day they, the sailors, lightened the ship. The imperfect denotes that they began to lighten the ship, set about it, by throwing out some of the cargo (as the word for "lightened" means in classical Greek), probably that which was on deck, or most easily accessible, not the precious wheat which was thrown overboard later (ver. 38).

19. And the third day of the storm.

Cast out with our own hands, that is, of the passengers as well as of the crew, the tackling, *σκεῦν*, "the furniture of the ship, its fittings and equipment, anything movable lying on the deck upon which the passengers could lay their hands,"⁵ "such as tables, beds, chests, and the like (Meyer, De Wette, Lange, Alford, Wordsworth). The self-inflicted loss in this case (*αὐτόχειρες*), which affected so much the personal convenience of each one, showed how urgent was the danger. According to some, again, as Wetstein, Kuinoel, Winer, it denotes the baggage of the passengers."⁶ A work of little practical value, but "they were eager to do something. This makes a striking picture of a growing panic."⁴

The expression means, says Smith, "the main-yard, an immense spar, probably as long as the ship, and which would require the united efforts of passengers and crew to launch overboard. The relief which a ship would thus experience would be of the same kind as in a modern ship when the guns are thrown overboard."⁷

20. When neither sun nor stars . . . appeared. We have to remember that before the invention of the compass the sun and stars were the only guides of sailors who were out of sight of land.⁸ "The Greeks and Romans, in the most improved state of navigation among them, were reluctant to venture out to sea beyond the sight

¹ *Paradise Lost*, 2: 393.

² James Smith, *Voyage and Shipwreck*.

³ Falconer, *The Shipwreck*.

⁴ Ramsay.

⁵ Knowling.

⁶ Hackett.

⁷ *Voyage and Shipwreck*, p. 71.

⁸ Compare *Æneid*, I. 88; III. 195; Horace, *Epodes*, X. 9.

21 And when they had been long ^{But after} without food, then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ^{ye should have} ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have ^{loosed} ^{set sail} from Crete, and ^{to have} ^{gained} ^{gotten} this ^{harm} ^{injury} and loss.

22 And now I exhort you to be of ^m good cheer : for there shall be no loss of ^{any man's} life among you, but ^{only} of the ship.

l vers. 10. m vers. 25, 36.

of land. During the day they kept the high lands on shore, or some island, in view, to direct them, and at night depended, for the same purpose, on the position, the rising and setting, of different stars."¹ This was a great aggravation to their peril, and filled them with dread of unknown dangers.

No small tempest lay on us, ἐπικειμένον, with the pressure of a violent tempest.

All hope . . . was then, λοιπόν, at last, henceforth, taken away. "The imperfect marks the gradual spread of a spirit of listless despondency during the latter portion of this prolonged struggle for life."² "No one who has never been in a leaking ship in a long-continued gale can know what is suffered under such circumstances. The strain both of mind and body, the incessant demand for the labor of all the crew, the terror of the passengers, the hopeless working at the pumps, the laboring of the ship's frame and cordage, the driving of the storm, the benumbing effect of the cold and wet, make up a scene of no ordinary confusion, anxiety, and fatigue."³ "Day after day the crew sat doing nothing, eating nothing, waiting till the ship should sink."

"Two stages in the progress of growing fear have been mentioned in the two preceding verses. This is the third stage, absolute despair. It was precisely at this time, when no escape through human means seemed possible, that Paul interposed with divine encouragement."⁴

21. After long abstinence, πολλῆς ἀστίας. "This does not denote long abstinence as rendered in the A. V., but frequent neglect of regular meals ^{due to exhaustion, distress of mind, and despair of safety.}"² Ἀστία implies disinclination to food, want of appetite. "There were no means of cooking, no fire could be lighted, the caboose and utensils must long ago have been washed overboard; the provisions had probably been spoiled and soddened by the waves that broke over the ship; indeed, with death staring them in the face, no one cared to eat."⁶ James Smith gives several instances of short allowances during disastrous storms like this.

Paul stood forth in the midst of them. Sailors, soldiers, and passengers now willingly crowding round him. Sirs, "Gentlemen," marking Paul's courtesy. "In such a situation the experience of many cases shows that some individual, often one not hitherto prominent, and not rarely a woman, comes forward to cheer the company to the hope of escape and courage of work; and many a desperate situation has been overcome by the energy thus imparted. . . . Amid panic and despair Paul appears cool, confident, assured of safety; and he speaks in the only tone that could cheer such an audience as his, the tone of an inspired messenger."⁷ Ye should have hearkened unto me. Paul recalls to mind their former mistake in disregarding his advice (vers. 9-11), not to reproach them, but in order to show his claim to their confidence with reference to the present communication.

And to have gained, κερδήσαι. "They had hoped to gain great advantage by venturing to sea: they had in fact gained only personal injury and loss of their ship."²

Harm and loss. The harm was to their persons, the loss to their property. The same words as in ver. 10. Plumptre does not regard the negative before "have loosed from Crete" as extending to the next clause, but translates, "to have been spared harm and loss."

"Parallel passages from other Greek writers show that to 'gain' a harm and loss meant to escape them — to get, as it were, a profit out of them by avoiding them. This, St. Paul says, they would have done had they listened to his advice. The Geneva version adds an explanatory note, 'that is, ye should have saved the losses by avoiding the danger.'"⁸

22. And now I exhort you, παρακῶ. "Hobart speaks of it as the verb employed for a physician giving his advice, and although the word is common in classical Greek (compare, also, 2 Macc. 7: 25, 26 R; 3 Macc. 5: 17; 7: 12 A), its frequency in medical usage may account for its occurrence in this 'We' section only."⁹

To be of good cheer, εὐθυμεῖν, "used in medi-

¹ Dictionary of Antiquities, art. "Ship," quoted in Hackett.

² Rendall.

³ Conybeare and Howson.

⁴ Schaff.

⁵ Euripides, *The Suppliants*, 1105.

⁶ Farrar.

⁷ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 332, 333.

⁸ Plumptre.

⁹ Knowing. See, also, Hawkins, *Horæ Synopticæ*, p. 153.

23 For "there stood by me this night" ^{the} an angel of the God "whose I am, and whom ^{also} I serve,

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; "thou must ^{be brought stand} before Cæsar: and lo, 'God hath ^{given granted} thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for "I believe God, that it shall be even so as it ^{was told} hath been spoken unto me.

26 Howbeit "we must be "cast upon a certain island.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven ^{up} to and ^{down} fro in the sea of *Ā'dri-ā*, about midnight the ^{shipmen deemed} sailors surmised that they ^{drew} were drawing near to some country;

n ch. 18. 9 & 23. 11.

o 2 Tim. 4. 17.

p See ch. 8. 26.

q Ps. 119. 94.

Dan. 5. 23.

r Cp. Dan. 6. 16. See

ch. 24. 14. s ch. 23. 11.

t Cp. Gen. 18. 26 & 19. 21, 29 & Ezek. 14. 14.

u Luke 1. 45 (mg.).

v ch. 28. 1.

w vers. 17, 29.

cal language of the sick keeping up spirit," in opposition to a state of *ἀθυμία*, depression, faint-heartedness, and *δυσθυμία*, despondency, despair.¹

23. There stood by me this night the (an) angel of God.² To reassure Paul, and by granting the lives of the others for his sake to lead them to trust in his Saviour, and to gain power and opportunity for a more successful work in Rome. For all this would be reported. Paul stood among them as a star in the dark heavens, as a lighthouse in a stormy sea.

24. Fear not. "The words obviously came as an answer to the prayer, prompted by the fear, not of death or danger in itself, but lest the cherished purpose of his heart should be frustrated when it seemed on the very verge of attainment."³ So Jesus, in the vessel with his disciples in the storm on the Sea of Galilee, bade them to fear not.

"Ridge of the mountain wave, lower thy crest!

Wail of *Euroclydon*, be thou at rest!

Sorrow can never be, darkness must fly,

Where saith the Light of light, Peace! it is I!"⁴

Thou must be brought before Cæsar. God will certainly fulfil his promise, and therefore Paul's life must be preserved. Paul's safety was as sure as God's promise.

¹ COMPARE JAMES T. Fields' *Poems*, "The Tempest;" and the poem concerning Cuthbert, in the dawn of English history. One day with three companions on the sea, he was tossed by a storm upon a dreary shore, and his comrades cried to him:—

"Cuthbert, let us perish,—hope is o'er;

The furious tempest shuts the water path;

The snow-storm binds us on the bitter land."

"Now, wherefore, friends, have ye so little faith? God's servant said, and stretching forth his hand toward heaven, —

"He lifted up his reverent eyes, and spake, —

"I thank thee, Lord, the way is open there.

God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Doubtless Paul prayed earnestly for the safety of those who were in the ship with him; and their lives were granted in answer to his prayers. The good man is never selfish even in his prayers. He ever thinks of others.

"Observe how one godly man saves many ungodly men. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom (Gen. 18: 22-33). This is a singular pledge of God's love toward us, that he maketh certain drops of his goodness distil from us unto others."⁵ Contrast Jonah in the storm, with Paul.

25. For I believe God. Paul doubtless told something of his experience, and why he believed God.

26. Howbeit, etc. These are Paul's words, but it must be "that in the vision some details of the manner of their preservation had been made known to St. Paul by the divine messenger."⁶

27. The fourteenth night, from the time they left Fair Havens, when the storm began.

Driven up and down, *διαφερομένων*, either borne in different directions, to and fro, or borne through.

"Throughout the Acts the habitual force of *did* in composition with verbs of motion, e. g., *διέρχονται*, *διαπλέειν*, *διαφεύγειν*, *διαπερνᾶν*, *διοδεύειν*, whether governing an accus. or used absolutely, is to express continuous movement onwards over

No storm above our heads in wrath shall break,

And shut the heavenward path of love and prayer."

So of Clan-Alpine to his warriors, —

"One blast upon his bugle horn

Were worth a thousand men."

² See Whately's *Good and Evil Angels*; Patterson's *The Angels and their Ministrations*; Whittier's *Poems*, "The Angel of St. Mark;" the poem, *Flitting, flitting, ever near thee*.

³ Plumptre.

⁴ Hymn of Anatolius.

⁵ Calvin.

⁶ *Cambridge Bible*.

28 And they sounded, and found "twenty fathoms: and ^{when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found "fifteen fathoms.}

29 Then And fearing lest ^{haply} we should ^{have fallen upon rocks,} they ^{cast} ^{he = cast ashore on rocky ground,} let go four anchors ^{out of} the stern, and wished for the day.

z vers. 17, 26.

an intervening space. The context clearly points to a similar interpretation of *διαφερομένων*: for the distance travelled in thirteen days (476 miles), and the silence of the narrative as to any fresh trim of the vessel after Cauda, forbid the notion of her beating about *up and down or to and fro*. The Cretan whirlwind was the precursor of a permanent change of wind, and settled down into a steady E. N. E. gale, before which the ship ploughed right across with storm sails set on the same tack the whole way from Cauda to Melita."¹

In *Adria*.² Not the Adriatic Sea to which the name is now limited. "The ancients gave the name of *Adria* to the central basin of the Mediterranean, enclosed between Africa on the south, Italy and Sicily on the west, Greece and Crete on the east."¹

The shipmen deemed that they drew, were drawing, near. "Literally, *they suspected, or surmised, that a certain country was approaching them*. The sound of breakers, probably the white lines of foam seen through the darkness, gave rise, we may believe, to this impression."³

"In dire amazement riveted they stand,
And hear the breakers lash the rugged strand."⁴

"James Smith shows by his experience and the Admiralty records that if the place of the wreck was St. Paul's Bay, Malta, as is almost unanimously agreed, no ship can enter it from the east without passing within a quarter of a mile of the point of Koura; but, before reaching it, the land is too low, and too far from the track of a ship driven from the eastward to be seen in a dark night. When she does come within this distance, it is impossible to avoid observing the breakers; for, with northeasterly gales, the sea breaks upon it with such violence, that Admiral Smyth, in his view of the headland, has made the breakers its distinctive character." On the 10th of August, 1810, the British frigate *Lively* fell upon these breakers in a dark night, and was lost. The quartermaster, who first observed them, stated in his evidence at the court-martial

that at the distance of a quarter of a mile the land could not be seen, but that he saw "the curl of the sea." "This was upon the point of Koura, the very spot where a ship driving from the east into St. Paul's Bay must have seen and heard the breakers, and the only spot where she could have done so."⁵

28. And sounded. On hearing the breakers, their instinct would be to heave the lead and ascertain the depth of the water. And found it twenty fathoms. That is, 120 feet. This is precisely the depth opposite the point; and the soundings forward in the middle of the bay give fifteen fathoms.

29. Fallen upon rocks, — the sunken reefs and rocky shore which were indicated by the breakers and by the diminished depth of water.

They cast four anchors. "To anchor was their only chance of safety, and four anchors would make the vessel more secure: ancient vessels carried as a rule several anchors. Athenæus speaks of a ship which had eight iron anchors."⁶

Out of the stern. "Anchoring by the stern was unusual; but in their situation it had great advantages. Had they anchored by the bow, the ship would have swung round from the wind; and when afterwards they wished to run ashore it would have been far harder to manage her. . . . But as they were, they had merely to cut the cables, unlash the rudders, and put up a little foresail (ver. 40), and they had the ship at once under command to beach her at any spot they might select."⁷ "The English ships-of-war were anchored by the stern in the battle of Copenhagen, and rendered very effective service in that position. Conybeare and Howson mention the singular fact that Lord Nelson stated after the battle that he was led to adopt that plan because he had just been reading this twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts."⁸

And wished, *ἠύχοντο*, wished, or prayed. "There is no reason for diluting the force of the Greek expression into a mere wish. Greek sailors might well resort to prayer at such a crisis."¹

¹ Rendall.

² See Strabo, 2: 123; Ptolemy, *Geography*, 3: 4, 14, 16.

³ Plumptre. "Breusing and Goerne (so Blass) think that the anchor or whatever weight was dragged behind the ship appeared to strike the ground."

⁴ William Falconer, *The Shipwreck*.

⁵ *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, 79-83.

⁶ Knowling. COMPARE "for the number here, and the

security which they gave, Caesar, *Bello Civili*, 1: 25, 'naves quaternis anchoris destinabat, ne fluctibus moverentur.'

⁷ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, 335. So Smith, Rendall, Farrar. "On the interesting parallels of anchoring ships from the stern in our own naval engagements, see C. and H., small edition, p. 653, and J. Smith, p. 133, 4th edition."

⁸ Hackett.

30 And as the ^{shipmen} sailors were ^{about} seeking to flee out of the ship, ^{when they} and had ^{let down} lowered ^{the} the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would ^{have cast} lay out ^{anchors} out of the foreship,

31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

32 Then the soldiers cut ^{off} away the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought ^{them} them all to take ^{meat,} some food, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye ^{have tarried} wait and ^{continued} continue fasting, having taken nothing.

γ ver. 16.

THE SHIPWRECK, vers. 30-44.

30. And as the shipmen. The sailors, the officers and crew, who could get at the small boat, and best knew how to manage it, and who knew that only a small part of those on board the ship could get into it, determined to save themselves, even though in doing it they left the vessel with all its passengers with none to manage it. Under colour, pretence. It was easy for the sailors to urge that the ship needed anchors fore as well as aft, and, while pretending to be occupied about this, to lower the boat which they had before hoisted on deck (ver. 16), and so effect their escape. The boat, it might appear, was necessary to their alleged purpose, as their ostensible aim was not merely to cast anchors from the bow, but to carry them out (as the word which St. Luke uses, *ἐκρῆνεν*, implies) to the full tether of the cable's length.¹

31. Paul said to the centurion. Paul being among the prisoners might easily see what was hidden from the army officers. The sailors would not be anxious to hide their plans from chained prisoners. But Paul was a very practical man as well as a spiritual philosopher. Paul could not appeal to the officers of the ship, for they were in the plot. On the other hand, the soldiers had the weapons and could enforce obedience. Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. He says "ye," not "we." He appealed to their instinct of self-preservation. There was reason in these words. The sailors understood managing the ship; the soldiers could have done nothing. The sailors also had possession of the boat which might have been necessary for reaching the shore. Here is an object lesson, a living illustration of the harmony of free will and election. Philosophically, there may remain difficulties in the way of reconciling the two, but they are here reconciled in fact, and the practical difficulties are removed. The Bible facts explain the Bible doctrines. The ship's company could work out their own salvation because God had

been and was working for them and with them.

32. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes. "Levin² sees in this the absolute ascendancy which St. Paul had gained; he had said that their lives should be spared, and although, humanly speaking, the boat offered the best prospect of reaching land, yet at a word from St. Paul the soldiers deprived themselves even of this last resource."³

33. While, *ἔχρη*, the day was coming on. So most. But Rendall translates "until," and says "while destroys the graphic force of the narrative, for it makes Paul wait silently through the long anxious night watch, whereas he really continued his entreaties all night to one and another from the moment the anchors were safely landed till the signs of daybreak indicated the need for action."

The fourteenth day that ye have tarried, waiting with great anxiety for the storm to cease. And continued fasting, *ἄντροι*, without food. Rendall renders "this is the fourteenth day that ye have continued fasting on the watch for the dawn." "The language of Paul does not imply a fourteenth day of continuous fasting, but fourteen successive nights of anxious watching for the dawn, all alike spent in restless hungry expectation of what the day might reveal."⁴ "Appian speaks of an army which, for twenty days together, had neither food nor sleep; by which he must mean that they neither made full meals nor slept whole nights together. The same interpretation must be given to this phrase."⁵

Having taken nothing. "Breusing explains the word as meaning that in their perilous and hopeless condition those on board had not gone to fetch their regular food and rations, but had subsisted on any bits of food they might have by them; in ancient ships there were no tables spread, or waiters to bring food to the passengers, and each one who wanted refreshment must fetch it for himself."⁶

¹ Plumtree.

² St. Paul, ii. 202.

³ Knowling.

⁴ Rendall, *Acts*, 347.

⁵ Doddridge.

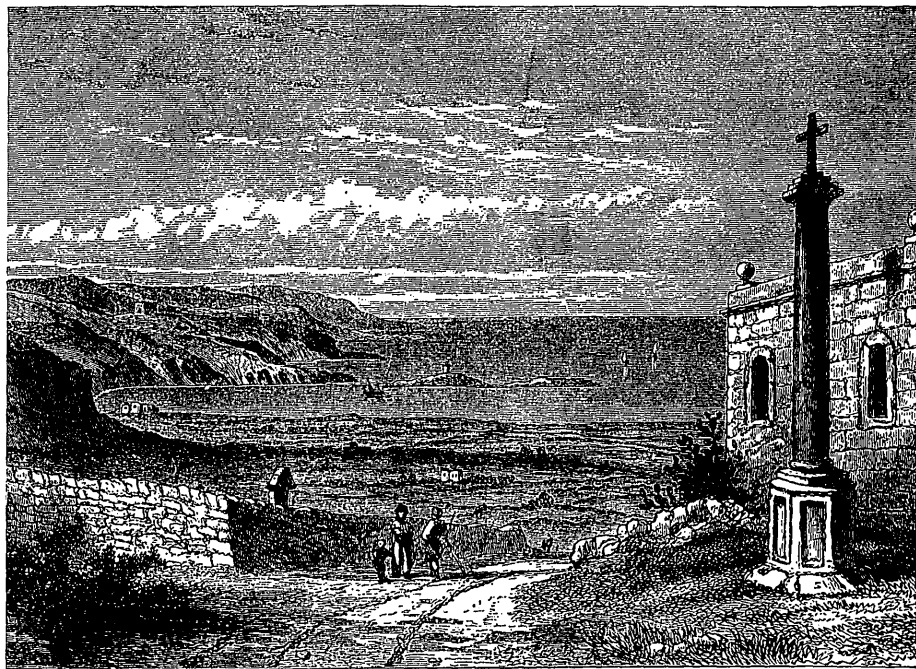
34 Wherefore I ^{pray} beseech you to take ^{some meat:} some food: for this is for your ^{health:} health: for ^{there} shall not a hair ^{fall} perish from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had ^{thus spoken, he took} said this, and had taken bread, and ^{he} "gave thanks to God in the presence of ^{them} all: and when he ^{had broken it, he} brake it, and began to eat.

z 1 Sam. 14. 45. 2 Sam. 14. 11. 1 Kin. 1. 52. Luke 21. 18. Cp. Matt. 10. 30. a See Matt. 15. 36.

34. Meat, food. For your health, *σωτηρίας*, *salvation, safety, deliverance*. "Only used here and in Heb. 11: 7 of the preservation of physical life, safety, so in classical Greek and in Greek medical writers, see on 16: 17."¹ "Health" in

the time of our translators had a wider signification than now, being derived from *whole, hale*, not from *heal*. "For example, in Wiclif's version, 'the knowledge of salvation,' in Luke 1: 77, appears as 'the science of health.' Wiclif has



ST. PAUL'S BAY, MALTA. From the south.

In the centre is the island of Salmonetta, with a lighthouse upon it. At the west end of the island, between it and the point off shore, is the place where the two seas met. The ship marks the spot where the wreck occurred. The rocky cape, Koura, where the sailors first heard the surf, lies further east beyond the building shown in the picture. (Lewin.)

'health' here also, and is followed by all the chief English versions, except the Geneva, which has 'safeguard.' What St. Paul means is that the preservation of his fellow-passengers depended on their keeping up their strength."² Not a hair fall from the head of any of you. This was a proverb denoting exemption from the slightest harm (1 Kings 1: 52; Matt. 10: 30; Luke 21: 18).

35. He took bread, and gave thanks to God, as every pious Jew and Christian were accustomed to do. This was a special opportunity for Paul to point these heathen to the true God. The true man has many opportunities of presenting his religion. This act was a sermon on Christian gratitude more eloquent than the appeal of the orator, and more convincing than the reasoning of the

¹ Knowing.

² Plumptre.

36 Then were they all of ^b good cheer, and ^{they} themselves also took ^{some meat.} food.
 37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen
 c souls.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, ^d and cast ^{throwing} out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, ^e they knew not the land: but they ^{discovered} perceived a cer-
 tain ^{creek} bay with a ^{shore, into the which} beach, and ^{they} were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in ^{the ship} upon it.

b ver. 22. c ch. 2. 41 & 7. 14. Rom. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 3. 20. d Cp. ver. 18. e Cp. ch. 28. 1.

logician.¹ He began to eat. To lead them on by his example, he himself did what he advised them to do.

36. Then were they all of good cheer. "The hearty cheerfulness (is it too colloquial a phrase to say the 'pluck'?) of the apostle had communicated itself, as by a kind of electric sympathy, to his companions. They looked to him as their friend and leader, and had spirits to eat once more."² "Each successive incident tended to raise him more and more into a position of overpowering influence. Not the captain or the ship's crew, but the passenger and the prisoner, is looked to now as the source of wisdom and safety."³ In this humane counsel we see the human side of the Christian gospel finely illustrated. Christ's apostle is Christlike in his thorough, practical sympathy with bodily needs. He shows God to these heathen souls as the carer for their bodies and the giver of their daily bread; and by exemplifying a grateful spirit helps to awaken it in their hearts.

37. We were in all in the ship. "The number may be mentioned at this point that they might know afterwards that all had been saved. But Breusing thinks that it would have come perhaps more naturally at the end of the narrative, and that it is given here because the rations were distributed to each on board at this juncture."⁴ Or perhaps the final muster roll was called by the captain or centurion before abandoning the ship.⁵

Two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. "Josephus informs us that there were six hundred persons on board the ship from which he, with about eighty others, escaped; and the great ship of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which forms the subject of one of Lucian's Dialogues, and which is described as driven by stress of weather into the Piræus, is estimated, from the dimensions given, to have been of 1,000 to 1,100 tons burden; and although this vessel was probably built for ostentation, we see that the tonnage of these trading ships was not far below that of our old East

Indiamen. In the time of Commodus, one of these wheat ships was driven into the Piræus. Lucian visited her, and from his description, her keel was about 100 feet, and it has been estimated that she would measure between 1,100 and 1,200 tons."⁶

38. They lightened the ship, for the third time. The object was to enable them to approach nearer the shore, for safety. It may be, too, that "the ship having been so long thrown partially on one side, the cargo had shifted; this rendered it necessary to cast out part of the wheat so as to right the ship again, and enable her to be more accurately steered toward the land."⁷

And cast out the wheat, *σίτον, wheat, grain*. This being the chief cargo of the ship, and less easily reached, had been kept as long as possible. Now there was no hope of saving it, and casting it into the sea might increase the chances of safety. And with the ship listed to one side, the waves less rough, and the ship standing still, the grain was more easily thrown out than at any other time during the storm.

39. They knew not the land. The Alexandrian sailors were familiar with Malta, but not with this part of it which was out of their regular course. Moreover they were close in shore, and the rain prevented any wide views. "An English seaman might have made many voyages between New York and Liverpool, and yet might be puzzled (even with the help of such charts as the old Greek sailors did not possess) if he found himself, in foggy weather, off a part of the coast of North Wales which he had never seen before."⁸

Discovered a certain creek, rather, inlet. With a shore, a sandy beach, upon which they could run the ship, and hold there without going to pieces before they could land. It would be almost impossible for any to escape if they ran upon rocks in a heavy storm.

Thrust, or drive, the ship. "The wind must have forced them to the west side of the bay, which is rocky, but has two creeks. One of these, Mestara Valley, has a shore. The other has no

¹ William M. Taylor.

² Plumptre.

³ Conybeare and Howson.

⁴ Knowing.

⁵ Rendall.

⁶ Hackett. See Lucian's "The ship." Seneca, *Epistles*, 77. Suetonius, *Augustus*, 98.

⁷ Lyman Abbott.

⁸ Schaff.

40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed ^{themselves} unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, ^{casting off} of the rudders; and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and they made toward shore. ^{for the beach.}

41 And falling into a place where two seas met, ^{But lighting upon} they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the ^{hinder part was broken with} the violence ^{of the waves.} ^{stern began to break up by} the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any ^{of them} should swim out, and escape.

43 But the centurion, ^h willing ^{desiring} to save Paul, ^{kept} stayed them from ^{their} purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast ^{themselves first into the sea,} themselves overboard, and get first to the land:

f Cp. 2 Cor. 11. 25. *g* Cp. ch. 12. 19. *h* ver. 3.

longer a sandy beach, but must have had one formerly, which has evidently been worn away by the action of the sea. The vessel grounded (ver. 41) before they reached the point on shore at which they aimed, though they may have entered the creek."¹

40. When they had taken up, *περιελόντες*, not "taken up," but the reverse. The sailors loosed the cables of the anchors which were fastened within the ship, that they might fall off into the sea.² "They cut the cables" and committed not themselves but the anchors, *ἰ. ε.*, "left the anchors in the sea."³

And loosed the rudder bands. "Ancient ships were steered by two large paddles, one on each quarter. When anchored by the stern in a gale, it would be necessary to lift them out of the water and secure them by lashings or 'rudder bands,' and to loose the rudder bands when the ship was again under way."⁴

And hoisted, early modern English for "hoist," the mainsail, *ἀνέμωνα*. Rather the "foresail." "This word has been interpreted by various writers as meaning nearly every sail which a vessel carries." But it could not mean the mainsail (ver. 17), and to set a stern sail, by which others define the word, would be the most foolish thing possible. The only sail adapted to the circumstances is the foresail. "A sailor will at once see that the foresail was the best possible sail to set."⁴ "The Venetians gave this name to the largest sail, and this may have led to the use of the term 'mainsail' here; but in Venetian ships the foresail was the largest sail."⁵ And

made toward shore, steering the vessel toward the point selected.

41. A place where two seas met. Mr. Smith is of the opinion that . . . these words may refer to the channel, not more than a hundred yards in breadth, which separates the small island Salmonetta from Malta, and which might very properly be called a place where "two seas meet," on account of the communication which it forms between the sea in the interior of the bay and the sea outside. He would place the scene of the shipwreck near that channel.¹ Ran the ship, *ῥαῖν*, aground.⁵ The forepart stuck fast. In Admiral Smyth's chart of the bay, the nearest soundings to the mud indicate a depth of about three fathoms, which is about what a large ship would draw. A ship, therefore, . . . would strike a bottom of mud graduating into tenacious clay, into which the forepart would fix itself and be held fast, while the stern would be exposed to the force of the waves.³

42. The soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners. The Roman soldiers were answerable with their lives for the detention of their prisoners (chap. 12 : 19; 16 : 27). "And they thought it would be poor comfort to escape from drowning only to be put to death by the sword. Note the natural selfishness of the soldiers here, and of the sailors just before (ver. 30), in contrast with the conduct of Paul."⁷

43. But the centurion, willing, rather "wishing;" it was no mere acquiescence, but a strong desire to save Paul, who had done so much for them, and had shown such noble characteristics.

¹ Hackett. ² Blass. ³ James Smith.

⁴ James Smith; see "Dissertation on Ancient Ships" in his *Voyage and Shipwreck*. "Virgil, whose descriptions of everything which relates to the sea are peculiarly exact, speaks of the ships in the fleet of Æneas as lost in various ways, some on rocks and some on quicksands, but 'all with fastenings loosened.'" — Conybeare and Howson.

⁵ Schaff. "Dr. Humphry very appositely here refers to the familiar passage in *Juvenal* (xii. 68), —

'Et quod superaverat unum,

Velo prora suo.'

⁶ Blass, *Philology of the Gospels*, p. 186, sees in this sudden introduction of the phrase *ἐπώκειλαν τὴν ῥαῖν* an indication that St. Luke had read his Homer, since in no other passage in the N. T. do we find the obsolete word *ῥαῖν*, the commoner expression *τὸ πᾶν* occurring in this chapter no less than thirteen times." — Knowing.

⁷ Farrar.

44 And the rest, some on ^{boards,} ^{planks,} and some on ^{broken pieces of} ^{other things from} the ship. And so it came to pass, that 'they ^{escaped all} safe to the land.

† ver. 22.

The trials of the terrible storm revealed characteristics to the centurion which he could have known in no other way. **Kept them from their purpose.** "It would have been a horrible thing that blood and butchery should stain the planks of a shipwrecked vessel at the very moment when safety seemed within reach, and that this human sacrifice of lives which God had rescued should be the only thanksgiving of the survivors."¹

44. And the rest, those who could not swim, some on boards, the planks that were in use in the ship for various purposes; perhaps, as Blass, some that had been used for keeping the cargo in position.

Broken pieces of the ship, which the waves had scattered over the water, and the wind was driving toward the shore. They were doubtless aided by the swimmers. "One of St. Paul's (former) shipwrecks must have taken place under the same circumstances; for he tells us, 'A day and a night I have been in the deep' (2 Cor. 11 : 25), supported, no doubt, on spars or fragments of the wreck. In Virgil's description of the casualties of the ships of Æneas, some are driven on rocks; others, on quicksands; but

'laxis laterum compagibus omnes

Accipiunt inimicum imbrem, remisque fatiscunt.'"²

"One of the completest services that has been rendered to New Testament scholarship is James Smith's proof that all these circumstances are united in St. Paul's Bay." His calculations are based on reliable observations. In a wind from

the E. N. E. the vessel with its storm sail set would drift W. b. N. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. or W. 8° N. The distance from Clauda to the point of Koura is 476.6 miles. Luke's narrative allows a fraction over thirteen days for the performance of this voyage. It must have occupied a day, or the greater part of a day, to have reached Clauda after they left Fair Havens. According to the judgment of experienced seamen, "the mean rate of drift of a ship circumstanced like that of Paul" (*i. e.*, working its way in such a direction in a gale of moderate severity, against a north-east wind) would be thirty-six and a half miles in twenty-four hours. "Hence, according to these calculations, a ship starting late in the evening from Clauda would, by midnight on the fourteenth, be less than three miles from the entrance of St. Paul's Bay. I admit that a coincidence so very close as this is, is to a certain extent accidental; but it is an accident which could not have happened had there been any great inaccuracy on the part of the author of the narrative with regard to the numerous incidents upon which the calculations are founded, or had the ship been wrecked anywhere but at Malta."³

What the story of Joseph was in the Old Testament, that of Paul's experiences from his last visit to Jerusalem to the end of the Acts, is in the New Testament, — a striking illustration of God's guiding providence over his children, and of their faith and courage and true living amid great trials and temptations.

¹ Farrar.

² "The joints of their sides being loosed, all the ships receive the hostile flood, and gape with chinks." — Hackett.

The anonymous poem on the sea, —

"Life is a sea as fathomless,
As wide, as terrible,
And yet sometimes as calm and beautiful," etc.

Suggestive Illustrations on Acts, p. 442.

Longfellow's *Poems*, —

"Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State."

The description of the storm in Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Act. I., Scene 2.

Homer's *Iliad*, Bk. XV., line 624, etc. Vergil, *Æneid*, Bk. I. The Shipwreck on the coast of Carthage.

³ James Smith.

CHAPTER 28.

PAUL IN MALTA AND IN ROME.

PAUL IN MALTA,
vers. 1-10.

Three months.

Nov., A. D. 60 — Feb., 61 (Lewin);

Nov., A. D. 59 — Feb., 60 (Ramsay).

{ The natives' kindness to the shipwrecked.
Paul and the viper.
Paul and Governor Publius.
Paul heals the sick.

THE JOURNEY FROM
MALTA TO ROME,
vers. 11-16.

February, 60 or 61.

{ From Malta to Syracuse.
to Rhegium in Sicily.
to Puteoli in Italy.
to Appii Forum. } Met by Roman Christians.
to Three Taverns. }
Arrival at Rome, about March 1.

PAUL IN ROME,
vers. 16-31.

Spring of 61 to Spring of 63,
or 60 to 62.

{ Paul a prisoner in his own hired house.
Conference with the Jewish leaders.
Paul expounds the gospel to the Jews.
Paul's final appeal to the unbelieving Jews.
He turns to the Gentiles.
Two years a prisoner, preaching the gospel of the
kingdom of God.

1 AND when ^{they}_{we} were escaped, ^{they}_{we} then knew that ^k the island was called Mĕl'ī-tā.

2 And the ^z barbarous people ^{barbarians shewed us no ^{little}_{common} ^m kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us ^{every one}_{all}, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.}

^j Cp. ch. 27. 39. ^k ch. 27. 26. ^l ver. 4. Rom. 1. 14. 1 Cor. 14. 11. Col. 3. 11. ^m ch. 27. 3.

PAUL IN MALTA, vers. 1-10.

1. Then they knew, ἐπέγνωσαν. The verb means to recognize, as by sight, hearing, or certain signs, what a person or thing really is, to find out, to ascertain; the aorist here denoting that as soon as they actually reached the shore in the daylight, they recognized from the previous experience of some of the sailors, or ascertained from the natives. The same Greek word in the imperfect, in 27: 39, implies that they tried to recognize at that time, but could not. The great harbor of Valetta, several miles distant, was doubtless more or less familiar to the seamen. That the island was called Melita, of which "Malta" is a shortened form. This is a small island sixty miles south of Sicily, and about two hundred miles from the African coast. It is seventeen miles in length, nine miles in its greatest breadth, and sixty miles in circumference. The inhabitants were of Phœnician origin, from Carthage in Africa. The island was governed then by the Romans. Now it is under British

rule. The native language is chiefly Arabic; about 70 per cent. of the words being Arabic, the rest chiefly a corrupt Italian. "The Maltese language approaches so nearly to the Arabic that the islanders are readily understood in all the ports of Africa and Syria."¹ The evidence of Phœnician coins and inscriptions shows that in Paul's time the Phœnician language had not died out in the island.

2. And the barbarous people. "The Maltese were a Carthaginian colony who spoke the Phœnician language: they were therefore designated barbarians by the Greeks, the term meaning only that they were foreigners speaking a strange language, not that they were barbarous."² Ovid says, speaking of his exile home: "Here I am a barbarian, because I am understood by no one;" and the Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 14: 11, says almost the same thing. "It is worth noting that the part of Africa from which the Maltese came is still called *Barbary*."³ "The Maltese are a strong, well-formed race, the men dark,

¹ Conybeare and Howson.

² Rendall.

³ Eugene Stock.

3 ^{And} ^{But} when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid ^{them} ^{them} on the fire, there came a viper out by reason of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

handsome, and lithe, the women with black eyes and fine hair and an easy carriage. They are a cheerful, good-humored, and industrious people, sober and abstemious, though quick-tempered and addicted to the use of the knife. . . . Among the people the Arab race and character predominate."¹

Shewed us no little, *τυχοῦσαν, ordinary, common*. They showed unusual, exceptional, unexpected kindness, *φιανθρωπῖαν, love to man*. Our word "philanthropy" is a transliteration of the Greek. "It denotes the kindness that is shown on the general ground of humanity, irrespective of differences of rank or race."² "It was a word which a physician would be very likely to employ, for Hippocrates speaks of 'philanthropy' in a physician as ever accompanying a real love of his profession. Galen distinguishes between those who healed through 'philanthropy' and those who healed merely for gain, and even a more generous diet for the sick was called *φιανθρωποτέρα τροφή* (more philanthropic food)."³

They kindled a fire. "An objection has been made that there is now a great absence of wood in the island. But within a very few years there was wood close to St. Paul's Bay."⁴ Because of the cold. The rain still continued. It was late in the autumn, and a northeast rain is very chilly, even when the thermometer is not very low. They would feel the cold more on account of their fatigue and exposure.

3. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, *σπυγδων, from σπύγω, to roast, parch; hence, dry sticks, brushwood, copse*. "The furze still growing near St. Paul's Bay would well afford material for a fire."⁵ "From the circumstance of the concealed viper, these sticks were probably heaps of neglected wood gathered in the forest."⁶

Paul, though the greatest man then living, was ready to do the humblest duty. He knew the

greatness of serving. His Master had taught this duty and privilege when he washed his disciples' feet. "Whatever was to be done, if he were able to take a part in it, he was never wanting, whether it was in counselling about a difficulty, in comforting under danger, or helping by bodily labor to relieve the general distress."⁷ Thus Paul held



VIPER.

up the banner of the cross, and proved the Christian spirit. His conduct was his credential.

"This was the noblest Roman of them all."

"His life was GENTLE; and the elements So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up And say to all the world, 'This was a MAN!'"⁸

Heroic deeds, martyrs' fires, and kingly power often bring no more of divine beauty than a true life, of highest motives, in honest daily toil.⁹

There came a viper out of the heat, from among the fagots already on the fire whose increasing heat awaked it from its torpid state in

¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

² Schaff.

³ Knowling. See Hobart, p. 296.

⁴ Conybeare and Howson.

⁵ Lewin.

⁶ Alford.

⁷ *Cambridge Bible*.

⁸ *Julius Cæsar*, Act V., Scene 5, Mark Antony on the death of Brutus.

⁹ COMPARE Murillo's picture in the Louvre, *The Miracle of San Diego*, or "The Angels in the Kitchen" preparing food as naturally as they would play harps in heaven. See *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, p. 221; and Dr. Gannett's *Blessed be Drudgery*.

"If the dear Lord should send an angel down,
A seraph radiant in robes of light,

To do some menial service in our streets
As braying stone, we'll say, from morn till night, —
Think you the faintest blush would rise
To mar the whiteness of his holy face?
Think you a thought of discontent would find
Within his perfect heart abiding-place?

"I love to think the sweet will of his God
Would seem as gracious in a seraph's eyes
In the dark, miry, crowded lanes of earth
As in the ambrosial bowers of Paradise:
That those fair hands which lately swept the lyre
Would not against their lowly work rebel,
But as they ever wrought his will in heaven,
Would work it here as faithfully and well."

Anon.

4 And when ⁿ the barbarians saw the ^{venomous} beast ^{hang on} ^{hauling from} his hand, they said ^{among themselves,} ^o No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped ^{one to another,} from the sea, ^q yet ^{vengeance suffereth not} justice hath not suffered to live.

n ver. 2. o Cp. Job 4. 7 & Luke 13. 2, 4 & John 9. 2.

p Cp. Num. 32. 23 & Amos 5. 19 & 9. 3. q Wisd. 14. 31.

which it had begun to lie dormant for the winter, and drove it forth. And fastened on his hand, as he was laying his bundle on the fire.

The viper was probably the common viper of Europe, *pelias berus*. It is poisonous but not deadly in England, but deadly in warmer climates. But it may have been the *viperina aspis*, or the asp, about twelve to eighteen inches long, such as caused the death of Cleopatra. Certainly this serpent must have been deadly, or the people would not have expected to see him die.

"The viper, a venomous little reptile, in various forms, infests nearly the whole of Europe, but is absent from the New World. A bounty is offered in France for the destruction of vipers, and it is to obtain this bounty that a man named Courtol, in the south of France, has in seven years, in a single province, killed 9,175 vipers, as shown by the official records."¹

There are now no venomous serpents in Malta, but that is no reason for believing there were none ages ago, when the island was sparsely inhabited.

"No person who has studied the changes which the operations of man have produced on the animals of any country, will be surprised that a particular species of reptiles should have disappeared from Malta. My friend the Rev. Mr. Landsborough, in his interesting excursions in the island of Arran, has repeatedly noticed the gradual disappearance of the viper from the island since it has become more frequented. Perhaps there is nowhere a surface of equal extent in so artificial a state as that of Malta is at the present day, — and nowhere has the aboriginal forest been more completely cleared. We need not therefore be surprised that, with the disappearance of the woods, the noxious reptiles which infested them should also have disappeared."² There are 1,200 persons to the square mile in Malta.

Lewin mentions that his travelling companions in 1853 started what they thought was a viper, which escaped into one of the bundles of heather.³ There is an instance nearer home. "The Blue Hills, a few miles south of Boston, are one of the very few spots in New England where rattlesnakes still survive. They are extremely rare even there; but a few years ago they might have been found in larger numbers."

Mr. Lyell, in quoting the travels of Spix and

Martius in Brazil, observes: "They speak of the dangers to which they were exposed from the jaguar, the *poisonous serpents*, crocodiles, scorpions, centipedes, and spiders. But with the increasing population and cultivation of the country, say these naturalists, these evils will gradually diminish; when the inhabitants have cut down the woods, drained the marshes, made roads in all directions, and founded villages and towns, man will by degrees triumph over the rank vegetation and the noxious animals."⁴

4. No doubt this man is a murderer. Paul was a prominent prisoner, accused of some crime unknown to them, and they naturally attributed to him the greatest crime. Yet vengeance. Vengeance should begin with a capital, as a personification of a deity, "The Avenger." "Justice here, like Nemesis among the Greeks, and Atē among the tragic poets of Greece, is an impersonation of divine indignation against wrong, and of misfortune, or divine infliction of evil. It was the way of accounting for especial and strange misfortunes. Dikē, or Justice, among the Greeks, was the personified daughter of Zeus and Themis (Jupiter and Law)."⁵

Suffereth not to live, as is her wont. Paul had escaped from the wreck, but he could not escape from the sword of divine justice. "Mr. Humphry adduces here an interesting Greek epigram, the substance of which is this, that a man shipwrecked on the coast of Libya, and killed while asleep by a serpent, had struggled in vain against the waves, finding here on land the fate that was his due."⁶

"There is a deep truth in the expectation of these Maltese people that crime will be followed by punishment. It is clear in the case of the criminal, the idler, the drunkard. The idea of the connection between guilt and retribution, the sleepless, never-dying avenger of wrong; the Nemesis who presides over retribution; the vengeance which suffereth not the murderer to live; the whips and scorpions of the Furies — it seems the first instinct of religion."⁷ But it is equally clear that no one but the Omniscient God can tell how far suffering is the sign of special sin. Jesus, in Luke 13: 1-5, says, "Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but,

¹ *Youth's Companion*, July 16, 1896.

² James Smith, *Voyage and Shipwreck*.

³ *St. Paul*, 2: 208.

⁴ *Principles of Geology*, 146.

⁵ President Theodore Woolsey.

⁶ Schaff.

⁷ F. W. Robertson, *Sermons*, vol. i. ser. 13.

5 ^{And} ^{Howbeit} he "shook off the beast into the fire, and, ^{felt} ^{took} no harm.
 6 ^{But} they ^{looked when} ^{expected that} ^{he should} have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly:
 but ^{after} ^{when} they ^{had looked a great while,} ^{were long in expectation,} and ^{saw no harm} ^{beheld nothing amiss} come to him, "they changed their minds, and 'said that he was a god.

r Mark 16. 18. Luke 10. 19.

s Cp. ch. 14. 11, 19.

t Cp. ch. 8. 10 & 14. 11.

except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." There are many other reasons for suffering besides wrong-doing, and we have no right to judge others.¹

5. And he shook off the beast into the fire. With perfect composure, doubtless arising from the two promises, (1) that of Christ to his disciples concerning serpents (Mark 16 : 18 ; Luke 10 : 19), and (2) the promise that he should preach the gospel in Rome, and, therefore, he could not die before he reached that city. "A man is immortal till his work is done."

The beast, τὸ θηρίον. "Luke uses the word in the same way as the medical writers, who employed it to denote venomous serpents, and particularly the viper ; so much so that an antidote, made chiefly from the flesh of vipers, was termed θηριακή. A curious bit of etymological history attaches to this latter word. From it came the Latin *theriaca*, of which our *treacle* (molasses) is a corruption. Treacle, therefore, is originally a preparation of viper's flesh, and was used later of any antidote. Thus Coverdale's translation of Jer. 8 : 22 has 'there is no more *treacle* in Gilead.' Gurnall ('Christian in Complete Armor') says: 'The saints' experiences help them to a sovereign *treacle* made of the scorpion's own flesh (which they through Christ have slain), and that hath a virtue above all other to expel the venom of Satan's temptations from the heart.' So Jeremy Taylor: 'We kill the viper and make *treacle* of him.'"²

6. They looked when, "they expected that," he should have swollen, etc. This was "the usual effect of a viper's bite, making itself apparent in a very short time."³ "The writer once saw a viper 'fasten on' the wrist of a friend in Epping Forest. The whole arm rapidly swelled to an enormous size, and though life was saved, the sufferer was in imminent peril for some days, and an invalid for months."⁴ Such effects of African serpents are spoken of by ancient writers. Thus, Solinus, a writer on natural history, speaks of the prester, a poisonous serpent, as distending the person whom it bites, and swelling him to an enormous size. "The verb for 'swollen,' *πυμπαρ-*

θαι, implies literally 'inflammation,' and one of the enormous serpents of Africa took its name, Prester ('the inflamer'), from it."⁵ "In classical Greek *πυμπασθαι* means to take fire, and *πρήθειν*, to cause to swell, and those two ideas are combined, as in the word *πηροσθήρ* (prester), venomous snake, the bite of which caused both inflammation and swelling."⁶ Lucan (IX. 790) describes the effect of its bite.

"Nasidium Marsi cultorem torridus agri,
 Percussit Prester. Illi ruber igneus ora
 Succendit, tenditque cutem, pereunte figura."

"Nasidius toiling in the Marsian fields,
 The burning Prester bit — a fiery flush
 Lit up his face and set the skin a-stretch,
 And all its comely grace had passed away."

Or fallen down dead suddenly. Sudden collapse and death ensue often from the bite of serpents. Shakespeare speaks as a naturalist when he says of the asp-bitten Cleopatra :⁷ —

"Trembling she stood, and on the sudden dropped."

Saw no harm come to him. "They knew the deadly nature of the bite, and their subsequent conduct shows that they regarded it as nothing short of miraculous that Paul escaped."⁸

"Neither the high priest, the Jewish Parliament, the conspirators, the devil himself, the storm-lashed Mediterranean Sea, nor the venomous viper, can prevent his going to Rome. So we are going to heaven, and God is our continual guard. All nature is used by Him for our good, and we need not fear."⁹ For Paul, as for every disciple, the very bitterness works out good. The viper was unable to harm him, and, like a church-bell, attracted men to the Master he served and the gospel he loved.

They changed their minds, and said that he was a god, because only divine power could have preserved him from harm. "Instead of being a murderer or a god, he is, as Bengel quaintly suggests, a man of God." At Lystra they first thought Paul was a god, and then stoned him for a malefactor (Acts 14 : 8-19).

Their taking Paul for a god "was quite in ac-

ment and Justice of God exemplified," to John Howie's *Scots Worthies*.

² M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*.

³ *Cambridge Bible*.

⁴ Plumptre.

⁵ Hackett.

⁶ Eugene Stock.

⁷ Knowling.

⁸ I. Jackson Wray.

¹ See Plutarch's *Delay of Divine Punishment*, with notes by Rev. A. P. Peabody, D. D. Cotton Mather's *Remarkable Judgments of God on Several Sorts of Offenders*, with remarks upon it in O. W. Holmes' *Professor at the Breakfast-Table*, section V. Scott's *Redgauntlet*, note to letter xi., speaking of the appendix, "The Judge-

7 ^{In} Now in the ^{same quarters} neighbourhood of that place ^{possessions of} were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, whose name was named Publius; who received us, and ^{lodged} entertained us three days courteously.

8 And it ^{came to pass,} that the father of Publius lay sick of "fever and ^{of a bloody dysentery:} flux; to whom Paul entered in, and "prayed, and ^{laid} laid his hands on him, and healed him.

u ch. 9. 40. Cp. James 5. 14, 15. v See Mark 5. 23.

cordance with heathen modes of thought. The whole story of the wanderings of the wine-god Dionysus is little more than a record of how the god came to this or that place and was received as a man, till, astounded by some portent, the people 'changed their minds, and said that he was a god.' Thus, when he came to Argos, the people would not acknowledge him; but, after he displayed his divine powers in the punishment of certain offenders, they hailed him as a god, and erected temples in his honor.

"The people would also have a certain selfish element in their recognition of Paul as a god. Doubtless many of them remembered how Jupiter and Mercury came down to earth as men, and how those who refused to receive them were destroyed by an inundation, while only Philemon and Baucis, their kindly host and hostess, were saved."¹

7. In the same quarters, in that neighborhood. The traditional place is Citta Vecchia, where is the country residence of the present British governor. Were possessions, landed property. He probably lived on more than one estate, as do the English nobility. It is very common here to have city and country residences. Of the chief man of the island. "Chief man," *τῷ πρώτῳ*, was the official title of the governor of the island, as we learn from two inscriptions, one in Greek, and one in Latin, discovered in Malta.² "It belonged doubtless to the chief Roman authority on the island under the prætor of Sicily; and Publius, though not head of his family (for his father was still living), now filled that position."³ "As his father was alive he would not have been called from his estates."⁴

Lodged us, *ἀναδεξαμένους*, took us up, entertained us hospitably at his home. Us, according to some writers, includes Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and probably the centurion and his staff. Others think that Publius entertained the whole crew for the three days while they were making arrangements for the winter.

8. And it came to pass. It happened that at this time the father of Publius lay sick of a fever, *πυρετός*, in the plural, which probably indicates the attacks of a recurrent or intermittent fever, occurring at intervals as in malaria. And of a bloody flux, *δυσεντερία*, of which our word dysentery is a transliteration. The combination of the fevers with dysentery would, according to Hippocrates,⁵ who also uses the plural form, make the case more than usually critical.⁶ "We have the testimony of physicians resident in that island, that this disorder is by no means uncommon there at the present day."⁷

To whom Paul entered in. "The report of his miraculous escape from the bite of the viper would direct the attention of Publius to Paul as a remarkable man; and Paul repaid his kindness by restoring his father to health. 'He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward,'"⁸ And prayed. To obtain the blessings from God, with the wisdom needed, and to show the people that all his power came from the same God whose gospel he preached.

And laid his hands on him. "It is remarkable, that so soon after the 'taking up of serpents,' we should read of Paul having 'laid his hands on the sick and they recovered' (see the two in close connection, Mark 16: 18)."⁹ And healed him. "St. Luke was a physician, but his skill was less effectual than the agency of St. Paul, who went into the sick man's chamber, prayed by his bedside, laid his hands on him, and healed him."¹⁰ But remember (1) that Luke, as a survivor of a total wreck, would have no remedies with him. And (2) there was need of the moral influence here that would come from miraculous healing by the preacher of the gospel. For Paul had no credentials that would be of use, and as a prisoner suspicion would be cast upon him. So that God himself gave him the best of credentials by bestowing on him miraculous power. Ordinarily, God is just as much in

¹ Sunday School Times.

² "A Greek inscription giving *πρῶτος Μετράτων καὶ Πάρτων*, applied to a Roman knight, Prudens by name, *imbre* 'P.', so that Publius may well have been of the same rank; and in a Latin inscription we have *municipii*

Melitensium primus omnium, see Zahn, *Einführung*, ii. p. 422." — Knowling.

³ Rendall.

⁶ *Aphorisms*, 6: 3.

⁷ Hackett.

⁹ Alford.

⁴ Knowling.

⁶ Plumptre.

⁸ Glog.

¹⁰ Farrar.

9 ^{So} And when this was done, ^{others} the rest also, which had diseases in the island came, and were ^{healed:} cured:

10 Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we ^{departed,} sailed, they ^{laded} put ^{us with} on board such things as ^{were necessary.} we needed.

11 And after three months we ^{departed} set sail in ^w a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the ^{isle,} island, whose sign was ^{Castor and Pollux.} The Twin Brothers.

w ch. 27. 6. *x* Cp. ch. 14. 12 (for *mg.*).

the healing through natural means in the hands of a physician as in a miraculous healing; just as our daily bread, through the processes of nature, is as really his gift as if he sent it, like manna, from heaven.

9. Others also. The original is more extensive; *all the rest*. Nothing is said of Paul's preaching, for that is taken for granted. Paul could not neglect such golden opportunities of preaching the gospel. His words and deeds went together.

"The stormy voyage and shipwreck form the central point of the narrative: to this is appended the residence at Malta. In the former, Paul reveals himself as a prophet; in the latter, as the possessor of miraculous power. We should make a vast mistake, however, if we were to infer from this that the simple travel-record had here been revised by a writer intent upon artificially glorifying the apostle as a worker of miracles. The narrative is an indivisible whole; it is impossible to disentangle the mere history of travel from it, or to strip away the miraculous additions."¹

10. Honoured us with many honours. They paid them every possible attention, trying to express their respect and gratitude. Laded us with such things as were necessary, as clothing, provisions; not as pay, but out of kindness and love. We must remember (1) that they had lost everything by the wreck. (2) They all of them received their help as well as the apostles. (3) That such tokens of respect were peculiarly proper, and showed a right mind. (4) This was entirely different, in principle and effect, from receiving hire for their miraculous cures, which was forbidden by Christ (Matt. 10: 8). (5) The good things which came to the soldiers and sailors through Paul would recommend the gospel to them.

THE JOURNEY FROM MALTA TO ROME, vers. 11-15.

11. And after three months, during the winter season, from early in November to early in

February when navigation was impracticable on the Mediterranean.

We departed, set sail; about February 8, according to Lewin, when Pliny says that navigation opens.

In a ship of Alexandria, probably carrying grain to Rome. Which had wintered in the isle. "The storm which occasioned the wreck of Paul's vessel had delayed this one so long that it was necessary, on reaching Melita, to suspend the voyage until spring. This vessel had been during the winter at Valetta, which must always have been the principal harbor of Malta."² Whose sign. "The ancient ships carried at their prow a painted or carved representation of the sign which furnished their name, and at the stern a similar one of their tutelary deity."³ "The figure-heads of the Greek and Roman ships were commonly placed both at the prow and the stern."⁴ The sign "answered to the ship's name in modern times. It was the image of a god, a man, a beast, or of some other object, sculptured or painted on the prow."⁵ This sign was used because men could not read. So in older times signs were used for taverns, as in London, "The Elephant and Castle," "The Boar's Head," etc.

Castor and Pollux, *Διοσκούροις*, to the Dioscuri, *The Twin Brothers*. The stories concerning these twin heroes vary in different ages. They were the sons of Jupiter, who in reward "for their brotherly love set them in the sky as the constellation Gemini, The Twins, or the morning and evening star."⁶ "The *Gemini* were connected with the month of May in the signs of the Zodiac, and Poseidon (= Neptune) had given them power over the winds and waves that they might assist the shipwrecked. In the *Helena* of Euripides they appear, as promising a fair wind and a safe voyage." Hence, they "were regarded as the guardian deities of sailors. So Horace speaks of the '*fratres Helenæ, lucida sidera*'" ('brothers of Helen, beaming stars'), and of the '*puerosque Leda*'" ('the children of Leda'), whose bright star shines propitiously on sailors."⁴

¹ Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, 2: 120.

² Hackett.

³ Alford.

⁴ Plumptre.

⁵ M. R. Vincent, *World Studies*.

⁶ Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, "Dioscūri."

⁷ *Odes*, 1: 3, 2.

⁸ *Odes*, 1: 12, 25.

12 And ^{landing} ^{touching} at Sŷr'ā-cūse, we tarried ^{there} ^{there} three days.

13 And from thence we ^{fetched a compass,} ^{made a circuit,} and ^{came to} ^{arrived at} Rhē'gī-ūm: and after one day ^{the} ^a south wind ^{blew,} ^{sprang up,} and ^{we came the next day} ^{on the second day we came} to Pū-tē'ō-li:

14 Where we found ^{brethren,} and were ^{desired} ^{intreated} to tarry with them seven days: and so we ^{went toward} ^{came to} Rome.

y See John 21. 23.

And landing at Syracuse, the capital of Sicily, and a Roman colony, 80 to 100 miles sail from Malta. "According to Strabo, its wall was twenty-two miles in circumference, and it rivalled Carthage in wealth." Paul would doubtless find some of his countrymen here, whom he may have been able to visit during the three days they were detained here. There is a local tradition that Paul was the founder of the Sicilian church. "The city was famous for the memorable siege during the Peloponnesian war, at all times taking its place among the most flourishing towns of Sicily. Ships bound from Alexandria to Italy commonly put in there. The stay of three days was probably caused by their waiting for a favorable wind. The fact stated in the next verse implies that it was more or less against them."¹ Lewin thinks they waited the three days for purposes of trade.

13. Fetched a compass, *πериελθόντες*, *going round about, making a circuit*. "As the wind was westerly and they were under the shelter of the high mountainous range of Etna on their left they were obliged to stand out to sea in order to fill their sails, and so came to Rhegium by a circuitous sweep. I was informed by a friend many years ago that when he made the voyage himself from Syracuse to Rhegium, the vessel in which he sailed took a similar circuit, for a similar reason."² Ramsay renders "by tacking," the frequent alteration of the ship's course on account of head winds, "so that they were able by good seamanship to work up to Rhegium," the modern Reggio, the first land they made in Italy. It was situated at the southern entrance to the Straits of Messina, between Italy and Sicily, here only a few miles in breadth. The name Rhegium, *Ῥήγιον*, was probably derived from *ῥήγνυμι*, *to rend asunder*, because at that point Sicily was believed to be *rent away* from Italy.³

The south wind, which was favorable for their course up the coast of Italy. We came the next day. "After a run of 15 miles they reached the headland on the east coast, so famous in story as the abode of the monstrous Scylla, who, with her six long necks and heads, was continually howling and barking like so many dogs at the passing

mariner; and just opposite the headland, near the Sicilian coast, was the no less celebrated whirlpool, the Charybdis."²

To Puteoli, 180 miles from Rhegium. This city, "now Pozzuoli, was eight miles northwest from Neapolis, the modern Naples. It derived its name from the springs (*putei*) which abound there, or from the (bad) odor of the waters (*a putendo*). It was the principal port south of Rome. Nearly all the Alexandrian and a great part of the Spanish trade with Italy was brought hither. The seventy-seventh Letter of Seneca gives a lively description of the interest which the arrival of the corn-ships from Egypt was accustomed to excite among the inhabitants of that time. A mole with twenty-five arches stretched itself into the sea at the entrance of this bay, alongside of which the vessels as they arrived cast anchor for the delivery of their freight and passengers. Thirteen of the piers which upheld this immense structure show their forms still above the water, and point out to us, as it were, the very footsteps of the apostle as he passed from the ship to the land."⁴ It was "the Liverpool of Italy." Paul looked upon the well-known beauties of the bay of Naples, and its marvellous surroundings which were the summer resort of the Roman emperors and nobles, and upon Vesuvius, "not then an unsleeping volcano, but a green and sunny background to the bay, with its westward slope covered with vines."

14. Where we found brethren. There is an interesting confirmation of the fact that there were Christians in this region during the lifetime of the apostles. Pompeii, in this neighborhood, was destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius, in A. D. 79. This city "remained for seventeen hundred years concealed from human sight or knowledge, till revealed in the year 1755 by excavations systematically pursued. All the inscriptions found therein were undoubtedly and necessarily the work of persons who lived before A. D. 79, and then perished. Now at the time that Pompeii was destroyed there was a municipal election going on, and there were found on the walls numerous inscriptions formed with charcoal, which were the substitutes then used for

¹ Plumptre.

² Lewin, *St. Paul*.

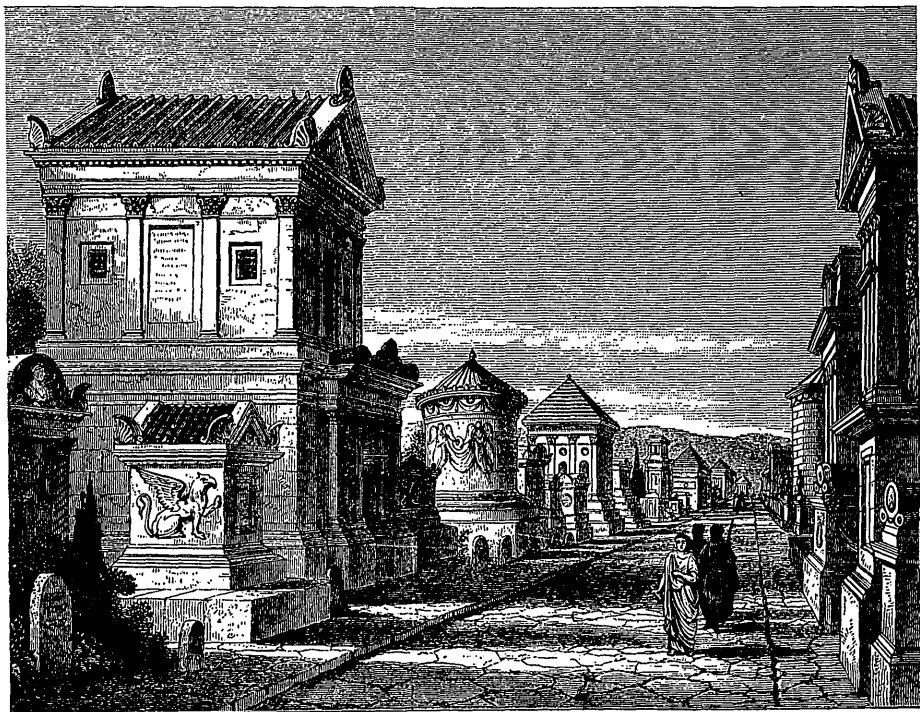
³ Thayer's *N. T. Greek Lex.* So Pliny, *Natural History*, 3: 8; Strabo, 6: 258.

⁴ Hackett.

the literature and placards with which every election decorates our walls. Among these inscriptions of mere passing and transitory interest, there was one found which illustrates the point at which we have been laboring, for there, amid the election notices of 79 A. D., there appeared

scribbled by some idle hand the brief words, '*Igni gaude, Christiane*' ('O Christian, rejoice in the fire'), proving clearly that Christians existed in Pompeii at that time, and that they were known as Christians."¹

Were desired to tarry with them seven days.



FIFTH MILE OF THE APPIAN WAY, RESTORED.

From Canina. (Lewin.)

On each side of the road were disposed, at the distance of every 40 feet, low columns as seats for the weary. . . . The roads were provided with inns, and ornamented with statues. At every 5,000 feet was a milestone. The track of the road was from 13 to 15 feet broad, the foundation was of concrete, and the surface paved with large polygonal blocks of the hardest stone.

"Probably the seven days' delay was needful for Julius to report his arrival at Rome, and to receive further orders from the capital, perhaps with regard to the disposal of the prisoners, but St. Paul must have been rejoiced at the opportunity of celebrating a Sunday with the little Christian church at Puteoli."² The delay also gave Paul opportunity to send word to the Roman Christians of his arrival in Italy.

And so we went toward Rome, about 140 miles from Puteoli, to Paul's ultimate destination. Ramsay thinks that "Rome" here refers

not to the city, but to the Roman state, including the surrounding country, as is readily experienced in entering London or New York; while the "came to" of verse 16 refers to entering within the city walls. "All the region near the coast, however transformed in the course of ages by the volcanic forces which are still at work, is recognized as the scene of the earliest Italian mythology, and must ever be impressive from the poetic images, partly of this world and partly of the next, with which Virgil has filled it."³

"There is a kind of triumph in the words: like

¹ Prof. Stokes in *Expositor's Bible*.

² Knowling.

³ Conybeare and Howson.

15 And from thence, ^{when} the brethren, ^{when they} heard of us, ^{they} came to meet us as far as ^{Appli-forum, The Market of Appi-us, and The three taverns:} whom when Paul saw, ^{he} thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we ^{came to} entered into Rome, ^{the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard:} but a Paul was suffered to ^{dwell} abide by himself with ^a the soldier that ^{kept} guarded him.

y See John 21. 23.

z Cp. Rom. 1. 9-12.

a Cp. ch. 24. 23 & 27. 3.

an emperor who has fought a naval battle and overcome, Paul entered into that most imperial city; he was nearer now to his crown; Rome received him bound, and saw him crowned and proclaimed conqueror."¹

15. When the brethren heard of us. Puteoli was not on the great military road from Rome to Brundisium, but some miles to the westward. And from thence by land northward 33 miles they struck at Sinuessa the famous Appian Way, "by which many a Roman general had passed in triumph to the capitol, seated on a car of victory, surrounded by the plaudits of rejoicing Rome."

"The stages from Sinuessa would probably be Minturnæ, Formiæ, Fundi, and Terracina, making altogether a distance of 57 miles. At this point they would have to choose between two modes of travel, taking the circuitous road round the Pontine Marshes, or going by the more direct line of the canal. Both routes met at Appii Forum, 18 miles from Terracina. For us well-nigh every stage of the journey is connected with some historical or legendary fact in classical antiquity. We think of the great Appius Claudius, the censor from whom the Via and the Forum took their names; of the passage in the overcrowded canal track-boat, with its brawling sailors, and of the scoundrel inn-keepers, whom Horace has immortalized in the narrative of his journey to Brundisium."² It was about 100 years before Paul's journey that Horace, a young man of twenty-eight, and Vergil travelled over this road on a mission from Augustus to Mark Antony.³

Appii forum. "The R. V. renders 'The Market of Appius' (really the Greek is a transliteration of the Latin Appii forum, as the words stood in 1611, 'forum' (not Forum), Hastings' B. D.). The word apparently implied what we should call a borough or assize town, cf. Forum Julium, etc. The picture drawn by Horace suggests a sharp contrast between the holy joy of the Christian meeting and the coarse vice and rude revelry which so often filled the wretched little town."¹ Here the first delegation of Roman Christians met Paul.

And The three taverns, 13 miles beyond Appii Forum, on the Appian Way, and 30 miles from Rome. Here a second delegation met Paul and

his companions. "It is mentioned more than once by Cicero in his letters, and appears to have been on the Via Appia, at a point where a road from Antium fell into it.⁴ It was accordingly a town of considerable importance."²

Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. The words imply that Paul had been depressed in spirit. Perhaps his exertions and the strain of the voyage and wreck had brought a return of his ill health.

PAUL ENCOURAGED. When Paul was met and greeted by the Christians of Rome, his heart was lifted out of its depression. He felt as Stanley did when he emerged from the great Central African forest into the open sunlight. (1) He entered Rome, not so much a criminal as an apostle with hosts of friends. (2) Human sympathy warmed his heart. (3) He found the church for which he had longed and prayed, safe and prosperous, and sound in the faith. (4) He would have the needed aid for preaching the gospel at Rome. (5) He had attained the end for which he had long been seeking with earnest desires. (6) The great anxieties and dangers of the journey were passed. (7) He would be refreshed after his long labors.

PAUL IN ROME, vers. 16-31.

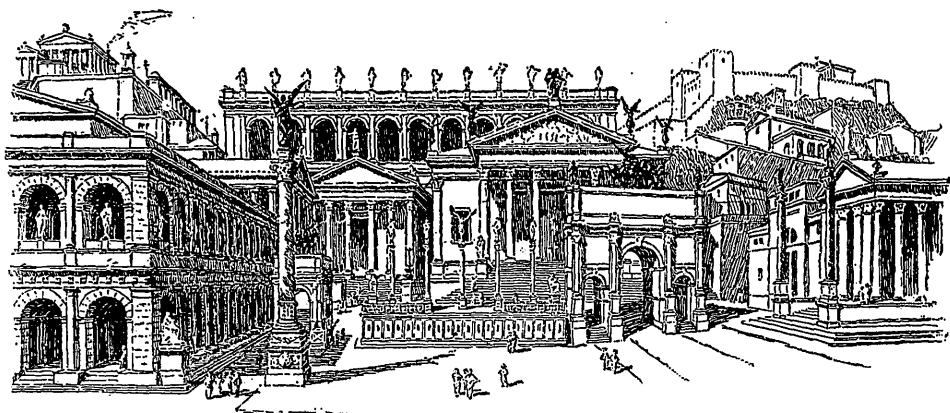
16. We came to, "entered into," Rome, by the Porta Capena, "a spot which we can hardly leave without lingering for a moment. Under this arch—which was perpetually dripping with the water of the aqueduct that went over it—had passed all those who since a remote period of the republic had travelled by the Appian Way—victorious generals with their legions returning from foreign service, emperors and courtiers, vagrant representatives of every form of heathenism, Greeks and Asiatics, Jews and Christians. From this point entering within the city, Julius and his prisoners moved on, with the Aventine on their left, close round the base of the Cœlian, and through the hollow ground which lay between this hill and the Palatine; thence over the low ridge called Velia, where afterward was built the Arch of Titus to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem; and then descending by the *Sacra Via* into that space which was the centre of imperial power and imperial magnificence, and asso-

¹ Knowing.

² Plumptre.

³ *Satires*, 1: 5.

⁴ *Ad Atticus*, 2: 10.



RESTORATION OF THE FORUM.
From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

ciated also with the most glorious recollections of the republic. The Forum was to Rome what the Acropolis was to Athens, the heart of all the characteristic interest of the place. Here was the *Milliarium Aureum* (the golden milestone), to which the roads of all the provinces converged. All around were the stately buildings which were raised in the closing years of the republic and by the earlier emperors. In front was the Capitoline Hill, illustrious long before the invasion of the Gauls. Close on the left, covering that hill whose name is associated in every modern European language with the notion of imperial splendor, were the vast ranges of the *palace*, the 'house of Cæsar' (Phil. 4: 22). Here were the household troops quartered in a *prætorium* attached to the palace. And here (unless, indeed, it was in the great *prætorian camp* outside the city wall) Julius

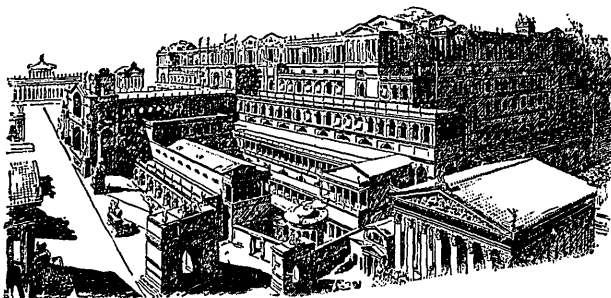
gave up his prisoner to Burrus, the *prætorian prefect*, whose official duty it was to keep in custody all accused persons who were to be tried before the emperor."¹

Delivered the prisoners. This sentence is not in the oldest manuscripts and is omitted in the R. V., but is retained by Ramsay and Blass. To the captain of the guard, *στρατοπεδάρχης*, the *stratopedarch*. Ramsay, following Mommsen, regards this officer as the *Princeps Peregrinorum*, "the chief of the soldiers from abroad," belonging to legions stationed in the provinces, who were employed as couriers, and for police and commissariat purposes. While in Rome they resided in a camp on the Cælian Hill, presided over by the *stratopedarch*.

Lewin thinks that the captain of the guard was the Prefect of the *Prætorium*, whose cohort had their barracks on the Palatine Hill near Cæsar's Palace. The Prefect at this time was Burrus, a liberal-minded man, and one of the few good statesmen of this corrupt age and city.

Paul was suffered, permitted, to dwell by himself. The kind terms in which Festus reported the case, and Paul's noble conduct and helpfulness on the voyage, as related by Julius the centurion, would combine to influence such a man as Burrus to grant to Paul every privilege and comfort within his power.

With a soldier that kept him. "He was coupled by a



PALACE OF THE CÆSARS.
Restoration by Benvenuti.
From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

¹ Conybeare and Howson.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days ^{Paul}_{he} called together those that were the chief of the Jews: ^{together:} and when they were come together, he said unto them, ^{Men and}_I brethren, ^b though I ^{have committed}_{had done} nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was ^I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans:

^b Cp. ch. 25. 8.

^c ch. 6. 14 & 15. 1 & 21. 21.

slight chain round the right wrist to the left of a soldier, and thus shackled was allowed to be at large within the palace, or even, if he could afford it, to hire a lodging for himself without the walls, but within the rules or prescribed limits, but oth-

erwise free from restraint."¹ "The form which his custody took has been well compared to that which Herod Agrippa underwent, who was confined at one time in Rome,² at first in the camp, and afterwards on the accession of Gaius in a



PRETORIAN SOLDIERS (from a relief in the Louvre). The bodyguard of the Roman Emperor.

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

house of his own, although still under military custody."³

The soldiers which guarded Paul were "from the imperial gward," the flower of the Roman army. Every few hours the guard was changed, so that "in this way there might be six or eight with him every twenty-four hours." Paul must have spoken to these soldiers about their souls, and salvation by Jesus Christ, and they would be won by the sweetness of his spirit, his patience, earnestness, and love. Tradition says that the greatest statesman, Seneca, was among the converts to Christianity by the preaching of Paul.

It is quite possible, according to Professor Lumby, that the gospel was introduced into England by some of those Roman soldiers who heard Paul preach the gospel in prison. "Paul knew the men then in the Praetorium might some day receive orders to go into Parthia, Germany, or Britain, and he endeavored to enable them to act as missionaries, and carry the gospel wherever they went, and thus was begun the great work which went on until the Thundering Legion became as famous in the martial annals of Rome as Havelock and his saints during the Indian mutiny."⁴

17. After three days. "Probably spent in

¹ Lewin.

² Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18 : 6, 5.

³ Knowling.

⁴ William M. Taylor, D. D.

18 Who, when they had examined me, ^{d, would have let me go, desired to set me at liberty,} ^{e because there was} no cause of death in me.

^d ch. 26. 31, 32.

^e See ch. 23. 29.

intercourse with the Roman Christians, in procuring a lodging, and in refreshing himself after his long journey."¹

Called the chief of the Jews together, the



A ROMAN SOLDIER IN FULL ARMOR. Such a soldier as Paul was chained to during his imprisonment.

Jewish leaders, and the officers of the synagogues of which there were seven in Rome. There was not room to receive all at this time, and Paul would naturally invite those who would be best informed, and most influential in affecting public opinion. Later, a day was set to receive all who wished to see him (ver. 23).

Rendall objects to this interpretation of "first," because "it ignores *ὑπὸς* altogether," the words literally reading "those being of the Jews first."

"Apparently the text describes him as inviting first those members of the synagogue who were Jews, reserving the devout Gentiles for the second place. Want of space probably prevented his receiving all at once."

REASONS FOR THIS INTERVIEW. Paul's object was to gain the Jews. Hence he would (1) explain how he came to be a prisoner, so that any prejudice against him might be removed and any false reports might be corrected. (2) He would arrange to have the Jews come to see him and hear the gospel at his residence, since he probably

could not go to their synagogues and preach, with a Roman soldier chained to his hand.

THE JEWISH COLONY IN ROME. "The Jews in Rome were at this time a large and organized community. A contemporary writer states that they were "a vast multitude." They congregated chiefly in that part of the city known now as the Trastevere. Pompey had brought many Jewish captives to Rome, who were gradually set free, and rapidly increased in numbers. We learn from Cicero that many of them were wealthy. That they had great influence we may infer from several passages in the satirist Juvenal. Seneca says of them that the conquered gave laws to the conqueror. In fact, they were spoken of much as the Germans speak of the Hebrew capitalists. Their synagogues were protected by imperial edicts, and they were authorized to send their annual tax of two drachmæ a head to the temple treasury. They had their own council for all matters among themselves. They were so numerous that no less than eight thousand Roman Jews supported the petition sent from Judea against Archelaus, — the occasion supposed to be referred to by our Lord in the parable of the pounds. From time to time the Jews roused the suspicions of the imperial government, and were banished,



TRADITIONAL APARTMENT OF THE CENTURION'S HOUSE in which Paul is said to have resided, chained by the wrist to a soldier, during his first imprisonment at Rome. The site is at the junction of the Via Lata and the Corso under the vestibule of the Church of Santa Maria.

From Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*, by per.

but always soon returned, as after their expulsion by Claudius."²

Nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers. "For everywhere had he shown himself desirous that his own people should hear the message of the gospel first, and for Jews he

¹ Gloag.

² Canon Tristram in *Sunday School Times*, 1897.

19 But when the Jews spake against ^{it}; I was constrained ['] to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse ^o my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore ^{have} I ^{called for} ^{intreat} you to see ^{you}, and to speak with ^{you}: ^{because that for} ^{for} ^a because of ['] the hope of Israel I am bound with ['] this ^k chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters ^{out of} ^{from} Judæa concerning thee, ^{neither} ^{nor} did any of ['] the brethren ^{that came shewed} ^{come} ^{hither} and report ^{or} ^{spake} any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this ^m sect, ^{we know} ^{it is known to us} ^{that} ^{every where} ⁿ it is spoken against.

f ch. 25. 11 & 26. 32. *g* ch. 24. 17 & 26. 4. *h* See ch. 23. 6. *i* Cp. Luke 2. 25. *j* ch. 26. 29. *k* Eph. 6. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 10. See ch. 21. 33 & Phil. 1. 7. *l* ch. 22. 5. *m* See ch. 24. 5. *n* Luke 2. 34. Cp. 1 Pet. 2. 12 & 3. 16 & 4. 14, 16.

had never forbidden circumcision, only insisting that Gentile converts should not be forced to submit to the Jewish law before they were received into the Christian Church."¹

18. Who, Felix, Festus, Agrippa, had examined me, as described in chaps. 24-26. Would have, ἐβούλοντο, deliberately willed, purposed, to let me go at liberty.

19. When the Jews spake against it, objected, a very mild word with which to describe what the Jews had done. Paul was as conciliatory and kindly as was possible under the circumstances. But he had to show why he was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar. He did this, not as an enemy of his people, nor to make any more trouble for those who already had suffered so much from the Romans, but because there was no other way of defending himself. He made no accusation against his people.

20. Have I called for you. Better as in R. V., "did I entreat you to see and to speak with me." This is more in accordance with their respective circumstances. Because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. It was not because he was opposed to Israel, as the Jerusalem Jews thought, but because he preached the realization of their hopes, the glory they had been looking for, the kingdom they had been expecting, that he was a prisoner. The consummation of the nation, the millennial times their prophets had foretold, the blossom and fruit, for which their whole existence had been a preparation, could be gained only through Jesus, the Messiah. "Nothing could be more pathetic than this reference to the chain" with which he was bound to the soldier guard.

21. We neither received letters out of Judæa, etc. It is not said that they had never heard anything about Paul, for it is implied that they had heard, but nothing of the events which led to his being a prisoner. "It may seem strange

that they had received no tidings concerning him. But, as Meyer well remarks, (1) *before* his appeal, the Jews in Judea had no definite reason to communicate with the Jews in Rome respecting him, having no expectation that Paul, then a prisoner in Judea, would ever go to Rome. And (2) *since* his appeal, it would have been hardly possible for them to have sent messengers who should have arrived before him."² For Paul sailed toward the very close of navigation, and others could not well have left Cæsarea till the following spring. (3) Still more probably "it would seem as if Paul, after two years at Cæsarea and more, had faded out of the thoughts of anti-Christian Jews, so that they feared him no longer."³

22. We desire to hear, ἀκούμεν, we think it fitting. "If St. Paul's statement in ver. 18 as to the favorable bearing of the Roman authorities towards him was true, it was but natural that the Jews should wish to refrain from hasty or hostile action towards a prisoner who was evidently treated with consideration in his bonds; they would rather act thus than revive an old quarrel which might again lead to their own political insecurity."⁴

This sect . . . every where . . . spoken against. These slanders arose (1) from Paul's seeming opposition to the Jewish ritual; (2) from the strict morality of the Christians which made bold and open sinners their enemies, especially on account of the terrible denunciations of disaster and ruin unless they repented (see Matt. 24); (3) from their necessary opposition to some Roman laws and customs; (4) from a misinterpretation of the Lord's Supper, where they were said to "eat the flesh and drink the blood" of Jesus; (5) from a misuse of the fact that they deified one who had been crucified as a malefactor; — "Like God, like people," they would say.⁵

"The darker calumnies which were propagated afterwards — stories of Thyestean (*i. e.*, cannibal)

¹ Cambridge Bible.

² Alford.

³ President Woolsey.

⁴ Knowing. See, also, Lightfoot, *Philippians*, pp. 15, 16.

⁵ "In the course of excavating on the Palatine hill, in one part of a palace, there was found scratched on the plaster of the second century wall of a small room, a caricature of the crucifixion, — a man with a donkey's head

23 And when they had appointed him a day, ^{there} they came ^{many} to him into ^{his} lodgingⁱ in great number; ^o to whom he expounded ^{and testified} ^{the matter, testifying} ^{the kingdom of} God, and ⁷ persuading them concerning Jesus, ^{both} ^{out of} the law of Moses and ^{out of} the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And ^s some believed the things which were spoken, and some ^{believed not.} ^{disbelieved.}

25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, 'Well spake the Holy Ghost by ^{E-sa'ias} ^{I-sa'iah} the prophet unto ^{our} ^{your} fathers,

26 Saying,

"Go ^{thou} unto this people, and say,

^v ^{Hearing} ^{By hearing} ye shall hear, and shall ^{not} ^{in no wise} understand;

And seeing ye shall see, and shall ^{not} ^{in no wise} perceive:

^o Cp. ch. 17. 2. 3. ^p ver. 31. ^q Cp. ch. 19. 8. ^r ch. 8. 35 & 24. 14 & 26. 22. ^s Cp. ch. 14. 4 & 17. 4, 5 & 19. 9 & 23. 7. ^t Matt. 15. 7. ^u Cited from Isai. 6. 9, 10. ^v Matt. 13. 14, 15. Mark 4. 12. Cp. Luke 8. 10.

banquets and licentious orgies — may possibly have been even then whispered from ear to ear. They were already, as Tacitus describes them, speaking of their sufferings under Nero, known as holding an *exitibilis superstitio* ('a detestable superstition'), guilty of *atrocia et pudenda, odio humani generis convicti*¹ ('atrocious and shameful crimes, convicted by the hatred of mankind'), or as Suetonius writes, as a *genus hominum superstitionis nove et maleficæ*² ('a race of men holding a new and criminal superstition')."³

23. When they had appointed, *κατασκευοι*. This denotes a mutual arrangement between the two parties for a day of meeting.

To whom he expounded, *ἐκέρθηρο*, he set out, expounded, the gospel of Jesus and its relations to the Jewish beliefs and scriptures. And testified. Testifying while he expounded, bearing witness to the truth of what he said; from his own experience; in his conversion, in the revelations God had made to him, in the comfort and help he had received, in the improvement of his own life. These are the two ways in which we now must lead men to Christ and salvation. Out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets. These were common ground. All believed them. So Paul placed the prophecies of the kingdom of God, and of the Messiah to come, side by side with the life, death, and teachings of Jesus, and showed the Jews how perfectly the latter were the fulfilment of the former. "Jesus and the expected Messiah he demonstrated to be in all respects one and the same."

24. And some believed, *ἐπεθοντα*, were persuaded, were being persuaded, were induced to believe, had faith. The Greek word is not the one usually employed for believing; but leads to the same state of mind through a process of being convinced or persuaded.

And some believed not. "The testimony of the apostles was 'a savor of life unto life,' or of 'death unto death.' The same fire reddens the gold and burns the dross; under the same threshing sledge the grain is cleansed and the chaff is crushed out; by the same press beam the oil is separated from the dregs."⁴ The same sun melts the wax and hardens the clay. The same sunshine and rain which cause the living tree to grow and flourish are the most potent influences to bring the dead tree to decay.

25. When they agreed not, were *ἀσύνφωνοι*, were not *σύνφωνοι*, of which our word "symphony" is a transliteration. They were like the various parts of a tune set to different keys; they were discordant, inharmonious. This variance was evinced by the earnest and excited discussion of the different views among the Jews.

They departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, not denouncing, but seeking to persuade them from their own prophet, Isaiah; and to show them that their rejection of his message was no sign that it was not true. This does not imply, as some say, that none became Christians, and that all were included under the category of those referred to by Isaiah. Even in Isaiah's time

being crucified, whilst another man is looking at it. Underneath is written in Greek letters, 'Alexamenos adores his God.'"¹ — S. Russell Forbes in *Footsteps of St. Paul in Rome*. "Tertullian (A. D. 160-240) mentions such caricatures as current in his time (*Apol.* c. 16), and the story that the Jews worshipped an ass's head, which we know to have been accepted at this very time (*Jos. cont.*

Apion. ii. 7; Tacit. *Hist.* v. 4), would naturally be transferred to the Christians, who were regarded as a sect of Jews. In Tertullian's time *Asinarii* ('ass-worshippers') was a common term of abuse for them." Plumptre.

¹ *Annals*, 15: 44.

² *Nero*, ch. 16.

³ Plumptre.

⁴ Augustine, *City of God*, 1: 8.

27

For ^{the heart of this people} ^{this people's heart} is waxed gross,
 And their ears are dull of hearing,
 And their eyes ^{have they} ^{they have} closed ;
 Lest ^{haply} they should ^{see} ^{perceive} with ^{their} eyes,
 And hear with ^{their} ears,
 And understand with ^{their} heart,
 And ^x should ^{be converted,} ^{turn again,}
 And I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that ^y ^{the} ^{this} ^z salvation of God ^a is sent unto the Gentiles; ^{and that} ^b they will ^{also} hear. ^{it.}

^w Cp. Jolm 12. 40 & Rom. 11. 8. ^x See Luke 22. 32. ^y ch. 13. 26. ^z Ps. 67. 2. Isai. 40. 5. Luke 2. 30 & 3. 6.
^{Cp.} Rom. 11. 11. ^a See ch. 13. 46. ^b Jolm 10. 16. ^{Cp.} ch. 13. 48 & Matt. 8. 11 & 21. 43.

there was a remnant of true servants of God. But the words were true of the nation as a nation.

Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias. *Esaias* is the Greek form for *Isaiah*. Here, as elsewhere, the New Testament proves that the prophet Isaiah was inspired, and gives us a true idea of what inspiration is, including the divine and the human elements.

26. Saying (Isa. 6 : 9, 10). Go unto this people. This was spoken in reference to the Jews, 130 to 150 years before their exile, when Isaiah was called to prophesy to them. The prophet was forewarned at the beginning of his mission that he would have but partial success. The words occur six times in the Gospels, in the Epistle to the Romans, and here in the Acts. For they applied to the Jews in the times of Christ and the apostles with even more emphasis than in the time of Isaiah.

Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand. They should hear the words with the outward organs of hearing, but they would not understand the real meaning and power of the words.

And seeing ye shall see, and not perceive. They shall see the words but not perceive their meaning; shall see the facts, the person and deeds of Jesus, but not understand their meaning and power. They saw Jesus through their prejudices as in a distorting mirror, like those of which there was a whole corridor full at the Paris Exposition, in which no person was seen as he really was. The minds of the people, and especially of the Pharisees, were preoccupied with entirely different ideas concerning the kingdom

and the Messiah from those presented by Christ, ideas instilled into them from childhood. The king and the kingdom were to excel all nations in worldly power and magnificence, like "Solomon in all his glory." The Messiah was to be a hero-warrior, greater than David or Cæsar. There was thus little room in their thoughts for such a Messiah as Jesus, or such a kingdom as he was founding. So they would have made a bad use of the true picture of the future if they had been shown it.

27. Heart . . . is waxed, grown, gross, literally, *become fat*, as applied to the body, hence, dull, stupid, so that it was difficult to make any impression upon it. **Their eyes have they closed; lest they should see.**¹ They did not wish to see. If they had seen, they would have had to give up their bad habits, their sinful pleasures, their unjust riches, their selfish living; and they would have been compelled to separate from friends, to join a despised sect, to live to do good, to suffer, and perhaps die, for Christ's sake.

And should be converted, "should turn round, and go back again," as God was anxious they should. Proverbs 1 : 24-33 applies to their case.

And I should heal them, of their sin, and dullness, and disobedience. It was less than 10 years later that Jerusalem was wholly destroyed, the temple obliterated, and the Jews were no longer a nation. All this might have been avoided, the Jews might have become the true kingdom of God, the centre of light and salvation to the world; only they would not.

28. Be it known therefore unto you. Because

¹ Pres. Noah Porter, in his *Books and Reading*, begins with the description of a South Sea savage in a modern city, and especially in a library, showing to how many things he is blind.

Cheyne (*Isaiah*) cites the case of a son of the Great Mogul, who had his eyes sealed up three years by his father as a punishment. Dante pictures the envious, on the second cornice of Purgatory, with their eyes sewed up:—

"For all their lids an iron wire transpierces,
 And sews them up, as to a sparrowhawk wild
 Is done, because it will not quiet stay." "

Purgatorio, xiii. 70-72.

See M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, Matt. 13 : 13.

Bunyan, in his *Capture of Mansoul*, represents the five senses as five gates to the citadel, all of them barred against Emmanuel, their rightful king.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

30 And ^{Paul dwelt} ^{he abode} two whole years in his own hired ^{house,} ^{dwellings,} and ^{came} ^{went} ⁱⁿ ^{unto} him,

31 ^{Preaching} the ^{kingdom of God,} and ^{teaching} ^{those} ^{things} ^{which concern} the Lord Jesus Christ ^{with} ^{all} ^{confidence, no man} ^{boldness, none} ^{of} ^{forbidding} him.

c Cp. Phil. 1. 13. d Cp. ch. 8. 12 & 20. 25. e ver. 23. See Matt. 12. 23 & 13. 19. f See ch. 4. 29. g Cp. Phil. 1. 12, 13 & 2 Tim. 2. 9.

ye are hardened and irreclaimable. I must preach the gospel, and if you will not hear, I must turn to those who will. The salvation of God shall not fail because you refuse it. You can destroy yourselves, but you cannot destroy the kingdom of God, or prevent the Messiah from reigning over all the earth.

They will hear. The message shall not only be sent, but be heard. Compare 13: 46. This has become the fact. This salvation has placed the Gentile nations who received it at the head of the world in religion, in power, in happiness, in hope. The Jews might have been in this position, but they would not. And by the Gentile believers the Jewish Messiah and the Jewish Scriptures have been placed at the very summit of humanity which from them derives its noblest motives and ideals of life. Through the Gentile believers the Jews are to be brought into the kingdom. In accordance with Isaiah's prophecy, the nation was cut down by the Exile like a tree, leaving only a stump, but a new shoot would spring up, the nation would be restored, and the new shoot would be greater than the former tree.

This was almost literally repeated and fulfilled in the time of Christ and the succeeding ages. Jesus with his gospel was the new shoot that sprang up from the Jewish commonwealth, which was cut down to a mere stump by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A. D. 70; and that shoot has already grown to be a far larger, nobler, more fruitful tree than the Jewish nation ever was, and the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament are being realized and fulfilled through the New.

They will hear, ἀκούσονται. This is the last word of the apostle Paul, recorded in the Acts; and ἀκωλύτως, *unhindered*, is the last word of the historian of his life. Knowing well finds in these two final words a note of triumph blending with the note of sadness. "The future of his message is assured, and we may borrow two words as an inscription for these closing pages of St. Luke's second treatise—the last word of the apostle, and the last of the historian—ἀκούσονται . . . ἀκωλύτως—the word of God was heard and welcomed, and that word was not bound."

29. And when he had said these words. This

whole verse is wanting in some of the best manuscripts; and is omitted in the R. V. and in Westcott and Hort. But it is retained by Blass, and is doubtless descriptive of what actually took place.

30. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, μισθώματι, *that which is either let or hired for a price*, as a house, apartment, lodging, the exact equivalent for the Latin *meritorium* or *conductum*. It means a *lodging* (as in verse 23) or *apartment*, and does not imply that he occupied a whole house.¹

PAUL'S EXPENSES. Living in his own hired house, Paul must meet his own expenses. This may have been done by his friends in Rome, or, as Ramsay argues, by means of his own patrimony.²

REASONS FOR THE DELAY OF THE TRIAL. There were many possible reasons why the trial of Paul was delayed. (1) It would take a long time for the accusers and witnesses to come from Palestine to Rome. They could not have followed Paul immediately, because he left unexpectedly toward the close of the navigation season, and they would not be able to collect their evidence, and get their witnesses ready in time to follow Paul that autumn. They could not leave before the following spring.

(2) The records of the trials at Cæsarea may have been lost in the wreck, and it was necessary to wait for the necessary information long enough for a voyage from Rome to Cæsarea, and return.

(3) It is very possible that since Paul was a prisoner and could not go on any more missionary tours, his enemies may well have been content that he should remain there, while if the trial came on he might be released.

(4) They would need evidence not only from Jerusalem, but from various parts of the empire where he had been charged with exciting riots; and it would take no little time to obtain the required facts.

(5) A corrupt judge frequently postponed a trial for months or years, as Festus had done in Cæsarea. It is said the emperor was in the habit of delaying trials for various reasons.

PAUL'S WORK DURING THESE TWO YEARS. He received all that came in unto him. The fact that they must come to him, because he could not go to them, created a sifting process, through

¹ Plumptre.

² St. Paul, 310, "Finances of the Trial."

which only the earnest and serious inquirers would come to him, and no time or strength was wasted.

31. Preaching . . . teaching. Paul's personal work was continued during these two years, with all confidence, implying that he had freedom of speech, and was hopeful of results.

Four epistles were written by Paul during these two years, — to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and to Philemon of Colossæ. "The composition of these epistles was by far the most important part of Paul's varied prison activity; and he crowned this labor with the writing of the Epistle to the Ephesians, which is perhaps the profoundest and sublimest book in the world. Never did there come to the church a greater mercy in disguise than when the arrest of Paul's bodily activities at Cæsarea and Rome supplied him with the leisure needed to reach the depths of truth sounded in the Epistle to the Ephesians."¹

It is good to read these epistles with the circumstances in view, as from a bodily prison, but with the spirit on the Mount of Transfiguration.

THE ACTS were probably completed at this time. "To my mind the simplest explanation why St. Luke has told us no more is that he knew no more, and that he knew no more because at the time nothing more had happened; in other words, that the book of the Acts was written a little more than two years after Paul's arrival in Rome."²

Thus Paul in prison was doing some of the most important work of his life, work that has rendered him immortal in his usefulness. From his prison there flowed a river of life, that has broadened and deepened as it has flowed through the centuries, and is still gladdening the city of God.³ He had no time or disposition to murmur, but as he wrote from this spot to the Philippians to "rejoice evermore, and again I say rejoice," so he rejoiced. Madame Guyon in prison expressed his feelings: —

"My cage confines me round, abroad I cannot fly,
But though my wing is closely bound, my heart's at liberty.
My prison walls cannot control the flight, the freedom of
the soul."

¹ Prof. Stalker.

² Prof. Salmon.

³ Savonarola wrote his commentaries on Psalms 31 and 51 during his month of imprisonment before his execution, which show that though he had much spiritual conflict, neither his faith nor his comfort yielded.

"The hymn *Jerusalem, My Happy Home* was, in one of its versions, composed by Francis Baker, while a prisoner in the tower, and in the same fortress Sir Walter Raleigh composed his *History of the World*, and wrote poems.

"Everybody knows that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* was the fruit of his labors in Bedford jail; and as the joy bells of the new Jerusalem kept ringing in his ears, he forgot the vileness of the 'cage' wherein he was confined. Not so well known are the letters of Samuel Rutherford, so unique for their unctious and holy rapture, yet many

"Paul," says Professor Stalker, "had always thought of Rome as a successful general thinks of the central stronghold of the country he is subduing. Paul was engaged in the conquest of the world for Christ, and Rome was the final stronghold he had hoped to carry in his Master's name." And he succeeded. He was protected by the Romans themselves, from all plots of Jews or Gentiles. Every one would want to hear the famous prisoner. Never was seen a clearer illustration of Divine Providence, leading through strange ways to success, and of making the very wrath of man to praise him.

PAUL'S COMPANIONS. Romans 16: 3-15 contains the salutations of Paul to Christians in Rome, sent to them thirteen years before. There are mentioned twenty men and eight women of which three are spoken of as his kinsmen, and four in connection with their households. Most of them are strangers to us, but two, Aquila and Priscilla, are our old friends whom we met at Corinth (chap. 18: 2, 3, 18, 26. See, also, Rom. 16: 3; 1 Cor. 16: 19).

Besides these, Paul, during this imprisonment, mentions in his letters as his especial companions and friends, Timothy (Col. 1: 1); Epaphras, a fellow prisoner (Philem. 23); Onesimus, a slave (Philem. 10); Tychicus, a minister who delivers the Epistle to the Colossians and Ephesians (Col. 4: 7, 8; Eph. 6: 21, 22); Aristarchus; Mark, author of the gospel; Justus; Luke, author of the Acts (Col. 4: 10, 11, 14); Demas (Philem. 24); Epaphroditus, who brings a gift to Paul from the Philippians and carries back Paul's letter to them (Phil. 2: 25; 4: 18); and some members of Caesar's household (Phil. 4: 22).

There is a tradition that Seneca was brought into close relations with Paul, and was among his hearers.

PAUL'S RELEASE AND LATER LIFE. "I cannot hesitate to agree with those who believe that Paul, on being brought to trial under his appeal to the emperor, was acquitted, and, casting aside his chains, went forth to labor again for the spread of the gospel.⁴ We see from his letters

of them were written from Aberdeen, to which city he had been confined by the court of high commission. George Wither, the Puritan poet, whose quaint motto was, 'I grow and wither, both together,' had a chequered career, and many of his best pieces were composed in prison.

"James Montgomery wrote a whole volume of *Prison Amusements* while he was confined in York Castle, the victim of political injustice; and the hymn beginning 'Spirit, leave thy house of clay' was composed in the same place on the occasion of the death of one of his fellow prisoners."

⁴ "A curious synchronism, however, suggests the thought that there may have been wheels within wheels, working to bring about this result. Josephus, the Jewish historian, then in his twenty-seventh year, came to Rome

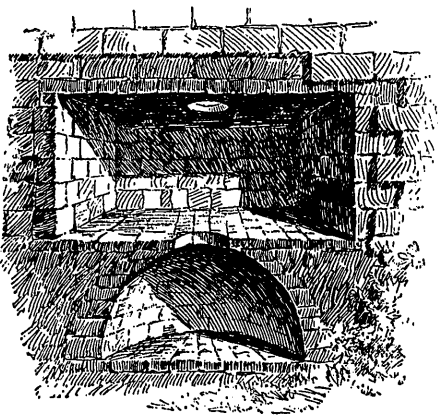
written while he was a captive that he was expecting to regain his liberty. (See, for example, Phil. 1: 25; 2: 23, 24; Philem. 22.) Even if Paul entertained this belief as a matter of judgment merely, and not in the exercise of a faith warranted by a special revelation, we must allow, at all events, that he had good means for forming a correct opinion of his prospects, and should be supposed, therefore, to have realized his hope, and not to have been condemned contrary to such manifest intimations of a different result. The journeys and labors indicated in the Pastoral Epistles make the supposition of an interval between a first and second imprisonment important, if not indispensable, as a means of reconciling Luke's account with this part of the apostle's correspondence. The facts mentioned in the letters to Titus and Timothy have no natural place in the portion of Paul's history recorded in the Acts. The style too and the circle of ideas in these Epistles indicate a later period in the life of the writer and in the progress of the churches than that of the conclusion of Luke's narrative. Finally, the historical testimony, as derived from the earliest sources, asserts a second Roman captivity in the most explicit manner. Clemens, the disciple and companion of Paul, affirms that the apostle, before his martyrdom, travelled 'to the boundary of the West'—an expression which the Roman writers in that age applied to the trans-Alpine countries; and the Canon of Muratori (A. D. 170) represents 'a journey into Spain' as a well-known event in Paul's history. Eusebius states the common belief of the early churches in these words: 'After defending himself successfully it is currently reported that the apostle again went forth to proclaim the gospel, and afterward came to Rome a second time and was martyred under Nero.'

"Hints in the epistles and traditions supply all that is known or conjectured respecting this last stage of the apostle's ministry. It is supposed that, on being liberated (writers do not agree as to the precise order), he visited again parts of Asia Minor and Greece; went to Crete and founded, or more probably strengthened, the churches there; made his long-contemplated journey to Spain; wrote his first Epistle to Timothy and his Epistle to Titus."¹

PAUL'S SECOND IMPRISONMENT AND DEATH. After several years of effective labor, Paul was again apprehended, and brought a second time as a prisoner to Rome. Tradition places his im-

prisonment in the dungeon of the Mamertine prison. "This was the Bastile of the old world. Here Jugurtha starved to death."

"A traveller in the East who visited the dungeon of the Mamertine, where tradition declares that Paul was for a time confined, makes a suggestive



SECTION OF THE TULLIANUM AT ROME.

On the eastern slope of the Capitoline Hill. Called in later times the Mamertine prison. It consists of an oblong upper, and a smaller underground circular dungeon originally reached only by an opening at the top. The lower dungeon was called the Tullianum, from the Tullii or springs at the bottom. Here, according to tradition, Paul and Peter were imprisoned in the time of Nero.

From Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, by per.

observation in regard to the place. The dungeon is entered through a round hole in the floor of the dungeon above. The uppermost apartment is dark enough, but the lower one is darkness itself. A strange fact is noticeable, however, that in the hard floor of the lower dungeon there is a beautiful fountain of clear, crystal water, which, doubtless, was as fresh in Paul's day as it is now,—a symbol full of instruction. There never was a dungeon for God's servants which was without its well of consolation."² The judge at Paul's last trial was Nero, the "past master in every kind of Sodom and Gomorrah abominations, who exhausted every possibility of infamy." "At his hideous shamefulness even the Rome of that day was horrified."

There were no persecutions of Christians by the Romans till "on the night of the 18th of July,

about the close of the second year of St. Paul's confinement. He was shipwrecked on his voyage, picked up by a ship of Cyrene, landed at Puteoli, and made his way to Rome. His main object in coming was, he says, to obtain the release of certain priests who had been sent to Rome by Felix as prisoners, and he accomplished his purpose through the influence of Poppæa, to whom he was intro-

duced by Aliturus, the Jewish actor, already mentioned (Jos. *Life*, c. 3). May we not think it probable that St. Paul reaped the benefit of a general order for the release of Jewish prisoners sent by the Procurator of Palestine obtained through this instrumentality?"—Plumptre.

¹ Hackett.

² *The Christian Endeavor World*.

64, a fire broke out in the city and raged six days and seven nights before it could be extinguished." It broke out again in another quarter and raged three days more. Two thirds of the city, its homes and its temples, were laid in ashes. The people accused Nero of setting the fire, and to ward off the accusation he charged it upon Christians and began a terrible persecution. They were crucified. They were sewed up in skins to resemble wild animals, and hunting dogs tore them to pieces. They were covered with tow, smeared with pitch, chained to posts, and set on fire to illuminate Nero's gardens. It was a very carnival of hell.¹

Some time during or after this persecution, there is an early and reliable tradition that Paul died a martyr, and was beheaded by Nero.² None know the place of Paul's burial. "We, also, careless of a monument by the grave, should build it in the world—a monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived."³ "The traditional spot of the apostle's death is marked by one of the most lordly churches of Christendom, 'St. Paul's without the Walls.' Close to the church is the Convent of the Three Fountains, where Paul, according to the tradition, was beheaded, the three fountains bursting forth at the three strokes of Paul's head upon the ground."

"The Paul of Acts is the Paul that appears to us in his own letters, in his ways and his thoughts, in his educated tone of polished courtesy, in his quick and vehement temper, in the extraordinary versatility and adaptability which made him at home in every society, moving at ease in all surroundings, and everywhere the centre of interest, whether he is the Socratic dialectician in the agora of Athens, or the rhetorician in its university, or conversing with kings and proconsuls, or advising in the council on shipboard, or cheering a broken-spirited crew to make one more effort

for life. Wherever Paul is, no one has eyes for any but him."⁴

"In all this career, with the difficulties and the dangers which he had to confront, the characteristics of Paul stand out luminous in the fragmentary sketches which history furnishes us of his career and character. He had passion and intensity, but great self-poise; versatility, but steadiness; scholarly tastes, but great presence of mind in sudden emergencies. He was equally at home before the university at Athens, before a Jewish audience in a great synagogue, before a group of pious women by the riverside, and before Festus or Felix in a semi-royal court. He captivated men by his personal magnetism; arrested them by his quiet calmness in times of peril.

"These qualities of courage, of poise, of magnetism, of versatility, receive perhaps their most dramatic illustration in the story of his shipwreck.

"This man is no lay figure on which philosophy hangs like clothes on a skeleton in a dry-goods window. He is a hero, a gentleman; Coleridge calls him the gentleman with the finest manners of any man upon record,—cultivated, refined, heroic, versatile, magnetic; a born interpreter of truth, a leader of men, a creator of life, an epoch-making genius. For illustrations of traits of character furnished by incidents in his life, see Acts 13: 10; 14: 15; 16: 3, 25, 37; 17: 16; 18: 5, 9, 18; 19: 30; 20: 20-31; 21: 37-40; 23: 17; 24: 10 ff., 25; 25: 10, 11; 26: 2 ff., 29; 27: 10, 21 ff., 31, 33-36; 28: 3-5, 17 ff. They illustrate his passionate nature, strong emotions, self-poise, presence of mind, courage, tact, oratorical skill, quickness in repartee, versatility, consecration, devotion to his cause."⁵

"The close of Paul's life is veiled from our eyes, but no cloud dims, or ever can dim, the splendor of the services of that life, for God and for humanity."⁶

¹ See Juvenal's *Satires*, 1, 155-157.

² "In the recently discovered (Greek) fragment of the *Ascensio Isaie*, the death of Peter is connected closely with the Neronian persecution (*Amherst Papyri*, pt. 1, 1900). For a discussion of this, and of the conjectural Testament embedded in the larger document, see Dr. R. H. Charles' new edition (*The Ascension of Isaiah*), which

supersedes most previous work upon the subject."—James Moffatt, *The Historical New Testament*.

³ Ruskin.

⁴ Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller*, pp. 21, 22.

⁵ Lyman Abbott, *Life and Letters of Paul*, pp. 59-61

⁶ Prof. George H. Gilbert, *Student's Life of Paul*.

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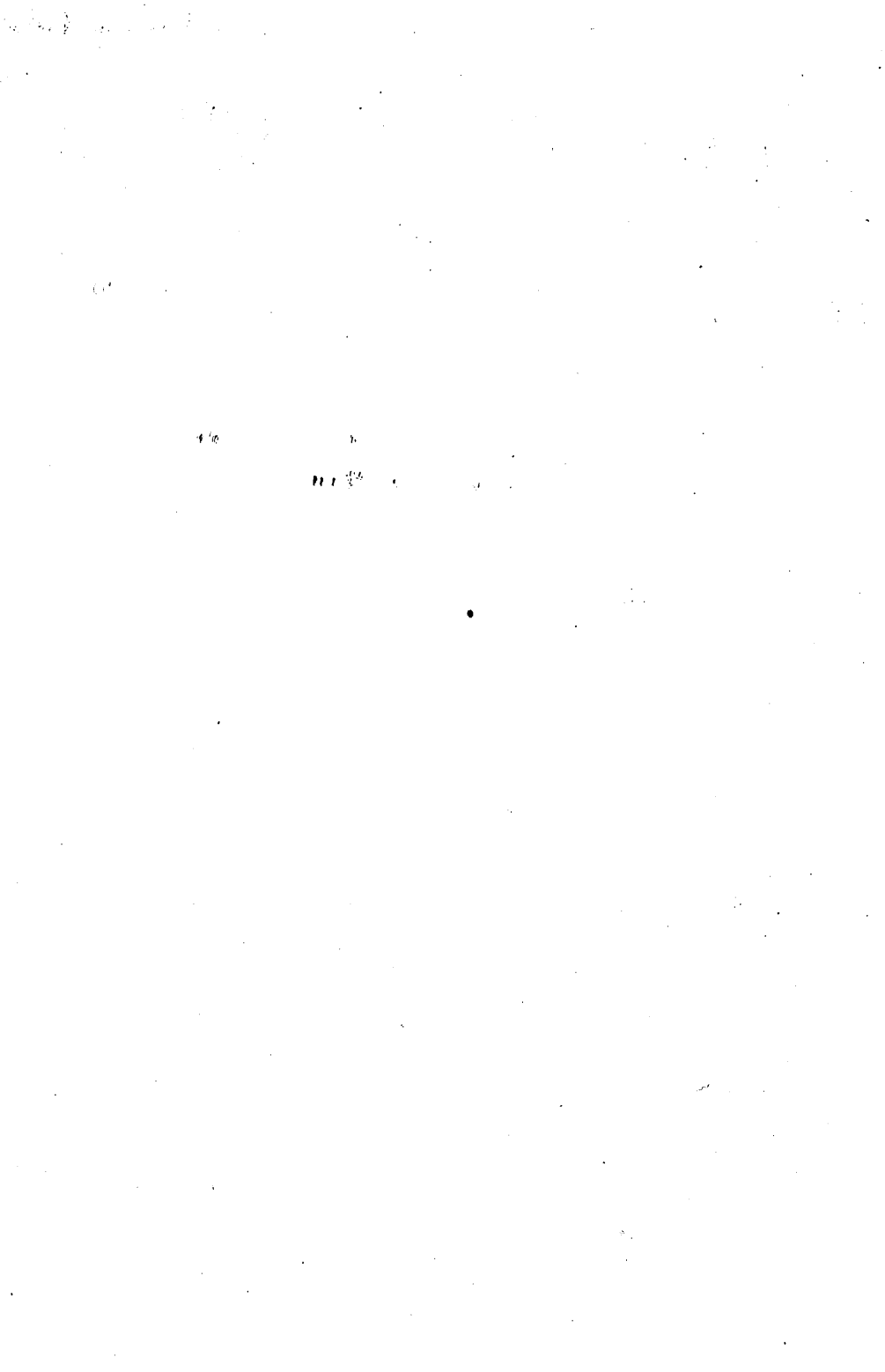
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