NOT PAUL, BUT JESUS



HOW PAUL USURPED CHRIST

JEREMY BENTHAM

Watersgreen House

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Author: Jeremy Bentham

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NOT PAUL, BUT JESUS ***

Not Paul, But Jesus

BY JEREMY BENTHAM, ESQR.,—The Eminent
Philosopher of Sociology, Jurisprudence,
&c., of London.

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With Preface Containing Sketches of His Life and
Works Together with Critical Notes by John
J. Crandall, Esqr., of the New Jersey Bar—
author of Right to Begin and Reply

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

Jeremy Bentham, an eminent English judicial or jural philosopher, was born in London, February 15, 1748, and died at Westminster, his residence for six years previously, June 6, 1832. His grandfather was a London Attorney; his father, who followed the same profession, was a shrewd man of business, and added considerably to his patrimony by land speculations. These London Benthams were probably an offshoot from an ancient York family of the same name, which boasted a Bishopric among its members; but our author did not trouble himself to trace his genealogy beyond the pawnbroker. His mother, Alicia Groove, was the daughter of an Andover

shopkeeper. Jeremy, the eldest, and for nine years the only child of this marriage, was for the first sixteen years of his life exceedingly puny, small and feeble. At the same time, he exhibited a remarkable precocity which greatly stimulated the pride and affection of his father. At five years of age he acquired a knowledge of musical notes and learned to play the violin. At four or earlier, having previously learned to write, he was initiated into Latin grammar, and in his seventh year entered Westminster School. Meanwhile, he was taught French by a private master at home and at seven read Telemaque, a book which strongly impressed him. Learning to dance was a much more serious undertaking, as he was so weak in his legs.

Young as he was, he acquired distinction at Westminster as a fabricator of Latin and Greek verses, the great end and aim of the instruction given there.

When twelve years old, he was entered as a Commoner at Queen's College, Oxford, where he spent the next three years. Though very uncomfortable at Oxford, he went through the exercises of the College with credit and even with some distinction. Some Latin verses of his, on the accession of George III, attracted a great deal of attention as the production of one so young. Into all of the disputations which formed a part of the College exercises, he entered with zeal and much satisfaction; yet he never felt at home in the University because of its historical monotony, and of all of which he retained the most unfavorable recollections.

In 1763, while not yet sixteen, he took the degree of A.B. Shortly after this he began his course of Law in

Lincoln's Inn, and journeyed back and forth to Oxford to hear Blackstone's Lectures. These lectures were published and read throughout the realm of England and particularly in the American Colonies. These were criticised by the whole school of Cromwell, Milton and such followers as Priestly and others in England and many in the Colonies in America. Young Bentham returned to London and attended as a student the Court of the King's Bench, then presided over by Mansfield, of whom he continued for some years a great admirer.

Among the advocates, Dunning's clearness, directness and precision most impressed him. He took the degree of A.M. at the age of 18, the youngest graduate that had been known at the Universities; and in 1772 he was admitted to the Bar.

Young Bentham had breathed from infancy, at home, at school, at college and in the Courts, an atmosphere conservative and submissive to authority, yet in the progress of his law studies, he found a striking contrast between the structural imperialism of the British Empire as expounded by Blackstone and others of his day, and the philosophical social state discussed by Aristotle, Plato, Aurelius, the struggling patriots of France, and the new brotherhood, then agitating the colonies of America.

His father had hoped to see him Lord-Chancellor, and took great pains to push him forward. But having perceived a shocking contrast between the law as it was under the Church imperial structure and such as he conceived it ought to be, he gradually abandoned the position of a submissive and admiring student and assumed a position among the school of reformers and afterwards the role of sharp critic and

indignant denouncer.

He heroically suffered privations for several years in Lincoln's Inn garrett, but persevered in study. He devoted some of his time to the study of science. The writings of Hume, Helvetius and others led him to adopt utility as the basis of Morals and Legislation. There had developed two distinct parties in England: The Radicals and Imperialists. The Radicals contended that the foundation of Legislation was that utility which produced the greatest happiness to the greatest number.

Blackstone and the Ecclesiastics had adopted the theory of Locke, that the foundation of Legislation was a kind of covenant of mankind to conform to the laws of God and Nature, as interpreted by hereditarily self-constituted rulers.

Bentham contended that this was only a vague and uncertain collection of words well adapted to the promotion of rule by dogmatic opinions of the Lords and King and Ecclesiastics in combination well calculated to deprive the people of the benefits of popular government. He conceived the idea of codifying the laws so as to define them in terms of the greatest good to the greatest number, and devoted a large share of the balance of his life to this work.

In 1775 he published a small book in defense of the policy of Lord North toward the Colonies, but for fear of prosecution it was issued by one John Lind and extensively read. A little later he published a book entitled "A Fragment on Government." This created a great deal of attention. Readers variously ascribed the book to Mansfield, to Camden and to Dunning. The impatient pride of Bentham's father betrayed this secret. It was variously interpreted as a

philosophical Treatise and a Critical Personal Attack upon the Government. But he persevered in the advocacy of his principals of Morals and Government. He hoped also to be appointed Secretary of the Commission sent out by Lord North to propose terms to the revolted American Colonies. But as King George III had contracted a dislike to him, he was disappointed in his plan of Conference with the Colonies. His writings were, however, more appreciated in France. He was openly espoused as a philosopher and reformer by D'Alimbert, Castillux, Brissat and others. But in the meantime some such men as Lord Shelbourne, Mills and others became his friends and admirers, and encouraged him to persevere with his philosophical Code of laws, largely gleaned from the ancient philosophers of liberty and equality which had been smothered and superseded by military and Church imperialism.

In 1785 he took an extensive tour across the Alps and while at Kricov on the Dou, he wrote his letters on Usury. These were printed in London, which were now welcomed by the people largely on account of his reputation in France as a philosopher of popular government. In the meantime, Paley had printed a treatise on the Principle of applying utility to morals and legislation. He determined to print his views in French and address them to that people then struggling for liberal government.

He revised his sheets on his favorite penal Code and published them under the title of "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation." The Principles enunciated in this treatise attracted the attention of the liberals in France, as well as England and America. Mirabeau and other French publishers spread his reputation far and wide.

Meanwhile, Bentham with the idea of aiding the deliberations of the States General of France, and encouraged by the liberals on both continents, and especially such men as Franklin, Jefferson and others, printed a "Draft of a Code for the organization of a Judicial Establishment in France," for which services the National Assembly conferred on him the Citizenship of France by a decree, August 23, 1792, in which his name was included with those of Priestly, Paine, Wilberforce, Clarkson, Mackintosh, Anacharsis, Clootz, Washington, Klopstock, Kosiosco, and several others.

In the meantime, in his travels, he conceived an extensive plan of Prison reform which he strenuously urged the Crown Officers and the English Parliament to adopt. After several years of strenuous labors and the expenditure of a large part of the patrimony left him by his father, the enterprise was thwarted by the refusal of the King to concur with Parliament in the enterprise. This scheme is fully set forth in the histories of the reign of George III. But to avoid persecution under the drastic penal Codes of England, Bentham boasted that he was a man of no party but a man of all countries and a fraternal unit of the human race, he had come to occupy at home the position of a party chief.

He espoused with characteristic zeal and enthusiasm the ideas of the radicals, who, in spite of themselves, were ranked as a political party. He went, indeed, the whole length, not merely republicanism, but on many points of ancient democracy including Universal Suffrage and the Emancipation of all Colonies.

No matter how adroitly the Contention was managed, the Imperialists insisted that it was merely

resurrecting the historic struggle of the days of Cromwell and his "bare bones." The Church establishment by way of the Lords and Bishops and Bishop Lords was the real foundation of the Crown rule in all its ramifications. This superstructure was protected by all forms of penal laws against "lease" Majesty and even the appearance of Church Creed heresy. The Radicals always confronted by Crown detectives were compelled to be very wary in their attacks upon this that they called imperial idolatry and were compelled to move by indirect and flank attacks.

The upheaval by Martin Luther in the reign of Henry VIII at the Council of Trent and others over the Divine authenticity of the Athanasian Creed never abated among the humanitarians of England or France. But in the presence of criminal inquisitions too barbarous to mention, the Radicals were handicapped and were compelled to work strategically and by pits and mines beneath the superstructure of Church imperialism. The Church structure as established in Europe is by common consent based upon the hypothesis of Divinity in the life, works, and dogmas of one Saul of Tarsus, or as denominated Paul, or the canonized St. Paul. The substantial Creed might well be denominated Paulism. Hence the legendary Paul has been one of the points of attack by the rationalists of the centuries.

While many of the contemporaries of Bentham both in England, America and the Continent denied the verity of the whole Mosaic cosmogony and historiology, yet Bentham seemed to ignore this task as superserviceable and unimportant. He and his school of Radicals were devoted to the life works and

teachings of Jesus. Jesus was the idol of his school and he heartily espoused the task of eliminating Paul as the nemesis of Jesus and his Apostles, and a character invented and staged by imperialists to subordinate the toiling classes to the production of resources to subserve their personal luxuries.

Bentham began writing a philosophic analysis of the Church's pretensions concerning the divine agency of Paul. After several years of examination and study, and while he was writing his famous treatise entitled "The Rational of Judicial Evidence" afterwards collected and published by Mill, he finished the manuscript criticisms of Paul and entitled them "Not Paul but Jesus."

For fear of prosecution for direct heresy or denunciation of the Creed of the Church, he evaded the use of his own name as writer of the Criticism and used the name of Conyers Middleton, a Cambridge Divine, who by his writings had created a great deal of disturbance. He had been convicted twice for heresy. He had been dead fifty years when Bentham introduced him in the first lines in the Introduction to his Criticisms herein published (See Introduction). Bentham, no doubt, intended to evade prosecution, as it will be seen that his name does not appear in the book, and yet at the same time used the name most obnoxious to the Church in all its history.

In 1729 Middleton published his "Letter from Rome" in which he boldly essayed to demonstrate that the then religion of the Roman Church was derived from their heathen ancestral idolaters. He published other works on the uses of miracles and prophecy. But Bentham's "Not Paul but Jesus" did not long remain anonymous. It was read extensively in France and

America. But this treatise formed a part of the labor of his life, which was to promote the theory of the social state based upon "The greatest good to the greatest number, and subordinate the whole to rational calculations of utility." These views he continually urged in the form of Codification so as to eliminate all pretensions of hierarchical control by historical divine prophets, the faithful souls and agents of Kings and princes. In the meantime, he was indefatigable in his attacks upon the English System of Jurisprudence, which was being operated in America as a kind of paternal inheritance. Dumont, in 1811, compiled from the manuscripts of Bentham a complete code which was readily adopted in France, because it conformed so closely to the old Roman procedure which was held tenaciously in France.

In the meantime, by importunity of Lord Brougham and others, and particularly of his friends in America, such as Adams, Franklin and others, he wrote to Madison offering his services to draw up a complete code of laws for the United States. Mr. Madison caused these ideas to be spread broadcast by pamphlets as pamphleteering was much in vogue for such purposes in those days. But on account of our dual form of government, and as the code would apply to the States separately, the scheme as a whole failed. But some of the Governors, especially those of Pennsylvania, Virginia and New Hampshire, got hold of the manuscripts and many of the provisions were adopted and still obtain.

In the meantime, Mr. Mill had collected his manuscripts on "The Rationale of Judicial Evidence" and published them in 5 vols. They shortly became a part of the libraries of the lawyers and statesmen of

England, and especially in the United States. His manuscripts on "Not Paul but Jesus" were extensively read and universally admitted to be rational and sound in point of rational jural demonstration. During this time, Thomas Jefferson had been writing on the same subject and after reading the prints of Bentham, he abandoned the part directed to the criticism of Paul, but he arranged chronologically all of the verses from the four gospels that pertain to the career of Jesus, omitting, however, every verse or paragraph that to his mind was ambiguous or controversial, and every statement of fact that would not have been admitted as evidence in a Court of Justice. The original copy of what is denominated as "Jefferson Bible," is now preserved in the National Museum at Washington. It was purchased by the Government as a memento of the author of the Declaration of Independence.

This "The Thomas Jefferson Bible" has lately been republished by David McKay, 604 S. Washington Sq., Philadelphia. The treatise "Not Paul but Jesus" was published in 1825. The printing art was not as well advanced as at present, and the division of subjects for discussion and correlation were not arranged strictly methodically, so the Editor has rearranged some of the titles with a view to improve the order of sequence. With this change, every word has been preserved.

It will all the time be borne in mind that the examination is Judicial and the Character Paul had to be staged from many points of view and examination. Jeremy Bentham has revolved him in the limelight of inquisition with a thoroughness that commands the attention of all thoughtful readers. With this view the Editor hopes to be justified in its

republication by the reading and inquiring public.

J. J. CRANDALL.

INTRODUCTION.

Illustrious, in the church of Jesus in general, and in the church of England in particular, is the name of CONYERS MIDDLETON. Signal was, and is, the service rendered by him to the religion of Jesus. By that bold, though reverend, hand, it now stands cleared of many a heap of pernicious rubbish, with which it had been incumbered and defiled, by the unhallowed labours of a succession of writers, who,—without personal intercourse with the founder, any more than we have now,—have, from the mere circumstance of the comparative vicinity of their days to those in which he lived, derived the exclusive possession of the imposing title of *Fathers of the Church*, or, in one word, *The Fathers*.

So able, so effectual, has been this clearance, that, as it has been observed by the Edinburgh Reviewers,—speaking of course of protestants, and more particularly of English protestants,—till one unexpected exception, which it mentions, had presented itself, they had thought that in no man's opinion were those writers any "longer to be regarded as guides, either in faith or morals."

One step further was still wanting. One thorn still remained, to be plucked out of the side of this so much injured religion,—and that was, the addition made to it by *Saul of Tarsus*: by that *Saul*, who, under the name of *Paul*, has,—as will be seen, without

warrant from, and even in the teeth of, the history of Jesus, as delivered by his companions and biographers the four evangelists,—been dignified with the title of *his* apostle: his *apostle*, that is to say, his *emissary*: his *emissary*, that is to say, *sent out* by him: sent out, by that Jesus, whose immediate disciples he so long persecuted and destroyed, and whose person,—unless dreaming of a person after his death, or professing to have dreamt of him, is seeing him,—he never saw.

In the course of the ensuing examination, the subject of *miracles* has come, unavoidably, under consideration. On this delicate ground, it has been matter of no small comfort to the author, to behold precursors, among divines of different persuasions, whose reputation for piety has not been diminished by the spirit of critical inquiry which accompanies it. Such were Mede, Sykes, and others, whose ingenious labours were, in the case called that of the *daemoniacs*, employed in the endeavor to remove the supernatural character, from what, in their eyes, was no more than a natural appearance. On the success of these their labours, any judgment would here be irrelevant. Not altogether so the observation, that in no instance does it appear to him that any such latitude of interpretation has been employed, as that which, on that occasion, was found necessary for the conversion of *devils* into *diseases*.

The *dissentions* which, at all times, have had place among persons professing the religion of Jesus, are but too notorious. The *mischiefs*, produced by these dissentions, are no less so. These dissentions, and these mischiefs—in what have they had their source? In certain words. These words, of whom have they been the words? Of Jesus? No: this has not been so

much as pretended. Of Paul, and of Paul alone: he giving them all along not as the words of Jesus, but as his own only:—he all along preaching (as will be seen) in declared opposition to the eleven who were undisputedly the apostles of Jesus: thus, of Paul only have they been the words.

That, by these words, and, consequently, by him whose words they were and are, all the mischiefs, which have been imputed to *the religion of Jesus*, have been produced,—in so far as the dissentions, from which these mischiefs flowed, have had these words for their subjects,—cannot be denied. But, moreover, in these same words, that is to say, in the doctrines delivered by them, cannot but be to be found the origin, and the cause, of no small part—perhaps of the greatest part—of the *opposition*, which *that religion, with its benevolent system of morals*, has hitherto experienced. If this be so, then, by the clearing it of this incumbrance, not only as yet unexampled purity, but additional extent, may not unreasonably be expected to be given to it.

It was by the frequent recurrence of these observations, that the author of these pages was led to the inquiry, whether the religion of Paul,—as contained in the writings ascribed to Paul, and with a degree of propriety which the author sees no reason to dispute,—whether the religion of Paul has any just title to be considered as forming a part of the religion of Jesus. The result was in the negative. The considerations, by which this result was produced, will form the matter of the ensuing pages.

If, by cutting off a source of useless privations and groundless terrors, comfort and *inward peace* should be restored or secured;—if, by cutting off a source of bitter animosity,—good-will, and peace from *without*,

should be restored or secured;—if, by the removal of an incongruous appendage, acceptance should be obtained for what is good in the religion commonly ascribed to Jesus;—obtained at the hands of any man, much more of many, to whom at present it is an object of aversion;—if, in any one of these several ways, much more if in all of them, the labours of the author should be crowned with success,—good service will, so far, and on all hands, be allowed to have been rendered to mankind.

Whosoever, putting aside all prepossessions, feels strong enough in mind, to look steadily at the originals, and from *them* to take his conceptions of the matter, not from the discourses of others,—whosoever has this command over himself, will recognise, if the author does not much deceive himself, that by the two persons in question, as represented in the two sources of information—the Gospels and Paul's Epistles,—two quite different, if not opposite, religions are inculcated: and that, in the religion of Jesus may be found all the *good* that has ever been the result of the compound so incongruously and unhappily made,—in the religion of Paul, all the *mischief*, which, in such disastrous abundance, has so indisputably flowed from it.

1. That Paul had no such commission as he professed to have;—2. that his enterprize was a scheme of personal ambition, and nothing more;—3. that his system of doctrine is fraught with mischief in a variety of shapes, and, in so far as it departs from, or adds to, those of Jesus, with good in none;—and that it has no warrant, in anything that, as far as appears from any of the four gospels, was ever said or done by Jesus;—such are the conclusions, which the author of these pages has found himself compelled to

deduce, from those materials with which history has furnished us. The grounds of these conclusions he proceeds to submit to the consideration of his readers.

PLAN OF THE WORK.

The work may be conceived as divided into five parts.

1. In Part the first, the five different, and in many respects discordant, accounts given of Paul's conversion, which, in these accounts, is of course represented as being not only *outward* but *inward*, are confronted, and, so far as regards inward conversion, shown to be, all of them, untrue: and, immediately after, the state of things, which produced, accompanied, and immediately followed, his outward conversion,—together with the time and manner in which that change was declared,—is brought to view. This part occupies the first two chapters.

2. Part the Second is employed in showing,—that, from the first commencement, of the intercourse, which, upon the tokens given of his outward conversion, took place at Jerusalem between him and the apostles, Acts 9:27, to the time when,—in consequence of the interposition of the Roman commander, to save him from the unanimous indignation of the whole people, more particularly of the disciples of the apostles,—he was conveyed from thence under guard to Rome, a space, according to the commonly received computation, not less than six and twenty years, (Acts 21 and 23), no

supernatural commission from Jesus, nor any inward conversion, was,—either by those distinguished servants and companions of Jesus, or by their disciples at Jerusalem,—believed to have place in his instance. This part occupies eight chapters: to wit, from the 3d to the 10th inclusive.

3. In Part the Third, in further proof of the insincerity of his character,—in addition to an oath proved to be false, are brought to view two unquestionably false assertions:—each having for its subject a matter of prime importance,—each deliberate and having in view a particular purpose: the one, a false account of the number of the witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus; 1 Cor. 15:6; the other, a prediction of the end of the world before the death of persons then living; 1 Thes. 4, 15, 16, 17. This part occupies Chapters 11 and 12.

4. Part the Fourth is employed in showing,—that no proof, of his alleged supernatural commission from the Almighty, is deducible, from any account we have, of any of those scenes, in which he is commonly regarded as having exercised a power of working miracles. For, that not only he himself never made exercise of any such power,—on any of those occasions, on which the demand for it, for the purpose of overcoming the disbelief entertained of his story by the Apostles, was extreme,—but, neither on those, nor any other occasions, did he ever take upon himself to make reference, to so much as any one instance of any such proof of special authority from the Almighty, as having been exhibited by him on any other occasion: that, for the belief in any such gift, we have no other ground, than the relations contained in the history called "*The Acts of the Apostles*," or, for shortness, *The Acts*: and that such

throughout is,—on the one hand, the nature of the occurrence itself, on the other hand, the character of the representation given of it,—that, to a disbelief in the exercise of any such supernatural power, it is not necessary that any such imputation as that of downright and wilful falsehood should be cast upon the author of that narrative: the occurrences in question being, mostly, if not entirely, such as lie within the ordinary course of nature,—but, upon which, either by the fancy, or by the artifice of the narrator, a sort of supernatural colouring has been superinduced. For this purpose, these supposed miracles are, each of them, separately brought to view and examined. This part occupies the 13th chapter.

5. Part the Fifth is employed in showing, that,—even if, on all these several occasions, the exercise of a power of producing supernatural effects had, by unequivocal statements, been ascribed to Paul by the author of the Acts,—such testimony, independently of the virtual contradiction given to it by the above-mentioned circumstantial evidence,—could not, with any propriety, be regarded as affording adequate proof—either of the fact of Paul's having received a divine commission, and thereby, having become, inwardly as well as outwardly, a convert to the religion of Jesus—either of that radical fact, or so much as of any one of the alleged achievements, which, upon the face of the accounts in question, are wont to present themselves as miraculous: for that, in the first place, it is only by error that the history in question has been ascribed to Saint Luke: it being, in respect of the account given of the circumstances accompanying the ascension of Jesus, inconsistent with the account given in the gospel of Saint Luke, when compared with Acts 1:3 to 12,—and as to those

attendant on the death of Judas, inconsistent with the account in Saint Matthew 27:3 to 10 and Acts 1:16 to 20: and moreover, such being the whole complexion of his narrative, as to render it incapable of giving any tolerably adequate support to any statement whereby the exercise of supernatural power is asserted. This part occupies Chapter 14.

In Part the Sixth, to give additional correctness and completeness, to the conception supposed to be conveyed, of the character of Paul and his attendant historiographer, jointly and severally considered,—a conjunct view is given of *five* reports of his five trials, as reported in the Acts. This part has been added since the publication of the above-mentioned Summary View. It occupies Chapter 15 of the present work.

Chapter XVI. and last, winds up the whole, with some general observations on the self-declared oppositeness of Paul's Gospel, as he calls it, to that of the Apostles: together with an indication of a real Antichrist, in compensation for the fabulous one, created by Paul, and nursed by the episcopal authors and editors of the Church of England, translators of the Bible: and by Chapter 12 of the present work, the imaginary Antichrist is, it is hoped, strangled.

At the time of the publication of the Summary View, —for the more complete and satisfactory demonstration of the relative insufficiency of the narrative in question, a short but critical sketch was, as herein stated, intended to be given, of the parts not before noticed of the *History of the Church*,—from the ascension of Jesus, being the period at which that narrative commences, to that at which it terminates, —to wit, about two years after the arrival of Paul at Rome, Acts 28: the history—to wit, as deducible

from the materials which, in that same narrative, are brought to view: the duration of the period being, according to commonly received computations, about 28 or 30 years[A]: the author of "*The Acts*" himself,—if he is to be believed,—an eyewitness, during a considerable portion of the time, to the several occurrences which he relates.

On this occasion, and for this purpose,—the history in question had been sifted, in the same manner and on the same principles, as any profane history, in which, in a series of occurrences mostly natural, a few, wearing a supernatural appearance, are, here and there, interspersed: as, for instance, in Livy's, and even in Tacitus's Roman History: on the one hand, the authority not being regarded as affording a sufficient foundation, for a belief in the supernatural parts of the narrative; nor, on the other hand, the sort of countenance, given to the supernatural parts, as affording a sufficient reason, for the disbelief of those, which have nothing in them that is unconformable to the universally experienced course of nature.

In respect of *doctrine*, the conclusion is—that no point of doctrine, which has no other authority than that of Paul's writings for its support, can justly be regarded as belonging to the religion of Jesus,—any more than if, at this time of day, it were broached by any man now living: that thus, in so far as he is seen to have *added* anything to the religion of Jesus, he is seen to set himself *above* it and *against* it: that, therefore, if this be true, it rests with every professor of the religion of Jesus, to settle with himself, to which of the two religions, that of Jesus and that of Paul, he will adhere: and, accordingly, either to say, *Not Jesus but Paul*,—or, in the words of the title to

this work, *Not Paul but Jesus*.[B]

FOOTNOTES:

[A] To prevent, if possible, an embarrassment, which might otherwise be liable to have place on the part of the reader,—and therewith, the idea of inconsistency, as having place here and there in the work,—the following indication may be found to have its use.

A cloud of uncertainty, to the length of one or two years, hangs over the duration of the period embraced by this work: namely, that between the point of time at which the conversion of Paul is stated to have taken place, and the point of time at which the history, intituled The Acts of the Apostles, as therein declared, concludes:—a point of time, posterior by two years to that of his arrival at Rome.

[B] For making the requisite separation, between the two religions of Jesus and the religion of Paul,—an instrument, alike commodious and unexceptionable, has—for these many years, though, assuredly, not with any such view,—been presented to all hands, by Doctor *Gastrell*, an English and Church of England Bishop: namely, in a well-known work, intituled *The Christian Institutes*: date of the 14th Edition, 1808. It is composed of a collection of points of faith and morality, and under each are quoted the several texts, in the New Testament, which are regarded by the author as affording grounds for the positions indicated. If then, anywhere, in his composition of the ground, passages, one or more, from this or that Epistle of Paul, are employed,—unaccompanied with any passage,

extracted from any of the four Gospels,—the reader may, without much danger of error, venture to conclude, that it is to the religion of Paul alone, that the point of doctrine thus supported appertains, and not to the religion of Jesus. As to any of the Epistles, which bear the name of any of the real Apostles of Jesus, —a corresponding question may perhaps be here suggesting itself. But, with regard to the design of the present work, scarcely will they be found relevant. For, when compared with the sayings of Jesus as repeated in the four Gospels, scarcely will they be found exhibiting any additional points of doctrine: never, pregnant with any of those dissentions, which, from the writings of Paul, have issued in such disastrous abundance. Only lest they should be thought to have been overlooked, is any mention here made, of those documents, which, how much soever on other accounts entitled to regard, may, with reference to the question between the religion of Jesus and the religion of Paul, be, as above, and without impropriety, stated as irrelevant.

TABLE I.

OUTWARD CONVERSION.

Showing at one view, under the head of Paul's Conversion, the different accounts from which the inference is drawn that the Conversion was outward only, not inward.

VISION I. ACTS ACCOUNT.

Ch. ix. 1-9.

1.—But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone around about him a light out of heaven: and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks: (1) but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice,—but beholding no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; (old version "no man") and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

II. PAUL'S FIRST PERSONAL ACCOUNT.

As per Acts xxii. 3-11.

I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day: and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 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 journeyed to Damascus, to bring them also which were there unto Jerusalem in bonds, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shown from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me beheld in deed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What 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. 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.

III. PAUL'S SECOND PERSONAL ACCOUNT.

As per Acts xxvi. 9-20.

I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prison, having received authority from the Chief Priests, and when they were put to death, I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the Chief Priests, at midday, O, king, I saw on the

way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me. Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance.

IV. PAUL'S ALLUSIONS.

I. As per Paul to Corinth. i. xv. 8.

And last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me, also.

II. As per Paul to Gal. i. 12, 15, 16, 17.

12. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of

Jesus Christ.

15. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb,

16. And called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

II. VISION 2.—ANANIAS'S.

I. Acts Account.

ix. 10-16.

10. Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias! And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth: and he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake.

III. ANANIAS'S VISIT TO PAUL.

I. Acts Account.

ix. 17-22.

And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; and he took food and was strengthened.

And he was certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. And all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havock of them which called on his name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests. But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

II. Paul's Account.

As per Acts xxii. 12-16.

xxii. 12. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will,

and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.

NOT PAUL, BUT JESUS

CHAPTER I.

Paul's Conversion.[1]*—Improbability and Discordancy of the Accounts of it.*

SECTION I.

LIST OF THESE ACCOUNTS, WITH PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

(*See* Table I., *in which they are confronted.*)

In one single work, and that alone, is comprised the whole of the information, in which, in relation to this momentous occurrence, any particulars are at this time of day to be found. This is that historical work, which in our edition of the Bible, has for its title *The Acts of the Apostles*; for shortness, let us say *The Acts*.

Of this same occurrence, in this one short work no fewer than three separate accounts are visible; one, in which the story is related by the historian in his

own person; two others, in each of which Paul is introduced as giving his own account of it. Of these three accounts, no two will be found agreeing with each other. By the historian, Paul when introduced as speaking in his own person, is represented as contradicting not only the historian's account, but his own account. On each occasion, it should seem, Paul's account is adapted to the occasion. On the first occasion, the historian's account was not exactly adapted to that same first occasion. By the historian's ingenuity, Paul is accordingly represented as giving on that same occasion another and better-adapted account. On the second occasion, neither was the historian's account nor Paul's own account, as given on the former occasion, found suitable to this fresh occasion; on this same fresh occasion, a suitable amendment is accordingly framed.

Here, at the very outset of the inquiry, the distance of time between the point of time on which the occurrence is supposed to have taken place, and the time at which the historian's account of it was penned, are circumstances that present a claim to notice.

The year 35 after the birth of Christ is the year which, according to the received accounts, is assigned to the occurrence. According to these same accounts, the year 63 is the date given to the last occurrence mentioned by the historian, Acts 28: after which occurrence, two years are stated by him as having elapsed, at the time at which the history closes. Here then is an interval of about 30 years, between the time at which the occurrence is stated to have happened, and the time at which these three mutually contradictory accounts of it were framed.

In regard to this radical occurrence in particular,

namely Paul's conversion,—for the foundation of this his report, what evidence was it that the reporter had, or could have had in his possession, or at his command? One answer may serve for all; the accounts given of the matter by Paul himself.

With Paul, then, what were this same reporter's means and mode of intercourse? In the year 59, and not before, (such is the inference from his own words) did it fall to his lot to be taken into the train of this self-denominated Apostle. Then it is, that for the first time, in the several accounts given by him of Paul's migrations from place to place, the pronouns *us*, Acts 20:5, and *we* make their appearance. From 34 to 59 years are 25. At the end of this interval came the earliest opportunity, which, for anything that appears, he could have had of hearing from his master's own mouth, whatsoever account, if any, it may have been the pleasure of that same master to give, of an occurrence, in relation to which there existed not among men any other percipient witness.

Having accompanied his master during the whole of his progress from Jerusalem, the historian speaks of himself as being still in his train on his arrival at Rome. Acts xxviii. 16, "And when we came to Rome," &c. It is not precisely stated, nor can it very determinately be inferred, whether at the point of time at which the history closes, the historian was still at that capital; the negative supposition presents itself as the most probable. Posterior to the closing of the real action of the history, the penning of it will naturally be to be placed.

"Paul, says the Acts xxviii. 30, dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him," &c. When this last verse but one of the history was penning, had the historian been living

with Paul, he would naturally have given us to understand as much; instead of *dwelt*, he would have said *has been dwelling*.

By the tokens of carelessness afforded by the omission of so many particulars, which in every work of an historical nature the reader will naturally expect to see specified; such as the name of the historian, the particulars, occasion and manner of his being taken into the company of the illustrious missionary, and the time of that event;—by these tokens, two inferences, how different soever their tendency, seem at once to be suggested. One is, the genuineness of the narrative. A writer, who was conscious that he was not the man he was thus representing himself to be, viz. the companion of the missionary, would hardly have slid in, in so careless a manner, the mention of so material a circumstance. The other is, the slenderness of the author's qualification for the task thus executed by him; the lowness of his station in the scale of trustworthiness, and consequently the smallness of the probative force, with which a mass of evidence thus circumstanced can reasonably be considered as operating, in support of any alleged matter of fact, which, (either by the extraordinariness of its nature, or the temptation which the circumstances of the case afforded for entire fiction or misrepresentation), presents itself as exposed to doubt or controversy.

A supernatural conversion, and the receipt of a supernatural commission for the delivery of a fresh body of doctrine; such are the two events, which, though in their nature so perfectly distinguishable, were according to this narrative combined in one:—the conversion from an unbelieving, cruel, and destructive persecutor of the new fellowship, into a

most zealous supporter and coadjutor: the body of doctrine such as if it amounted to anything, could not but have been—what the person in question declared it to be—a supplement to the religion taught by Jesus while in the flesh;—a supplement, containing matter never revealed to, and consequently never taught by, his Apostles.

Now then, of all these supernatural occurrences, which, by the nameless historiographer, are related to have happened to Paul, if anything had really happened to him—on this supposition, (so many as were the different sets of disciples of his, inhabitants of so many mutually distant provinces, no fewer than eight in number); is it in the nature of the case, that in no one instance, in any of his numerous Epistles, he should have felt the necessity of stating and accordingly have stated, to any of these his disciples, the circumstances attending the event of his conversion—an event on which alone all his professions were founded? circumstances to which, as stated in his historian's narrative, could not from their nature have been known to any human being other than himself?

Yet, in no one of all his Epistles, to any one of these his disciples, of any such particular, either in the way of direct assertion, or in the way of allusion, is any trace to be found. Of *revelation*, yes: of *revelation*—this one most momentous indeed, but at the same time most mysterious and uninstructive word, repetitions we have in abundance. But of the time and manner of the alleged communication, or of the matter communicated, nothing is anywhere said.

In these considerations may be seen a part, though but a part, of those, on which, in due season, will be seen grounded the inference,—that at no time, in all

the personal conferences he had with the Apostles, was any such story told by Paul, as is related by the author of the Acts.

On the supposition that the narrative, such as it is, is genuine,—taking it as a whole, a very important source of division, from which it will require to be divided in idea into two parts or periods, here presents itself. Period the first, containing the portion of time *anterior* to the historian's admission into the train of the supposed Apostle: Period the second, containing the portion of time *posterior* to that event: this latter portion continuing, as far as appears, to the time at which the history closes.

In this latest and last-mentioned period are comprised all the several facts, or supposed facts, in relation to which any grounds appear for the supposition that the historian was, in his own person, a percipient witness.

In relation to all the several facts, or supposed facts, anterior to this period,—the best evidence, which, for anything that appears, ever came within his reach, was composed of such statements as, in the course of his service, it may have been the pleasure of the master to make to, or in the hearing of, this his attendant. Whatsoever may be the grounds of suspicion that may be found attaching themselves to evidence passing through such a channel, or issuing from such a source; other evidence will, if taken in the lump, present itself as being in comparison much less trustworthy. All other evidence consists of statements, coming from we know not whom, at we know not what times, on we know not what occasion, each of them with we know not how many reporting witnesses, one after and from another, through so many different and successive channels,

between the percipient witness or witnesses, and the last reporting witness or witnesses, from whom the historian received the statement in the way of personal intercourse.

The period of *rumour*, and the period of *observation*—By these two appellations it should seem, may the two periods be not altogether unaptly or uninstructively distinguished.

With reference to the period of rumour,—whether, it was from Paul's own statement, or from a source still more exposed to suspicion, that the historian's conception was derived,—one consideration presents itself, as requisite to be kept in mind. This is, With what facility, especially in that age, upon an occurrence in itself true, and including nothing that lies without the ordinary course of nature,—a circumstance out of the course of nature, giving to the whole a supernatural, and to use the ordinary word a miraculous, character, may, in and by the narrative, have been superinduced.[2] Fact, for instance, as it *really* was—at the word of command, (suppose) a man, having the appearance of a cripple, stands up erect and walks: untrue circumstances, one or both superinduced by *rumour*—the man had been so from his birth; from his birth down to that same time he had been an inhabitant of that same place.

In the chapter on Paul's supposable miracles, about a dozen occurrences of this description will be found. On each one of these several occasions, the propriety of bearing in mind the above-mentioned consideration, will, it is believed, not appear open to dispute, whatsoever on each several occasion may be the application made of it.

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SECTION 2.

Vision I.—DIALOGUE ON THE ROAD: PAUL HEARS A VOICE, SEES NOTHING.

I. ACCOUNT.—*As per Acts* ix. 1-9.

ix. 1. And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,—and *desired* of him letters to Damascus to the *synagogues*, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.—And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from *heaven*:—and he fell to the earth, and *heard a voice* saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?—And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.—And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.—And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, *hearing a voice* but *seeing no man*.—And Saul arose from the earth; and *when his eyes were opened, he saw no man*; but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.—And he was *three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink*.

II. PAUL'S supposed FIRST OR UNSTUDIED ACCOUNT.—*As*

***per* Acts xxii. 3-11.**

xxii. 3. I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.—And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.—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 to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.—And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus *about noon*, suddenly there shone from *heaven* a great light round about me.—And I fell unto the ground, and *heard a voice* saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?—And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.—And they that were with me *saw indeed the light*, and were afraid; but *they heard not* the voice of him that spake to me. —And I said, What 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. —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.

III. PAUL'S supposed ORATORICAL OR STUDIED ACCOUNT.

—*As per* Acts xxvi. 9-20.

xxvi. 9. I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.—Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them.—And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.—Whereupon as I went to Damascus with *authority* and *commission* from the *chief priests*,—at *midday*, O king, I saw in the way a light from *heaven*, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.—And when we were all fallen to the earth, *I heard* a voice speaking unto me, and saying *in the Hebrew tongue*, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.—But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;—delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee.

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On comparing the three accounts of Vision 1st, the particulars will be found referable to twelve heads.

Under no more than two of the twelve, will the conformity among them be found entire.

Where disconformity has place it may be clear or not clear of contradiction. Clear it may be of contradiction, when it consists either of mere deficiency or mere redundancy, or of both: deficiency or redundancy, according as it is this or that account, which, on the occasion of the comparison, is taken for the standard.

On the occasion in question, such is the importance of the occurrence, that the proper standard of reference and comparison is that which is most ample: that which, if not strictly speaking complete, wants the least of being so. On the part of the historian, speaking in his own person, omission is in such a case without excuse.

Not so, necessarily, in the case of a person whom the historian speaks of as giving that person's own account of that same occurrence. What may be is, that in the nature of the occasion in which the person is represented as speaking of it, there is so much of suddenness, by reason of impending danger, or urgent pressure, that, of the quantity of time necessary for complete utterance, and even of that necessary for complete and correct recollection, more or less was wanting.

On the occasion of that account of the matter, which is the first of the two on which the historian represents Paul as giving an account of this momentous occurrence,—this justification for want of completeness, or this excuse for want of correctness, might naturally enough have place. For it was while pleading for his life at Jerusalem, before a mixed multitude, no inconsiderable part of which were endeavouring at the destruction of it, that Paul

is represented as delivering this first of his two accounts:—call that *the supposed unstudied or unpremeditated account*.

Not so, on the occasion on which he is represented as delivering the second of these same two accounts. On this occasion, it is true, he is represented as pleading in his defence. But it is pleading in and before a regularly constituted judiciary, and after time for preparation in much greater abundance than he could have wished:—call this *the supposed studied or premeditated account*.

In this view, the proper standard of comparison can not be dubious. The historian being himself, in all three accounts, the immediately reporting witness, and having had his own time for the forming of them all,—that which he gives in his own person, and which therefore naturally occupies the first place, should, in respect of both qualities, as well as in that of clearness, have been, (and, setting aside deceptious design, naturally would have been), as perfect as it was in his power to make it. To the others alone could any excuse be afforded, in respect of any one of those requisites, by any circumstance peculiar to the respective cases.

What is above being observed—Of the ten following instances of disconformity, seven will be found to be cases of simple deficiency, three of contradiction.

In those which are cases of simple deficiency, it will be seen to have urgency for its justification or excuse; for the others there appears no justification or excuse.[3] Of the twelve distinguishable heads in question, under two alone, viz. that of *place* and that of *time*, will the conformity be found complete. *Place*, a spot near to Damascus, in the road leading from

Jerusalem to Damascus: *Time*, meaning time of *day*, —about noon. But, in the quality of trustworthiness deficient as all three accounts will presently be shown to be, it will be seen how little is contributed, by conformity as to the mere circumstances of time and place.

Now then let us see the subjects, in relation to which a want of conformity is observable. To save words, the shortest form of description possible will throughout be employed.

Omissions

1. The light seen.
2. The dialogue.
3. Falling to the ground.
4. Language of the voice.
5. Kicking against the pricks.

Contradictions

6. The Lord's commands.
7. Paul's companions' posture.
8. Paul's companions' hearing or not hearing.
9. If hearing, what they heard.
10. Nothing seen but light.

1. *Light seen.* Between Acts account and Paul's 1st or supposed unstudied account, no disconformity worth remarking. In Acts it is a "*light*," in Paul 1st a "*great light*";[4] in both it is about midday. But in Paul's 2d or supposed studied account, it is above the brightness of the sun at that time of the day.

In Acts the passage is simply narrative: in Paul's 1st, the urgency of the occasion left no room for flowers. But in Paul's 2d, time being abundant, flowers were to be collected, and this is one of them. In the

ordinary course of nature there exists not upon earth any light equal in brightness to that of the sun; especially the sun at midday, and in such a latitude. Supposing the light in question ever so much greater than the midday sun, neither Paul nor this his historian could, without a miracle on purpose, have had any means of knowing as much. For a miracle for such a purpose, the existence of any effectual demand does not seem probable. For the purpose mentioned,—namely the bereaving of the power of vision every open eye that should direct itself towards it,—to wit, so long as that same direction should continue,—the ordinary light of the sun would have been quite sufficient. At the time and place in question, whatever they may have been, suppose it true that, though midday was the time, the atmosphere was cloudy, and in such sort cloudy, that without something done for the purpose, a light productive of such effects could not have been produced. Still, for this purpose, a specially created body of light different from that of the sun, and exceeding it in intensity, could not be needful. The removal of a single cloud would have been amply sufficient:—a single cloud, and that a very small one.

But if the light was really a light created for the purpose, and brighter than that of the sun; of circumstances so important, mention should not have been omitted in the standard narrative.

Here then is either a deficiency in the standard narrative,—and this deficiency, as already observed, an inexcusable one,—or a redundancy in the subsequent account: a redundancy, the cause of which seems sufficiently obvious: a redundancy—in that account which, being premeditated on the part of the historian, is given by him as being

premeditated on the part of the speaker, whom he represents as delivering it: a redundancy,—and that in a word a falsehood: a falsehood, and for what purpose?—for deception: the hero represented by his historian as using endeavours to deceive.

2. *Dialogue.* Per Acts, the Dialogue contained five speeches: to wit, 1. The voice's speech; 2. Paul's; 3. The Lord's, whose voice, Paul and his historiographer[5], from what experience is not said, knew the voice to be; 4. Paul's; 5. The Lord's. In Paul 1st, speeches the same in number, order, and, save in one phrase about kicking against the pricks, nearly so in terms. But in Paul 2d, the number of the speeches is no more than three: and, as will be seen below, of the last the import is widely different from that of any of those reported in the other two accounts.

3. *Falling to the ground.* Per Acts and Paul 1st, by Paul alone was this prostration experienced. Per Paul 2d, by his unnumbered companions, by the whole company of them, as well as by himself. Deficiency here on the part of the proper standard; so, in the case of the unstudied speech. In the studied speech it is supplied.

4. *Language of the voice.* Per Acts and Paul 1st, of the language nothing is said. Deficiency, as in the case last mentioned; to wit, in the regular history, and in the unstudied speech. In the studied speech it is supplied. Stage effect greater. Agrippa, to whom it was more particularly addressed, being, under the Roman viceroy, a sort of king of the Jews,—what seems to have occurred to the historian is—that it might be a sort of gratification to him to be informed, that his own language, the Hebrew, was the language which, on this occasion, was employed

by that voice, which by Paul, by whom it had never been heard before, was immediately understood to be the Lord's; *i.e.* Jesus's; *i.e.* God's. The character, in which Paul was on this occasion brought by his historiographer on the stage, being that of a consummate orator, furnished with all his graces,—this compliment was among the rest put into his mouth. Moreover, by Jesus no language, for aught that appears, but the Hebrew, having been ever spoken, hence the account became the more consistent or credible.

5. *Kicking against the pricks.*[6] "Hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Per Acts, this proverbial expression is employed by the voice, as soon as it turns out to have been the Lord's. In the supposed and hasty unstudied speech, it is dropped. This is natural enough. In Paul 2d—in that studied speech, it is employed: it stands there among the flowers.

6. *The Lord's Commands.* Commands delivered to Paul by the Lord. Under this head there is a disastrous difference; a sad contradiction. Per Acts, the command is for Paul to go into Damascus: there it stops. Follows immediately an article of information, which is, that at that time and place there is no information for him; but that, sooner or later, some will be ready for him. After he has arrived at Damascus, it shall there, by somebody or other, be told him, it is said, what he is to do. So likewise in Paul 1st, in the unstudied speech, he is, in like manner, to learn not merely what he is to do, but everything that he is to do. Lastly comes, Paul 2d, the studied speech. By the time the historian had arrived at this point in his history, he had forgotten that, according to his own account of the matter, no information at all had, during the road scene, been

given to Paul by the Lord's voice; by that voice which was so well known to be the Lord's. That the supposed studied speech, by the charms of which the favour of the King was so happily gained, might be the more impressive,—he makes his orator, in direct contradiction to the account which, on the former occasion, had by him (the historian) been given, enter, on the very spot, into all the details of the Lord's commands.

When the time had come for composing this supposed studied speech,—the historian had, it should seem, forgot Ananias's vision, that subsidiary vision, which we shall come to presently, containing a further promise of the Lord's commands and instructions; and which, after all, unless it is by this studied speech that they are to be regarded as given, are not given by him anywhere.

7. *Paul's companions—their posture.* Per Acts, though he fell, they stood it out. Per Paul 1st, not said whether they fell or stood it out. Per Paul 2d, they fell. The supposed studied oratorical account is here in full contradiction with the historical one.

8. *Paul's companions—their hearing or not hearing.* Per Acts, they not only saw the light, but heard the voice. Per Paul 1st, they did NOT hear the voice. In the supposed hasty and unstudied speech is the oratorical account made to contradict the historical one. In this particular, which of the accounts was true? If the historical, the haste must, in the oratorical, be the apology, not only for the incompleteness but for the incorrectness. In Paul 2d, nothing is said about their hearing or not hearing.

Supposing the story in any of the accounts to have had any truth in it, there was a middle case, fully as

possible and natural as either of these extreme and mutually contradictory ones. It may have been, that while some stood their ground, others fell. And the greater the numbers, the greater the probability of this middle case. But as to their number, all is darkness.

9. *Paul's companions—if they heard, what it was they heard.* If they heard anything, they heard, as far as appears, whatever Paul himself heard. Per Acts, it is after the order given to Paul to go on to Damascus,—with the promise thereupon, that there and then, and not before, he should receive the information he should receive; it is after the statement made of his hearing all this from the voice, that the further statement comes, declaring that it was by Paul's companions also that this same voice was heard. But this same voice was, it is said, the Lord's voice. That when the voice had answered to the name by which Paul called it, to wit, the name of Lord, it stopt there, so far as concerned Paul's companions;—and that it reserved what followed, to wit, the above-mentioned order with the promise, for Paul's single ear; true it is, this may be *imagined* as well as anything else: but at any rate it is not *said*.

If Paul 2d—the studied oratorical account—is to be believed, all the information for the communication of which this miracle was performed was, as will be seen, communicated here upon the road: viz. immediately after the voice had been called by him *Lord*. But, if this was the case, and, as above, Paul's companions heard all that he heard,—then so it is, that the revelation was made as well to them as to him;—this revelation, upon the strength of which we shall see him setting himself up above all the Apostles; himself and that Gospel of his own, which

he says was his own, and none of theirs. Now then—these companions—was it upon the same errand as his that they went, to wit, the bringing in bonds to Jerusalem all the Damascus Christians? If so, or if on any other account they were any of them in a condition to need conversion,—they were converted as well as he; or else, so far as concerned them, the miracle was thrown away. Companions as they were of his, were they or were they not respectively attendants of his? attendants going under his orders, and on the same errand? Unless, by the Jerusalem rulers, on the part of the Damascus rulers, both will and power were depended upon, as adequate to the task of apprehending the followers of Jesus and sending them bound to Jerusalem, such these companions ought to have been, every one of them—supposing always on the part of this about-to-be Apostle an ordinary prudence: that sort and degree of prudence with which no ordinary police-officer is unprovided. Some persons under his orders he must have had, or he could never have been sent on so extensively and strongly coercive an errand.

These companions, if, on this occasion, any such or any other companions he had, had each of them a name. To this vision, such as it was, they being each of them respectively, as well as himself, whether in the way of sight and hearing both, or in the way of sight alone, percipient witnesses, their names, in the character of so many percipient witnesses, ready upon every proper occasion to answer in the character of *reporting* witnesses, would have been of no small use: of use, were it only for the giving to this story a little more substance than it has in the form we see it in.

As to Ananias—the supposed principal actor in the

scene next to Paul—for him, indeed, supposing any such person to have existed, a name, it is seen, was found. But, with a view to any purpose of evidence, how little that name amounted to, will be seen likewise.

In this vision of Paul's, as it is called,—was any person seen, or anything but light—light at midday? No; positively not any person, nor as far as appears, the light excepted, anything whatsoever. Per Acts, chap. ix:8, when "his eyes were opened,"—so it is expressly said,—"he saw no man." This was after he had fallen to the earth; for it was after he arose from the earth. But, it was before he fell to the earth, and thereupon heard the voice, that, according to this same account, he saw the extra light—the light created for the purpose: and, forasmuch as at the conclusion of the dialogue with the five speeches in it—forasmuch as at the conclusion of it, such was the effect produced upon him by the light, as to render him at that time stone-blind, requiring to be led by the hand, it could not from the first have been anything less effective. Per Acts, in this state he continues all the way as far as Damascus, and for three days after his arrival there. So likewise in the supposed unstudied speech, Paul 1st. But in the studied speech, Paul 2d, there is no blindness; the blindness is either forgotten or discarded.

But the curious circumstance is, his being led by the hand—all the way to Damascus led by the hand:—led by the hand by these same companions. Now these same companions, how was it that they were able to lead him by the hand? All that he saw was the light, and by that light he was blinded. But all that he saw they saw: this same light they saw as well as he. This same light, then, by which he was

blinded—were they not blinded likewise by it? Was it a privilege—a privilege reserved for a chosen favourite—a privilege which it cost a miracle to produce—the being blinded when nobody else was blinded?

Blinded then as they were, how came he to be led by them, any more than they by him? Can the blind lead the blind? Let Jesus answer. Shall they not both fall into the ditch?

Oh! but (says somebody) it is only in Paul 1st,—in Paul's supposed unstudied speech, that the historian makes them see the light that Paul saw. Answer. True: but neither in his own person does he say the contrary. As to their seeing, all he says is, that *they* saw no man, "hearing a voice but seeing no man." (ver. 7.) But by the same account, (ver. 8.) "When *his* eyes were opened, he saw no man;" so that, though in what he says in his own person the historian does not mention this which he mentions, speaking in Paul's person,—yet he does not contradict it.

10. *Paul's companions. What part, if any, took they in the conversation?* Per Acts, they stood speechless: and it is after the dialogue has been reported, that this is stated. In the unstudied speech, nothing is said about their speech. In the studied speech, with reference to them, no mention is made of speech; any more than of sight or hearing.

But, forasmuch as, according to Acts, whatever Paul saw and heard, they saw and heard likewise; how happened it, that by no one of them, so much as a word, on an occasion so interesting to all, was said—or a question put? To be sure it was to Paul alone, that by the voice, whosever it was, any address was made. It was his concern:—his alone, and none of theirs.

So, indeed, some might think; but, others in their situation, quite as naturally might think otherwise. Sooner or later, at any rate, they would recover whatever it was they lost: sight, if sight; speech, if speech. Whenever recovered, speech would thereupon range with but the greater freedom, for the restraint which, for a time, had been put upon it: —range over the whole business, including whatever secrets Paul had been put in possession of:—the commission, the sweeping and incarcerating commission he had been intrusted with by the rulers, and the unperformed promise that had been made to him by the voice, which being at midday, accompanied by an extraordinary light, was of course the Lord's voice. These things would naturally, by these his companions, have been converted from secrets into town-talk.

Nay but (says somebody) though it *is* said he saw no *man*, it is *not* said, he saw not the Lord: and elsewhere he may be seen saying—saying in the most positive terms, that he did see the Lord[7]. And if he did see the Lord anywhere, why not here as well as anywhere else?

"*Saw no man.*" Yes: so says the English version. But the original is more comprehensive:—Saw no person, says the original: that is, to speak literally, saw no one of the masculine gender. No one what? No one person of this gender: this is what the word means, if it means anything. No person; and therefore no Lord: no God; if so it be that, when applied to denote God, the word person means God, or as some say, a part of God.

Note, likewise,—that, when the companions are spoken of,—both in the translation and in the original, the object to which the negative is applied

is expressed by the same word as when he, Paul, is spoken of.

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SECTION 3.

Vision II.—Ananias's.

Topic 1.—*Ananias's Description.*

Of the vision itself there being but one account, by this singleness discordancy is saved.

But, of the description belonging to Ananias there are two accounts. One the historical, as before: the other, the unpremeditated oratorical account supposed to be given by Paul in the first of his two supposed speeches, as above; and, room being thus given for discordancy,—discordancy, as of course, enters—or at any rate a strong suspicion of it.

Per Acts, Ananias is a disciple: a disciple, to wit, a Christian; a disciple immediately of Jesus or his Apostles: for, such is the signification attached to the word *disciple* in the Acts: such he would on this occasion be of course understood to be; for, otherwise the word would be uncharacteristic and insignificant.

Materially different is the description supposed to have been given of this same Ananias by Paul in that same supposed unpremeditated speech; so different as to be not without effort, if by any effort, reconcilable with it.

He is now a disciple of Jesus and the Apostles; of that Jesus, by whom the law, *i.e.* the Mosaic law, was after such repeated exposure of its inaptitude,

pronounced obsolete. He is now not only spoken of as being, notwithstanding this conversion, a devout man according to that same law; but, moreover, as having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, to wit, at Damascus. Of the Jews? Yes; of "*all*" the Jews.

If, notwithstanding his conversion to a religion by which that of the Jews was slighted and declared to be superseded, he was still so happy as to be the subject of this good *report*, which is as much as to say —of a correspondently unanimous good opinion; this, it would seem, would have been the man to preach to them that religion: especially if that part of the story were true, according to which he was distinguished by the same supernatural sort of communication; this man, who was already a Christian, this man, and not Paul, who of all opposers of Christianity had been the most fierce and the most mischievous, would naturally have been the man to receive the supernatural commission. Supposing his vision real, and the reports of it true, no difficulty, rationally speaking, could he have found in obtaining credence for it at the hands of the Apostles: those Apostles, at whose hands, from first to last it will be seen, never was it the lot of Paul, with *his* vision or visions, to obtain credence.

The audience, before which this speech was supposed to be delivered, of whom was it composed? With the exception of a few Romans, to whom it was probably unintelligible unless by accident, altogether of Jews; and these—no one can say in what proportion, probably in by much the largest, Jews not christianized. Hence then the sort of character, which the occasion and the purpose required should be given, to this supposed miraculously formed

acquaintance of the person who, upon the strength of this acquaintance, was to be numbered among the Apostles.

Topic 2.—*Mode of Conversation.*

By this vision is produced a dialogue. Interlocutors, the Lord and Ananias. In the course of the dialogue, speeches five: whereof, by the Lord, three; the other two by Ananias.

In and by the first pair of speeches the Lord calls the man by his name: the man answers, Behold, says he, I am here, Lord. In the English translation, to atone for the too great conciseness of the Greek original, the words "*am here*" are not improperly interpolated. Giving to this supposed supernatural intercourse what seemed to him a natural cast—a cast suited to the occasion—seems to have been the object of the historian in the composition of this dialogue. But, upon so supernatural a body, a natural colouring, at any rate a colouring such as this, does not seem to fit quite so completely as might have been wished. On the road, when the voice,—which turned out to be that of the Lord, that is, being interpreted, Jesus's,—addressed itself to Paul, this being the first intercourse, there was a necessity for its declaring itself, for its declaring whose it was; and the declaration was made accordingly. Here, on the other hand, no sooner does Ananias hear himself called by his name, than he knows who the person is by whom he is thus addressed. Taken as it stands, an answer thus prompt includes the supposition of an already established intercourse. Such intercourse supposed—in what way on former occasions had it been carried on? Laying such former occasion out of the question—in what way is it supposed to be

carried on on the occasion here in question? On the occasion of his visit to Paul,—the Lord, to whomsoever he may have been audible, had never, from first to last, as we have seen, been visible. On the occasion of this visit of his to Ananias—was the Lord audible only, or visible only, or both audible and visible? If both audible and visible, or even if only visible,—the mode of revelation was more favourable to this secondary and virtually unknown personage, than to the principal one.

Between mortal and mortal, when it is the desire of one man to have personal communication with another whom he supposes to be within hearing, but who is either not in his sight or not looking towards him,—he calls to him by his name; and in token of his having heard, the other answers. From man to man, such information is really necessary; for—that the requisite attention has place where it is his desire that it should have place, the human interlocutor has no other means of knowing. Not considering, that the person to whom the information is supposed to be conveyed is a sort of person to whom no such information could be necessary, the historian represents his Ananias as giving to the Lord, as if to a mere mortal, information of his presence. Behold, Lord! I am here.

Topic 3.—*Lord's Commands and Information: Want of particularization a disprobative Circumstance.*

The conversation being thus begun, the interlocutors proceed to business. In speech the 3d, Lord delivers to Ananias, the devout Jew, a command, and thereupon a piece of information. The command is—to repair to a place therein described, and find out Paul: the information is—that at the time then

present Paul is praying; and that, at an anterior point of time not designated, he had seen a vision.

In the command, the designation of the place wears, upon the face of it, the appearance of that sort and degree of particularity, the exaction of which is, in these days, in which genuine visions are never exemplified, matter of course, on every occasion on which it is the real intention, of those on whom it depends, that through the medium of personal testimony the truth should be extracted. On every such occasion, the object in question, whether it be an event or a quiescent state of things, is endeavoured to be individualized: and, for the production of this effect, the individual portion of space, and the individual portion of time, are endeavoured to be brought to view together.

On the occasion here in question, towards the individualization of the portion of space some approach is made: the town being foreknown, to wit, Damascus, the *street* is particularized; it is the street called *Straight*: as in Westminster we have *Long-ditch*, and in London *Crooked-lane*. Moreover, the *house* is particularized; it is the house of Judas. To this Judas had any one of those marks of distinction been added, which in that age and nation we find to have been common,—as in the instance of the too notorious Judas the Iscariot, *i.e.*, the inhabitant of Iscara, and in that of Judas Barsabas, *i.e.*, the son of Sabas, or, as we should say, Sabasson, not long after mentioned, Acts 25:22,—it would have been something. But, destitute of such limitative adjunct, *Judas* of itself was nothing. In that age and country, even without reckoning notorious traitors, there was never any want of Judases. Not inferior in plenty were Ananiases: in the Acts we have three of them;—

this private inhabitant of Damascus: the High Priest, whose seat was at Jerusalem; and the husband of Sapphira: and in Josephus they vie in abundance with the Johns and Jesuses.

But, on the occasion in question, and to the purpose in question, though a distinctive adjunct as above would have done something, it would have done very little. In the field of time,—seven-and-twenty years at least, and we know not how much more, according to the received chronology, was the distance between the event in question, and the report given of it in this history. Neither in Damascus nor yet in Jerusalem was any such thing as a newspaper,—not even an enslaved newspaper, in existence; no, nor yet so much as a printing-press,—not even an enslaved printing-press. For writing, the materials were expensive; and handwriting was the only mode of copying. Publication was not, as under the printing-press, promiscuous: unless by accident, for an indefinite length of time, into no other hand did any copy find its way, other than those of the author's confidential friends, or friends separated from the author by a greater or less number of removes, as it might happen; but all of them linked to one another by the bonds of amity, and unity of principle and practice.

In such a capital as Damascus, Straight Street might have been as long as Oxford Street; and, unless the style of building in those earlier days had much more of convenience and luxury in it than in these latter days, was much more crowded. Conceive a man at this time of day, going to Oxford Street with the intention of finding the house, in which, thirty years ago, a man of the name of Brown or Smith had his residence,—to wit, on some indeterminate day, of

the number of those included within the space of an indeterminate number of years; and this, for the purpose of ascertaining whether, on this indeterminate day, and by this Smith or this Brown, a vision, not seen by anybody else, had been seen. Suppose a man in Rome set out on such an errand—and then say what would be the probable result of it.

Topic 4.—*Vision reported to Ananias by the Lord as having been seen by Paul.*

Of the report then given of this anterior vision, the character is too remarkable to be given, as it were, in a parenthesis: it is therefore referred to a separate head. Acts ix. 12. "And Paul hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight."

Topic 5.—*Ananias's Objection to the Lord's Commands to visit Paul—He informs the Lord what he had heard about Paul.*

By the two first speeches of this dialogue, we are given to understand that Ananias had already held intercourse with the Lord; an intercourse which, the nature of the two parties considered, could not have been other than a supernatural intercourse: yes, and on this very subject: for, if not on this particular subject, the subject of it, whatever it was, could not but have called for notice and communication. But, no sooner does this next speech commence, than we are given to understand that there had not—could not have been any such intercourse: for if there had been, what follows would have been rendered useless and needless. Upon receiving the command, Ananias's first thought is—to endeavour to excuse himself from paying obedience to it; for in this

endeavour it is, that he gives the Lord a piece of information; to wit—of what, in relation to Paul's character, he (Ananias) had heard. Acts ix. 13: "Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem. And here he hath authority from the Chief Priests to bind all that call on thy name." Thus then, commands known to have been the Lord's, having that instant been received,—the man by whom they have been received—so small is the confidence, reposed in the Lord by this his favoured disciple—instead of paying obedience to them, answers them by an objection. This objection, prepared for it or not prepared for it, the Lord, as might well be expected, immediately overrules.

A question that here presents itself is—Since it was from *many*, i.e. *many men*, that Ananias had heard, not only what everybody had been hearing for weeks, or months, or years,—viz. of the evil that Paul had been doing to the Jerusalem saints, but of the authority that he had so lately received, to bind at Damascus all the Damascus saints he could find—since it was from so many, who then were these many? How was it, that in the compass of the three days (ver. 9), during which Paul had remained without sight or nourishment, a commission,—to the execution of which secrecy was so obviously necessary,—had to such a degree transpired? Suppose the secret to have thus transpired,—two results would, in any natural and credible state of things, have been among the consequences. The persons thus devoted to destruction would have made their escape; the commission by which alone the supposed proceedings against them could have found a justification or a cause, not having been delivered. On the other hand, hearing that Paul was

there, and that he either was, or pretended to be, in the house in question, or in some other, in the extraordinary condition above described,—the persons spoken of in the Acts under the name of *the Synagogue*, would not have left him there, but would have convened him before them, and, if he really had any such commission, have caused it to be produced, and read it: convened before them, not only Paul with his supposed commission, but those companions of his that we have already heard of, if any such he had[8].

But of these there will be occasion to speak in another place.

Topic 6.—*The Lord's Answer, obviating the objection, and giving intimation of his designs in favour of Paul.*

This objection, no sooner has the Lord overruled it, than he undertakes to answer it, and to explain to this his so singularly favoured old disciple the intentions he had formed in favour of his intended new convert, whose conversion is, however, as yet but in progress (ver. 14): "But the Lord said to him, Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel:—For (continues the Lord) I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Being, and therefore at the time of Paul's vision purposing to be, in relation to his designs for Paul, thus communicative to this same Ananias, who is a perfect stranger to this same Paul, —to what purpose, on the occasion of his supposed visionary intercourse with Paul, should *the Lord* have stopped short; reserving the communication, for the intention of giving it him at second-hand by the

mouth of that same stranger? This is one of the swarms of questions which an account of this sort could scarcely fail to present to any inquiring mind.

Meantime, as to the Lord's having thus stopped short, this we shall see is in full contradiction with the account which the historian makes him give in his supposed second reported speech, to wit, the supposed premeditated one, spoken before Agrippa, who, under the proconsul Festus, was king of the Jews, and who, on that occasion, is spoken of as being assessor to the said proconsul Festus. On that occasion the Lord is represented as explaining himself more fully to Paul himself, than here, for the benefit of Paul, through Ananias.

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SECTION 4.

ANANIAS: HIS VISIT TO PAUL AT DAMASCUS.

We now come to the visit, which, we are to understand, was, in reality, paid to Paul by Ananias, in consequence of this vision, in obedience to the command imagined to be given in it.

Note that, though, in the original—in *the including vision*, as it may be called—the command is given to inquire in the house in question for the person (Saul) in question,—this is *all* the command which, in that least visionary of the two visions, is delivered. In the first instance to make the inquiry, and in conclusion to go his way—this is all to which the commands given to him in the direct way extend themselves. To accomplish the object of this intercourse—to do anything towards it beyond the making of this inquiry—he has to take hints and to draw inferences:

—inferences from the Lord's speech, which is thus continued, Acts ix. 12: "And (Paul) *hath seen in a vision* a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight." From having been told what—in a vision, to wit, this *contained or included vision*—this same Paul had been *fancying* he *had* seen him (Ananias) do—from this he was to conclude that it was the Lord's will that he (Ananias) *should* do *in reality* that which Paul had been fancying him to have done; though the only effect, for the doing of which it had so been fancied to have been performed, had never been produced. This was what he was to conclude was the Lord's will; although the Lord himself, who (if any person) should have known how to speak plainly and beyond danger of misconception, had forborne to tell him as much.

On the occasion of this important visit—this visit of Ananias to Paul,—the double light—the light cast by the first of the two oratorical accounts—to wit, the supposed unpremeditated one, upon the historical one—recommences.

Follows now—and from both sources—the account of the interview, and of the cure performed in the course of it.

ACTS' ACCOUNT.—Ch. ix. ver. 17-22.

> And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said: Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that *appeared* unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, *and be filled with the Holy Ghost*.—And immediately there fell from his

eyes as it had been *scales*: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and *was baptized*.—And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul *certain days* with the disciples which were *at Damascus*.—And straightway he *preached* Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.—But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said: Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the Chief Priests?—But Saul *increased the more* in strength, and *confounded the Jews* which dwelt at *Damascus*, proving that this is very Christ.

PAUL'S ACCOUNT.—Acts, Ch. xxii. ver. 12-16.

12. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*,—Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me: Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.—And he said: The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and *see* that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.—For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast *seen* and heard.—And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and *be baptized*, and wash away thy sins; calling on the name of the Lord.

Topic 1.—*On visiting Paul, Ananias's Introductory Speech—Preliminary Recital.*

I. In the historical account, the speech has in it several distinguishable parts.

I. "Brother Saul."

First comes the address, in which Saul, the future Paul, is addressed by disciple Ananias by the name of *brother*. If, as between Jew and Jew, this was a common form of salutation,—so far everything is in order. But, if it was only in consideration of his having been denominated a disciple, to wit, of Jesus, —the salutation is rather premature: the conversion, supposing it effected, is, at any rate, not yet declared. Not only in the historical account is this appellation employed, but likewise in the oratorical one.

The attention of Paul being thus bespoken by his visitor, mention is thereupon made of the purpose of the visit.

I. In the first place comes a recital. "The Lord (says he), even Jesus, that *appeared* unto thee on the way as thou camest, hath sent me".... Unfortunately, according to the historian himself, this assertion, as we have seen already, is not true. In no manner or shape did the Lord Jesus, or any other person, make his appearance;—all that *did* appear was the light—the light at midday: so he has just been writing, and before the ink, if ink it was that he used, was dry, already had he forgotten it.

This, however, is but a collateral averment:—a recital, an episode, matter of *inducement*, as an English lawyer would phrase it.

Topic 2.—*Declared Purposes or Objects of the Visit.*

Purpose the first. "That thou mightest," says Ananias, "receive thy sight." Thus says Ananias in the

historical account: in the supposed oratorical one he is more concise. No supposed past occurrence referred to:—no purpose declared. "Receive thy sight" are the words.

Purpose the second. That thou mightest "be filled with the Holy Ghost," says the historical account. But in a succeeding passage what is the purpose, which, in the supposed oratorical account Ananias is made to speak of, in the design that it should be taken for the purpose which the Lord by his commandment meant to be accomplished? Not the being filled by the Holy Ghost; only the being baptized. "And now, why tarriest thou? (Acts xxii. ver. 16) Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Well but (says somebody) receiving the Holy Ghost, and being baptized,—by these two expressions, is not one, and no more than one effect—one and the same effect—to be understood? No, in truth, if the historian himself is to be believed. Turn to another chapter—the very next chapter before this, Acts 12 to 17, and there you will see, that the being baptized was one thing, the receiving the Holy Ghost another thing, and much more. For administering the ceremony of baptism, a single Apostle, Philip, was sufficient: whereas, for the causing the Holy Ghost to be received, nothing less was requisite than the cooperation of two Apostles, and those two commissioned by the rest.

So serious always, according to this historian, was the difference, that it was after he had been already baptized, and baptized gratis in a crowd, that for the power of conferring this benefit, whatever it was that it was composed of, Sorcerer Simon made to the two Apostles, those offers—those pecuniary offers—which are said to have been no sooner made than

rejected. Acts 13 to 24.

Topic 3.—*Actual Effects of the Visit, and the Application in consequence made in the course of it.* Effect 1. *Scales fall from Eyes, and Sight is received in consequence.*

In the historical narrative, the effect is as complete as it is remarkable. Fall from his eyes a portion of matter of the nature or resemblance of scales: whereupon he receives sight forthwith.

In the supposed oratorical account, whatsoever had been meant by scales, nothing is said of them. Neither is the declaration made of the completeness of the case quite so explicit. One look he gave—gave to his wonder-working surgeon—and instead of its being given forthwith—to give this one look required, it should seem, if not a whole hour, at any rate so little less, that any time less than an hour could not—such, in this supposed unpremeditated speech, was the anxiety felt for correctness—could not be ventured to be particularized.

The more closely these scales, or things resembling scales, are looked at, the more difficult will it be to find them amount to anything. In no cure, performed upon eyes in any natural way, in these our days—upon eyes that have lost their sight—do any scales fall off, or anything in any degree resembling scales; —in no disorder of the eyes, known to have place in these our days, do scales, or anything like scales, come over the eyes. By the taking of matter from the eyes, sight, it is true, is every now and then restored: but this matter is not matter, foreign in relation to the eye and exterior to it; but one of the component parts called *humours* of the eye, which, by losing its transparency having suspended the faculty of vision, is let out by a lancet; whereupon not only is the

faculty of sight restored, but the part which had been extirpated restored likewise; and without any expense in the article of miracles.

On the supposition of falsity,—quere the use of this circumstance? *Answer*. To afford support to the conception, that memory and not imagination was the source from which the story was derived. True it is, that, instead of support, a circumstance exposed to contradiction would be an instrument of weakness: if, for example, on the supposition that Paul had no companions on the road, names indicative of really existing and well-known persons had been added, to the intimation given in the *Acts*, of the existence of such companions. But to no such hazard was the story of the scales exposed: not to any great danger, on the supposition of the existence of Paul's Ananias: not to any danger at all, upon the supposition of his non-existence.

But, upon this occasion, now again once more present themselves—present themselves to the mind's eye—Paul's companions. That they were blinded at all can scarcely, it has been seen, be believed, if on this matter the historian himself is believed. For, per Acts ix. 8, "they led him by the hand:" so, per Paul 1st, Acts xxii. 11, "When I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those that were with me, I came unto Damascus." But if, notwithstanding so it was that *they* too were blinded,—how was it with *their* eyes? Had *their* eyes scales upon them? did these scales ever fall off?—if so, by what means were they made to fall off? *their* evidence would have been not much, if anything, less impressive,—and it would have been much less open to suspicion,—than Paul's evidence, supposing him to have spoken of these scales—which

the historian, to whom, if he is to be believed, their existence is so well known, did not take upon him to represent Paul as saying that he did. But if so it was, that, though rendered blind as Paul's, no scales were superinduced upon, nor consequently made to fall off, the eyes of those nameless and unknown persons, —how came they to be superinduced upon and made to fall off from the eyes of their singularly favoured principal? If, for a length of time more or less considerable, they really were made blind,—it was, if the historian is to be believed, by the same cause by which, in the instance of Paul's eyes, this same effect was produced:—the same cause, to wit an extraordinary light at noonday. If, whatsoever was the matter with them, the eyes of these ordinary persons could be set to rights without a miracle, what need could there be of a miracle for the producing the same desirable effect in the person of this their leader or master, extraordinary as this same leader or master was?

Topic 4.—*Baptism—was it performed? when, where, by whom, &c.?*

The baptism thus spoken of—was it performed? Yes: if you will believe the historian, speaking in his own person, speaking in his own historical ac- count: "And forthwith," in the first place, "Paul recovered his sight;"—then, when, his sight having been recovered, he was able to go about as usual,—he arose and was baptized: baptized—that is say, as from this expression taken by itself any one would conclude—baptized, as soon as he arose, to wit, as soon as water could be found for the purpose: that water, which his guest Ananias, foreknowing what was to come to pass, and what was to be done to

make it come to pass, might naturally be expected to have provided, and this without any supernatural foresight: in a word, without the expense of any additional miracle in any shape:—the water being thus ready upon the spot, and he in equal readiness to administer it.

This, according to the historian, speaking in his own person: but, when the time comes for giving an account of the matter in the person of Paul himself, —to wit in the supposed unpremeditated oratorical speech,—then, for whatever it was that stopped him, (whether the supposed urgency of the occasion on which the supposed speech was supposed to be made, or any thing and what else,) so it is, that he gives not any such information: he leaves the matter to hang in doubt:—a doubt, which, down to the present day remains unsolved.

A command to this effect is spoken of as having been given: thus much is said. But, what is not said is—whether to this same command any or what obedience was paid.

Thus it is that, instead of an *effect* which it seems desired that we should consider as being produced, what we see directly stated as being produced, is nothing more than a *command*—a command, by which, as by its cause, we are to suppose the effect to have been produced. What is more, in the same blind way, is intimation given us, of another and very different effect—*the washing away of sins*—as if produced by the first-mentioned physical operation; —namely, by that of a man's being dipped in, or sprinkled with, water: and thus it is, that from a mere physical operation of the most trivial nature, we are called upon to infer a spiritual and supernatural effect of the most awful importance; the

spiritual effect stated as if it were produced by the physical operation, to which it has no perceptible real relation—nothing but the mere verbal one thus given to it; produced by it, and following it, as of course—just as if sins were a species of dirt, which, by washing, could as surely be got off as any other dirt.[9]

And was he then really baptized? If so he was, then also if, speaking in the person of his hero, the historian is to be believed,—then also, by this ceremony, the name of the Lord being at the same time called upon,—then also were his sins washed away; his sins washed away; the sinner, therefore and thereby, put into the same case as if the sins had not any of them been ever committed. How can it be understood otherwise? for if, in and by this passage, intimation—sufficiently perfect information—is given, that the ceremony was performed—then also is sufficiently perfect information given, that such was the effect actually produced by it. "Arise" (Ananias is made to say)—"*Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*"

This is no light matter: if so it really were, that according to the religion of Jesus, by such a cause, such an effect was on that occasion produced;—that such effect could, in a word, on any occasion, in any case be produced,—that *murders*, or (not to embarrass the question with conceits of local jurisprudence) *killings* of men—killings of men by persecution carried on, on a religious account—slaughters of Christians by non-Christians—could thus, as in Paul's case, be divested of all guilt, at any rate of all punishment, at the hands of Almighty Justice;—if impunity could indeed be thus conferred by the sprinkling a man with water or dipping him in

it, then would it be matter of serious consideration—not only what is the *verity* of that religion, but what the *usefulness* of it, what the usefulness—with reference to the present life at any rate, not to speak of a life to come: what the usefulness of it; and on what ground stands its claim to support by all the powers of factitious punishment and factitious reward, at the hands of the temporal magistrate.[10]

Topic 5.—*Performance of the Promise, supposed to have been made by the Lord, in favour of Paul, to Ananias.*

If the supposed promise is inadequate to the occasion, the supposed performance is still more inadequate with reference to the promise.

In the supposed promise are two distinguishable parts, and in neither of them is the one thing needful to be found. Of these two parts, the only one in which in any direct stage the matter of a promise is contained, is the one last mentioned: it is the promise to show him, (Paul) what sufferings he will have to undergo in the course of the career, whatever it is, in which he is about to engage: to wit, in name and profession, the preaching the religion of Jesus: "for I will show him," says the Lord, according to the historian,—"I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." If so it was, that upon this promise, such as it is, performance never followed, the regret for the failure need not be very great. Whatsoever were the sufferings that he was predestined to undergo, that which was *not* in the nature of this foreshowing, was—the lessening their aggregate amount; that which *was* in the nature of it was—the making an addition to that same afflicting aggregate; to wit, by constant and unavoidable

anticipation of the approach of such sufferings.

Of this talk, vague as it is, about sufferings, the obvious enough object was—the giving exaltation to the idea meant to be conveyed of the merits of the hero:—an object, which, by this and other means, has accordingly, down to the present day, in no small degree been accomplished. So much as to sufferings: as to enjoyments, by any idea entertained of the enjoyments derived by him from the same source, this design would have been—not promoted, but counteracted. But, when the time arrives, whether the mass of suffering was not, to no small amount, overbalanced by that of his enjoyments—meaning always worldly sufferings and worldly enjoyments—the reader will be left to judge.

Here then we have the only promise, which in any direct way is expressed:—a promise which, in the first place would have been useless, in the next place worse than useless.

Topic 6.—*Indirect Promise, that Paul shall spread the Name of Jesus.*

In the whole substance of this promise, if there be anything, which, with reference to the professed end —to wit the giving extension to the religion of Jesus —would have been of use, it is in the foregoing part that it must be looked for. In this part then, if there be any such matter to be found, it will be this: to wit, a promise that he (Paul) shall bear, and therefore that he shall be enabled to bear, the name of the Lord, to wit, the name of Jesus, before the classes of persons specified, to wit, the Gentiles, and kings, and children of Israel: Acts ix. 15. But, only in an indirect way is this solely material part of the promise

expressed: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name," &c. *i.e.* When I chose him, it was my design that he should do so. But, in the case of the Lord, according to the picture drawn of him by this historian, how very inconclusive evidence *intention* is of *execution*, there will, in the course of this work, have been abundant occasion to see.

Bear the name of Jesus? so far, so good. But for this function no such special and supernatural commission was necessary: without any such commission, the name of Jesus had been borne to the people at large, if in this particular the Gospel history is to be believed. Luke ix. 49, 50: "And John answered and said, 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name: and we forbad him, because he followed not with us.' And Jesus said unto him, 'Forbid him not, for he that is not against us, is for us.'" How inadequate soever, with reference to the professed end, to wit, giving extension to the religion of Jesus, the promise was perfectly adequate, and commensurate, to what we shall find to be Paul's real design; to wit, the planting a Gospel of his own, as, and for, and instead of, the Gospel of Jesus. The Gospel of Jesus was the Gospel of Jesus: and the Gospel, which, availing himself of the name of Jesus, it was Paul's design and practice to preach, was, as he himself declares,—as we shall see him declaring in the plainest and most express terms,—a Gospel of his own; a Gospel which was not the Gospel of the Apostles, and which, for fear of its being opposed by them, he kept studiously concealed from those confidential servants and real associates of Jesus, as may be seen in the following passages: Gal. i. 9, 11, and 12; "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed.—But I certify

you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man.—For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. 2:2: "And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles; but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means, I should run, or had run, in vain."

In the course of Paul's dialogue with the voice on the road—that voice which we are given to understand was the Lord's, *i.e.* Jesus's—the promise supposed to be made to Paul, it must be remembered, was—the promise to tell him, when in the city, what he was to do. "What thou must do," says the historian in his historical account:—"all things which are appointed for thee to do," says the historian in the supposed unpremeditated oratorical account, which, in this so often mentioned first of the speeches, he is supposed by the historian to have delivered.

Among all these things,—one thing, which it is manifestly the design of the historian, as it was that of his hero, to make men believe, was accomplished: to wit, the satisfying them what was the religious doctrine, for the dissemination of which the expense of this miracle was incurred. This, moreover, is the promise; which, in the reading of the story everybody looks for: this too is the promise which in the reading of this same story, the believers in the religion of Jesus have very generally been in the habit of considering as performed. Not in and by this history, however, will they have any such satisfaction, when the matter comes to be looked into. For, in respect of this information, desirable as it is,—Paul is, in this strangely supposed intercourse, put off—put off to another time and place: put off,

for no reason given, nor for any substantial reason that can be imagined. Further on, when a show of performing the promise comes to be made, then, instead of accomplishment, we have more evasion. Instead of furnishing the information to Paul himself —to Paul directly—for, when the time and place for performance comes, performance—what the Lord is not supposed so much as to profess to do, what he professes to do is—to make the communication to this man, who, his existence being supposed, was an utter stranger to Paul—namely to this Ananias. Well, and for the conveying the information, in this indirect and inadequate way—for conveying it to and through this same Ananias—what is done?—as we have seen, what amounts to nothing.

When, for affording the information—had any information been intended to be afforded—the time and place are come; when Ananias and Paul have been brought together; what is it that, from the information afforded us by the historian, we are to understand, passed? *Answer*, that, after the scales had fallen from his eyes, Paul was baptized; that he ate meat, and that after he had eaten meat he was strengthened: strengthened, we are warranted to suppose, by the meat which he had so eaten. Moreover, that somehow or other, in this large city he was certain days—number not specified,—with certain disciples—neither names nor number specified,—and preached Christ in the synagogues, saying that he was the son of God.

Thus far then we are got; and, of the supposed revelation, in all this time nothing revealed. Promises, put-offs, evasions—and, after all, no performance.

Among the purposes of this work, is the satisfying

the reader—not only that Paul received not any revelation from the Almighty; but that, even upon his own showing, never did he receive any such revelation: that, on pretence of his having received it from the Almighty by a special revelation, he preached indeed a certain doctrine; but that this doctrine was partly one of his own, contrary to that of Jesus's apostles, and therefore contrary to that of Jesus: and that, in the way of revelation, he never did receive anything; neither that doctrine of his own which he preached, nor anything else.

Topic 7.—*Doctrine, supposed to be preached by Paul at Damascus in the synagogues.*

Straightway, if the historian is to be believed;—straightway after being strengthened by the meat;—and straightway after he had passed the certain days with the disciples;—then did Paul preach Christ in the synagogues—preach that he is the son of God.

Here, had he really preached in any such places—here would have been the time, and the best time, for telling us what, in pursuance of the supposed revelation, he preached. For, whatever it was, if anything, that he ever learnt from his supposed revelation, it was not till he had learnt it, till he made this necessary acquisition, that the time for beginning to preach in the synagogues in question or anywhere else was come. And, no sooner had he received it, than then, when it was fresh in his memory—then was the time for preaching it. But, never having received any such thing as that which he pretended, and which the historian has made so many people believe, he received,—no such thing had he to preach at any time or place.

Whatever of that nature he had had, if he had had at any *time*, Damascus was not the *place*, at any rate at *that time*, for him to preach it, or anything else, in synagogues—in any receptacle so extensively open to the public eye.

Preach, in the name of Jesus—in the name of that Jesus, whose disciples, and with them whose religion, he now went thither with a commission to exterminate,—preach in that name he could not, without proclaiming his own religion—his own perfidy;—his own rebellion, against the authorities, from which, at his own solicitation, the commission so granted to him had been obtained:—his own perfidious contempt—not only of those Jerusalem rulers, but of those Damascus authorities, from whom, for that important and cruel purpose, he was sent to receive instruction and assistance. At some seven-and-twenty years distance in the field of time, and at we know not what distance in the field of space, probably that between Rome and Damascus, it was as easy for the historian to affirm the supposed preaching, as to deny it: but, as to the preaching itself, whether it was within the bounds of moral possibility, let the reader judge.

Topic 8.—*Supposed Amazement of the People of Damascus at this Paul's supposed preaching of Christ in the Synagogues there.*

Had there really been any such preaching, well might have amazement followed it. But there was no such preaching, therefore no such amazement. Had there been real preaching, and real amazement produced by it—what would have been the subject of the amazement! Not so much the audacity of the preacher—for madmen acting singly are to be seen in

but too great frequency: not so much the audacity of the speaker, as the supineness of the constituted authorities; for, madmen acting in bodies in the character of public functionaries have never yet been visible. And if any such assemblage was ever seen, many such would be seen, before any one could be seen, whose madness took the course of sitting still, while an offender against their authority, coming to them single and without support,—neither bringing with him support, nor finding it there,—continued, at a public meeting, preaching against them, and setting their authority at defiance.

Topic 9.—*Matter of the Revelation, which, in and by the supposed unpremeditated Oratorical Account, is supposed to have been made.*

Forgetting what, as we have seen, he had so lately been saying in his own person—in the person of Paul,—he on this occasion, returns to the subject: and more evasive is the result.

On this occasion—this proper occasion—what is it that he, Paul, takes upon him to give an account of. —That which the Lord had revealed to him?—revealed, communicated in the supernatural way of revelation, to him—Paul? No; but that which, according to him,—if he, and through him the historian, is to be believed,—the Lord communicated to Ananias concerning him—Paul. The Almighty having minded to communicate something to a man, and yet not communicating to that man any part of it, but communicating the whole of it to another! What a proceeding *this* to attribute to the Almighty, and upon such evidence!

Still we shall see, supposing it communicated, and from such a source communicated—still we shall see

it amounted to nothing: to nothing—always excepted the contradiction to what, in relation to this subject, had, by this same historian, been a little before asserted.

Observe what were the *purposes*, for which, by this Ananias, Paul is supposed to be made to understand, that God—the God, says he, of our fathers—had chosen him.

1. Purpose the first—"To know his will." His will, respecting what? If respecting anything to the great purpose here in question, respecting the new doctrine which, to this Paul, to the exclusion of the Apostles of Jesus, is all along supposed to have been revealed. Of no such doctrine is any indication anywhere in these accounts to be found.

2. Purpose the second—"And see this just one." Meaning, we are to understand, the person all along spoken of under the name of the Lord; to wit, Jesus. But, in the vision in question, if the historian is to be believed, no Jesus did Paul see. All that he saw was a light,—an extraordinary strong light at midday; so strong, that after it, till the scales fell from his eyes, he saw not any person in any place: and this light, whatever it was, was seen by all that were with him, as well as by him.

3. Purpose the third—"And shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." Oh! yes; if what the historian says in that other place is to be believed—hear a voice he did; and if the historian is to be again believed, that voice was the Lord's. But, by hearing this voice, how was he distinguished? those that were with him, according to the historian's own account, heard it as well as he. And what was he the wiser? This also, it is hoped, has been rendered sufficiently visible—just nothing.

Purpose the fourth and last—"Thou shalt be his witness (the Lord's witness), of everything thou hast seen and heard:"—that is, of that which was nothing, and that which amounted to nothing.

Unhappily, even this is not all: for, before the subject is concluded, we must go back and take up once more the supposed premeditated and studied speech, which, on the second occasion, the self-constituted Apostle is supposed to have made to the Sub-king of the Jews, Agrippa, sitting by the side of his superior —the Roman Proconsul, Festus.

In the course of this long-studied speech,—to whom, is the communication, such as it is,—to whom, in an immediate way, and without the intervention of any other person, is it supposed to be made? Not to Ananias;—not to any such superfluous and unknown personage;—not to Ananias, but to Paul himself: viz. to the very person *by* whom this same communication, supposed to have been made to him, is supposed to be reported (Acts xxvi. 16 to 18): to this principal, or rather, only person concerned:—to this one person, the communication, such as it is, and to him the whole of it at once, is supposed to be made.

Here then is this Ananias discarded:—discarded with this vision of his, and that other vision which we have seen within it: the communication, which, speaking in the first place in his own person,—and then, on one occasion, in the person of this same hero of his—the historian had just been declaring, was made—not to Paul, but to Ananias;—this all-important communication, speaking again in this same third person, but on another occasion—the discourse being supposed to be a long-studied one—he makes this same Paul declare, was given—not to

any Ananias, not to any other person—but directly to him, Paul, himself.

Let us now see what it amounts to. In the most logical manner, it begins with declaring the *purposes* it is made for; and, when the purposes are declared, all that it does is done. Ver. 16. "But now: rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose."...In this purpose are several parts: let us look into them one by one.

1. Part 1. "To make thee (says the Lord) a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." But, as to the things which he had seen, by this same account they amounted to nothing but a glare of light. Here then was the light to *bear witness of*, if it was worth while: but, as to the *ministering*, here was nothing at all to minister to: for the light was past, and it required no ministering to, when it was present. Had it been the light of a lamp—yes; but there was no lamp in the case.

Thus much, as to these things which he had seen. Thereupon comes the mention of those things "in the which, the Lord is supposed to say, I will appear unto thee!" Here, as before, we have another put-off. If, in the way in question, and of the sort in question, there had been anything said, here was the time, the only time, for saying it. For immediately upon the mention of this communication, such as it is, follows the mention of what was due in consequence of it, in obedience to the commands supposed to be embodied in it, and by the light of the information supposed to be conveyed by it. "Whereupon, says he, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision..."

Part 2. The purpose continued.—"Delivering thee

from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee." This, we see, is but a continuation of the same put-off: no revelation, no doctrine, no Gospel here. As to the doctrine—the Gospel—that Gospel which he preached, and which he said was his own, no such Gospel is on this occasion given to him; and, not being so much as reported to have been given to him on any other occasion, was it not therefore of his own making, and without any such supernatural assistance, as Christians have been hitherto made to believe was given to him?

As to the deliverance from the people and from the Gentiles, this is a clause, put in with reference to the dangers, into which the intemperance of his ambition had plunged him, and from whence in part it had been his lot to escape. Here then the sub-king and his Roman superior were desired to behold the accomplishment of a prophecy: but the prophecy was of that sort which came after the fact.—"Unto whom now I send thee..." In this they were desired to see a continuation of the prophecy: for, as to this point, it was, in the hope of the prophet, of the number of those, which not only announce, but by announcing contribute to, their own accomplishment.

Part 3. The purpose continued.—"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God..." Still the same nothingness: to his life's end a man might be hearing stories such as these, and still at the end of it be none the wiser:—no additional doctrine—no additional gospel—no declaration at all—no gospel at all—here.

Part 4. The purpose continued and concluded... "that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Good. But this is not doctrine; this is not gospel;

this is not itself the promised doctrine: but it is a description of the effect, of which the promised doctrine was to be the cause.

Now it is, as we have just seen, that Paul is represented as commencing his preaching, or sallying forth upon his mission; preaching, from *instructions* received in a supernatural way—received by revelation. Yet, after all, no such *instructions* has he received. Thrice has the historian—once in his own person, twice in that of his hero—undertaken to produce those instructions. But by no one, from first to last, have they anywhere been produced.

Truly, then, of his own making was this Gospel which Paul went preaching; of his own making, as well as of his own using; that Gospel, which he himself declares to his Galatians was not of man, was not, therefore, of those Apostles, to whom the opposition made by him is thus proclaimed.

When, after having given in his own person an account of a supposed occurrence,—an historian, on another occasion, takes up the same occurrence; and, in the person of another individual, gives of that same occurrence another account different from, and so different from, as to be irreconcileable with it; can this historian, with any propriety, be said to be himself a believer in this second account which he thus gives? Instead of giving it as a true account, does he not, at any rate, in respect of all the several distinguishable circumstances in which it differs from the account given in his own person—give it in the character of a fable? a fable invented on the occasion on which the other person is supposed to speak—invented in the intent that it shall promote the purpose for which this speech is supposed to be made? Yet this account, which in the eyes of the very

man by whom it is delivered to us, is but a fable, even those to whom in this same character of a fable it is delivered—this account it is that *Christians* have thus long persisted in regarding, supporting, and acting upon, as if it were from beginning to end, a truth—a great body of truth!—O Locke! O Newton! where was your discernment!

On such evidence would any Judge fine a man a shilling? Would he give effect to a claim to that amount? Yet such is the evidence, on the belief of which the difference between happiness and misery, both in intensity as well as duration, infinite, we are told, depends!

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SECTION 5.

VISION III.—PAUL'S ANTERIOR VISION, AS REPORTED BY THE LORD TO ANANIAS.

By the nature of the acts which are the objects of it, the command, we see, is necessarily pregnant with information: but now comes the information given as such—the piece of information with which the command is followed. This information—in and by which another, an antecedent vision, is brought upon the carpet, and communicated—has been reserved for a separate consideration.

This information is in its complexion truly curious: to present a clear view of it, is not an altogether easy task. The information thus given by the Lord—given to this Ananias—this information, of which Paul is the subject, is—what? that, on some former occasion, neither time nor place mentioned, he, Ananias, to whom the Lord is giving the information, had been

seen by this same Paul performing, with a certain intention, a certain action; the intention being—that, in relation to this same Paul, a certain effect should be produced—to wit, that of his receiving his sight. The Lord declares, Acts ix. 12, to Ananias, that Paul "had *seen in a vision* a man, Ananias himself, coming and putting his hand on him, that he (Paul) might receive his sight."

Well then—this action which the Lord thus informs Ananias that he, Ananias, had performed,—did he, at any time and place, ever perform it? Oh, no; that is not necessary: the question is not a fair one; for it was only in a vision that it was performed. Well then—if it was only in a vision that it was performed, then, in reality, it was never performed. The Lord said that it had been performed; but in so saying the Lord had said that which was not true. The Lord had caused him to believe this—the Lord knowing all the while that it was not true. Such is the deed, which, according to our historian, the Lord relates himself to have achieved.

But the *intention*, was that true? Oh, no; nor was there any need of its being so: for the intention, with which the act was supposed to be performed, was part and parcel of the divinely-taught untruth.

The effect, the production of which had been the object of the intention, was it then—had it then been—produced? Wait a little; no, not at that time. But the time was not then as yet come; and now it is coming apace.

But this effect—what is it? a man's receiving his sight; this same Paul's receiving his sight; this same Paul, of whom Ananias knew nothing, nor had ever heard anything, except what he had just been hearing—to wit, that, by a man of that name, he,

Ananias, had once been seen—seen to do so and so—he, all the while—he, the doer, knowing nothing of what he was doing—knowing nothing at all about the matter. However, only in a vision did all this pass; which being the case, no proper subject of wonder was afforded to him by such otherwise somewhat extraordinary ignorance.

But this sight—which, at the hands of this seer of visions, to whom this information is thus addressed, this stranger, whose name was still *Saul*, was to receive—how happened it that it was to him, Ananias, that he came to receive it? This faculty—at his birth, was he not, like any other man, in possession of it? If he was, what was become of it? In this particular, the information thus supposed to have been given by Omniscience, was rather of the scantiest.

Supposing the story to have any foundation in truth, —such, to Ananias, it could not but have appeared; and, supposing him bold enough to ask questions, or even to open his mouth, a question, in the view of finding a supply for the deficiency, is what the assertion would naturally have for its first result. No such curiosity, however, has Ananias: instead of seeking at the hands of Omniscience an information, the demand for which was so natural, the first use he makes of his speech, or rather would have made of it, if, instead of being imagined in a vision, the state of things in question had been true, is—the furnishing to Omniscience a quantity of information of a sort in no small degree extraordinary. For, hereupon begins a speech, in and by which Ananias undertakes to give Omniscience to understand, what reports, in relation to this same Paul, had reached his (Ananias's) ears. What he is willing thus to *speak* is

more, however, than Omniscience is willing to *hear:* the story is cut short, and the story-teller bid to "go his way." "Then Ananias," says the text, Acts ix. 13. "Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem. And here he hath authority from the Chief Priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way; for..." &c.

But, though thus cut short, he is far from being in disgrace. So far from it, that he is taken into confidence. Then comes—still in a vision, and the same vision—information of the till then secret acts and intentions of Omnipotence in relation to this same Paul: he had actually been "chosen" as "a vessel to bear the Lord's name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:" and the determination had been taken, says the Lord in this vision, "to show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." "For I will show him," says the Acts, ix. 16, "how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." And, with the announcement thus made of this determination, the historical account, thus by the historian in his own person given, of this same vision, closes.

Thus highly distinguished, and favoured with a confidence, equalling, if not surpassing, any which, according to any of the Gospel accounts, appears ever to have been imparted to any one of the Apostles, how comes it that Ananias has never been put in the number of the *Saints?* meaning always the Calendar *Saints*—those persons, to wit, who, as a mark of distinction and title of honour, behold their ordinary names preceded by this extraordinary one? Still the answer is: Aye, but this was but in vision: and of a vision one use is—that of the matter of

which all that there is *not* a use for, is left to be taken for false; all that there *is* a use for, is taken, and is to pass, for true. When, by the name of Ananias, who, humanly speaking, never existed but in name, the service for which it was invented has been performed —to wit, the giving a support to Paul and his vision, —it has done all that was wanted of it: there is no, further use for it.

Supposing that thirdly mentioned vision really seen, at what point of time shall we place the seeing of it? In this too there seems to be no small difficulty.

Between the moment at which Paul is said to have had his vision, if a vision that can be called in which, the time being midday, he saw nothing but a glare of light,—between the moment of this vision, of which a loss of sight was the instantaneous consequence— between the moment of this loss of sight and the moment of the recovery of it, the interval is mentioned: three days it was exactly. Acts ix. 9, "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

The time during which, in verse 9, he has just been declared to have been the whole time without sight, —this is the time, within which he is declared— declared, if the historian is to be believed, declared by the Lord himself—to have seen this introductory vision—this preparatory vision, for which it is so difficult to find a use. And thus it is, that in a vision, though *vision* means seeing, it is not necessary a man should have sight.

Meantime, of all these matters, on which his own existence, not to speak of the salvation of mankind, so absolutely depends, not a syllable is he to know, but through the medium of this so perfectly obscure and questionable personage—this personage so

completely unknown to him—this same Ananias.

Three whole days he is kept from doing anything: during these three whole days the business of the miracle stands still. For what purpose is it thus kept at a stand? Is it that there might be time sufficient left for his learning to see, when his sight is returned, this preparatory vision, by which so little is done, and for which there is so little use?

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SECTION 6.

VISIONS, WHY TWO OR THREE INSTEAD OF ONE.

As to the matter of fact designated by the words *Paul's conversion*, so far as regards *outward* conversion, the truth of it is out of all dispute:—that he was *converted, i.e.* that after having been a persecutor of the votaries of the new religion, he turned full round, and became a leader. Whether the so illustriously victorious effect, had for its cause a supernatural intercourse of Paul with Jesus after his resurrection and ascension, and thence for its accompaniment an *inward* conversion—in this lies the matter in dispute.

From those, by whom, in its essential particular, the statement is regarded as being true, a natural question may be—If the whole was an invention of his own, to what cause can we refer the other vision, the vision of Ananias? To what purpose should he have been at the pains of inventing, remembering, and all along supporting and defending, the vision of the unknown supposed associate? Answer.—To the purpose, it should seem, of giving additional breadth to the basis of his pretensions.

Among that people, in those times, the story of a vision was so common an article,—so difficultly distinguishable from, so easily confounded with, on the one hand the true story of a dream, on the other hand a completely false story of an occurrence, which, had it happened, would have been a supernatural one, but which never did happen,—that a basis, so indeterminate and aërial, would seem to have been in danger of not proving strong enough to support the structure designed to be reared upon it.

On the supposition of falsity, the case seems to be—that, to distinguish his vision from such as in those days were to be found among every man's stories, as well as in every history,—and which, while believed by some, were disbelieved and scorned by others,—either Paul or his historian bethought himself of this contrivance of a *pair* of visions:—a pair of corresponding visions, each of which should, by reference and acknowledgment, bear witness and give support to the other: a *pair* of visions: for, for simplicity of conception, it seems good not to speak any further, of the antecedent vision interwoven so curiously in the texture of one of them, after the similitude of the flower termed by some gardeners *hose in hose*.

Of this piece of machinery, which in the present instance has been seen played off with such brilliant success upon the theological theatre, the glory of the invention may, it is believed, be justly claimed, if not by Paul, by his historian. With the exception of one that will be mentioned presently[11], no similar one has, upon inquiry, been found to present itself, in any history, Jewish or Gentile.

The other pair of visions there alluded to, is—that which is also to be found in the Acts: one of them

ascribed to Saint Peter, the other to the centurion Cornelius.

Paul, or his historian?—The alternative was but the suggestion of the first moment. To a second glance the claim of the historian presents itself as incontestable. In the case of Peter's pair of visions, suppose the story the work of invention, no assignable competitor has the historian for the honour of it: in the case of Paul's pair of visions, supposing *that* the only pair, the invention was at least as likely to have been the work of the historian as of the hero: add to this pair the other pair—that other pair that presents itself in this same work of this same history—all competition is at an end. In the case of even the most fertile genius, copying is an easier task than invention: and, where the original is of a man's own invention, copying is an operation still easier than in the opposite case. That an occurrence thus curious should find so much as a single inventor, is a circumstance not a little extraordinary: but, that two separate wits should jump in concurrence in the production of it, is a supposition that swells the extraordinariness, and with it the improbability, beyond all bounds.

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SECTION 7.

COMMISSION TO PAUL BY JERUSALEM RULERS—COMMISSION TO BRING IN BONDS DAMASCUS CHRISTIANS—PAUL'S CONTEMPT PUT UPON IT.

Per Acts, in the historical account, is stated the existence of a commission:—granters, the Jerusalem rulers; persons to whom addressed, Paul himself at Jerusalem; and the synagogues, *i.e.* the rulers of the

synagogues, at Damascus: object, the bringing in custody, from Damascus to Jerusalem, all Christians found there: all adult Christians at any rate, females as well as males; at Paul's own *desire*, adds this same historical account (ix. 2.); "for to be punished," adds Paul 1st supposed unpremeditated oratorical account, xxii. 5. In the supposed premeditated oratorical account, Paul 2nd, the existence of authority and commission granted to him by the Chief Priests is indeed mentioned, xxvi. 12: but, of the object nothing is said.

In the unpremeditated oratorical account, such is the boldness of the historian, nothing will serve him but to make the orator call to witness the constituted authorities—the Jerusalem rulers—whoever they were, that were present,—to acknowledge the treachery and the aggravated contempt he had been guilty of towards themselves or their predecessors: towards themselves, if it be in the literal sense that what on this occasion he says is to be understood: "As also the High Priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the Elders, from whom also I received letters," &c., Acts xxii. 5. In the premeditated oratorical account, the boldness of the orator is not quite so prominent; he says—it was "with authority and commission from the Chief Priests" at Jerusalem, that he went to Damascus; but, for the correctness of this statement of his, he does not now call upon them, or any of them, to bear witness.

In respect of the description of the persons, of whom the Jerusalem rulers, exercising authority in their behalf, were composed,—the conformity, as between the several accounts, is altogether entire. In the historical account, it is the authority of the High Priest, and the High Priest alone, that is exercised: in

the unpremeditated oratorical account, it is that of the High Priest and all the estate of the Elders: in the premeditated account, it is that of the Chief Priests: nothing said either of High Priests or Elders.

Neither, in the supposed unpremeditated oratorical account, is it stated—that, at the time and place of the tumult, the rulers thus called to witness, or any of them, were actually on the spot. But, the spot being contiguous to the Temple—the Temple, out of which Paul had been that instant dragged, before there had been time enough for accomplishing the determination that had been formed for killing him, —the distance, between the spot, at which Paul with the surrounding multitude was standing, Paul being under the momentary protection of the Roman commander—between this spot and the spot, whatever it was, at which the question might have been put to them, or some of them, could not be great.

On the part of the historian, the boldness, requisite for the ascribing the correspondent boldness to the orator, may be believed without much difficulty. The materials for writing being at hand, there was no more danger in employing them in the writing of these words, than in the writing of an equal number of other words.

Not so on the part of the orator himself. For, supposing the appeal made, the multitude might have saved themselves the trouble of putting him to death: the constituted authorities whom he was thus invoking—those rulers, against whom, by his own confession, he had committed this treason—would have been ready enough to proceed against him in the regular way, and take the business out of the hands of an unauthorized mob.

The truth of the story, and for that purpose the trustworthiness of the historian, being to be defended at any rate,—by some people, all this contradiction, all this mass of self-contradiction, will of course be referred to *artlessness*, or, to take the choice of another eulogistic word, to *simplicity:* and, of trustworthiness, this amiable quality, whatever may be the name given to it, will be stated as constituting sufficient proof. No such design, as that of deceiving, inhabited, it will be said, his artless bosom: no such design was he capable of harbouring: for, supposing any such wicked design harboured by him, could he have been thus continually off his guard?

But—by all this self-contradiction, the quality really proved is—not artlessness, but weakness: and, with the desire of deceiving, no degree of weakness, be it ever so high, is incompatible. By weakness, when risen even to insanity, artfulness is not excluded: and, in the fashioning, from beginning to end, of all this story, art, we see, is by no means deficient, how unhappily soever applied.

But the story being such as it is, what matters it, as to the credence due to it, in what state, in respect of probity, was the author's mind? Being, as it is, to such a degree untrustworthy and incredible, as that, in so many parts of it, it is impossible it should have been true, the truth of it is impossible: what matters it then, whether it be to the weakness of the moral, or to that of the intellectual, quarter of the author's mind, that the falsity is to be ascribed?

Not only in the whole does this history, anonymous as it is, present satisfactory marks of *genuineness*,—that is, of being written by the sort of person it professes to be written by, namely, a person who in

the course of Paul's last excursion was taken into his suite; but in many parts, so does it of *historic verity*. True or not true,—like any other history ancient or modern, it has a claim to be provisionally taken for true, as to every point, in relation to which no adequate reason appears for the contrary: improbability, for example, of the supposed facts as related, contradictoriness to itself, contradictoriness to other more satisfactory evidence, or probable subjection to sinister and mendacity-prompting interest.

But, under so much self-contradiction as hath been seen,—whether *bias* be or be not considered, could any, the most ordinary fact, be regarded as being sufficiently proved?

Meantime, let not any man make to himself a pretence for rejecting the important position thus offered to his consideration;—let him not, for fear of its being the truth, shut his eyes against that which is presented to him as and for the truth;—let him not shut his eyes, on any such pretence, as that of its being deficient in the quality of *seriousness*. If, indeed, there be any such duty, religious or moral, as that of *seriousness*; and that the stating as absurd that which is really absurd is a violation of that duty;—at that rate, *seriousness* is a quality, incompatible with the delivery and perception of truth on all subjects, and in particular on this of the most vital importance: seriousness is a disposition to cling to falsehood, and to reject truth. In no part has any ridicule *ab extra*, been employed:—ridicule, by allusion made to another object, and that an irrelevant one.[12]

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SECTION 8.

COMPANIONS—HAD PAUL ANY UPON THE ROAD?

Meantime, if all these miraculous visions and other miracles must needs be supposed,—a cluster of other miracles, though not mentioned, must be supposed along with them: miracles, for the production of which a still greater mass of supernatural force must have been expended. Here, their existence being supposed, here were those companions of his, who, unknown in names and number, saw or saw not all or anything that he saw, and heard or heard not all or anything that he heard. These men, at any rate, if so it be that they themselves, blind or not blind, led him, as it is said they did, into the city, because he could not see to guide himself,—must, in some way or other, have perceived that something in no small degree extraordinary had happened to him: so extraordinary, that, in the condition in which he was, and in which, if they saw anything, they saw him to be—no such commission, as that, for the execution of which, if, as well as companions, they were his destined assistants, they were put under his command,—could, in any human probability, receive execution at his hands. If they were apprised of this commission of his, could they, whether with his consent or even without his consent, avoid repairing to the constituted authorities to tell them what had happened? This commission of his, so important in itself, and granted to a man of letters by men of letters, could not but have been in writing: and accordingly, in the form of letters we are, by the historian, expressly informed it was. Of the existence of these letters, on the tenor of which their future proceedings as well as his depended,—these

conductors of his, if *he* did not, with or without his consent would of course have given information, to the rulers to whom these same letters were addressed. Not being struck dumb, nor having, amongst the orders given by the voice, received any order to keep silence, or so much as to keep secret anything of what little they had heard, they would scarcely, under these circumstances, have maintained either silence or secrecy. The historian, knowing what he (the historian) intended to do with his hero —knowing that, at three days' end, he intended not only to make scales fall from his eyes, but to fill his belly,—might not feel any great anxiety on his account. But Paul himself, if he, in the condition he is represented in by the historian,—was, for three days together, with scales on his eyes, and nothing in his stomach: and, at the end of the three days, as ignorant as at the beginning, whether the scales would, at any time, and when, drop off, and his stomach receive a supply: in such a state surely, a man could not but feel a curiosity, not unattended with impatience, to know when and how all this was to end. Under these circumstances, by some means or other, would all these tongues have been to be stopped: otherwise, instead of the house of Judas in Straight-street, Paul might have had no other place, to receive his visitor in, than the town jail, or some one other of those strong places, into which visitors do not always find it more easy to gain entrance, than inmates to get out.

These tongues then—Paul's tongue, his companions' tongues—this assemblage of tongues, all so strongly urged to let themselves loose—by what could they have been stopped? If, by anything, by a correspondent cluster of miracles—nothing less.

That, from Jerusalem, about the time in question, Paul went to Damascus,—and that it was with some such letters in his possession,—seems, as will be seen presently, altogether probable;—also, that when there, he acted in the way his historian speaks of, betraying the confidence reposed in him by the constituted authorities, and joining with those whom he had solicited and received a commission to destroy;—that these were among the circumstances of his alleged conversion, seems probable enough:—though he, with all the need he had of miracles, if any were to be had, gives not—in what he himself, writing to his Galatian converts, says of his conversion—any of the slightest hint of them.

As to his conversion—meaning his *outward* conversion, which was all that was necessary to the production of the effect so notoriously produced by him—to *that*, it will be seen, no miracle was necessary: nothing but what belonged to the ordinary course of things. As to companions on the journey—whether he had any or not; and if he had any, whether they were attendants on his orders, or acquaintances of his not under his orders; or mere strangers into whose company accident threw him—all this we must satisfy ourselves, as well as we can, under the ignorance of.

That, for giving effect, by his means, to the sort of commission he went entrusted with, the power of local authorities was trusted to, is a supposition altogether natural. For bringing to Jerusalem "bound, for to be punished (Acts ix. 2. xxii. 4), all the Christians that could be found in Damascus, both men and women," if the Damascus rulers were favourable to the persecuting design, no large force from Jerusalem could be needful. Even a small one

would be superfluous: and, by a force, great or small, sent from the one set of constituted authorities, a slight would be shown to the other.

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SECTION 9.

IN PAUL'S EPISTLE TO HIS GALATIANS,—BY HIS SILENCE, ACTS' ACCOUNTS OF HIS CONVERSION ARE VIRTUALLY CONTRADICTED.

Of Paul's *outward* conversion—conversion from the character of an authorized persecutor of the religion of Jesus, to that of a preacher of a religion preached in the name of Jesus—such, as we have seen, is the account given in the Acts; given by the author of the Acts, and by him alone. For, what ought never to be out of mind, if instead of two different accounts—declared by him as having been, on different occasions, delivered by Paul—he had given two hundred, still they would have been his:—not Paul's, but his.

All this while, now for little less than 1800 years, from Paul's own pen we have an account of this his conversion: and, of any such story as that of its being effected through the instrumentality of visions,—in this account of his, not any the slightest trace is to be found;—not any the slightest allusion to it.

At the time of his giving this account—supposing this story of the mode of his conversion true—supposing even that, though false, it had been got up and propagated—at the time of his giving the account which bears such unquestionable marks of being his, was the occasion such as to render it probable, that he could thus have omitted all allusion, to an

occurrence at once so extraordinary and so important? If not, then so it is—that, by the silence of Paul himself, the story related by his historian is virtually contradicted.

The occasion here in view is—that of his writing the so often mentioned, and so often about to be mentioned, Epistle to his Galatian disciples.

At the time of his writing this letter, so we shall have occasion to see over and over again in the tenor of it, he was acting in opposition—declared and violent opposition—to the Apostles: struggling with them for the mastery; declaring that to them he was not beholden for anything;—that the Gospel he preached was not their Gospel, but a Gospel of his own, received by him directly from Jesus;—declaring, that in Jerusalem itself, the seat of their authority, he had preached this Gospel of his, which was not theirs; but confessing, at the same time, that when he did so, it was in a secret manner, for fear of the opposition, which he well knew, had they known of it, they could not but have made to it.

In this state of contention—supposing any such miracle as that in question wrought in his favour—was it in the nature of the case that he should have failed to avail himself of it?—to avail himself of the account which the truth—the important truth—would have so well warranted him in giving of it? Supposing it true, had there at that time been witnesses to it—any percipient witnesses—the supposed Ananias—the supposed companions on the road,—would he have failed making his appeal to their testimony? Supposing even that there were none such left, the truth of the occurrence—of an occurrence of such momentous importance, would it not have inspired him with boldness, sufficient for

the assertion of it, with all that intensity for which the case itself furnished so sufficient a warrant, and which the vehemence of his character would have rendered it so impossible for him to avoid? Supposing even the story an utter falsehood, yet, had it been at this time got up and promulgated, could he, if he saw any tolerable prospect of its obtaining credence, have failed to endeavour to avail himself of it?

No, surely. Yet, in this his address, made to his Galatian disciples, and to all such inhabitants of that country, as he could see a prospect of numbering among his disciples—in this address, written under a sense of the necessity he was under, of making for his support against the Apostles, the most plausible case his ingenuity could enable him to make,—not any, so much as the slightest, hint of any such miracle, does he venture to give. *Revelation! revelation!*—on this single word—on the ideas, which, in the minds with which he had to deal, he hoped to find associated with that word—on this ground, without any other, did he see himself reduced to seek support in his contest with the Apostles. Revelation? revelation from Jesus? from the Lord, speaking from heaven? from the Almighty? On what occasion, in what place, at what time, in what company, if in any, was it thus received? To no one of these questions does he venture to furnish an answer—or so much as an allusion to an answer. Why?—even because he had none to give. He had been a persecutor of the disciples of Jesus—this he confesses and declares: he became a preacher in the name of Jesus—this he also declares; a preacher in the name of him, of whose disciples—the whole fellowship of them—he had been a persecutor—a blood-thirsty and blood-stained persecutor. His

conversion, whatever it amounted to, how came it about? what was the cause, the time, the place, the mode of it; who the percipient witnesses of it? To all these questions, *revelation*; in the single word is contained all the answer, which—in this letter—in this plea of his—he, audacious as he was, could summon up audacity enough to give. Why, on so pressing an occasion, this forbearing? Why? but that, had he ventured to tell any such story, that story being a false one, there were his opponents—there were the Apostles, or men in connection with the Apostles—to contradict it—to confute it.

Had he made reference to any specific, to any individual, portion of place and time, the pretended facts might have found themselves in contradiction with some real and provable facts. But, time as well as place being left thus unparticularized,—he left himself at liberty, on each occasion, if called upon for time or place, to assign what portion of time and place the occasion should point out to him as being most convenient;—best adapted to the purpose of giving lodgment to an appropriate falsity;—and without danger, or with little danger, of exposure.

At distinct and different times, *five* interviews we shall see him have, with the Apostles—one or more of them: the first interview being,—according to his own account, as given in this very Epistle,—at little if anything more, than three years' distance from the time of his quitting the occupation of persecution. Then, says he, it was, Gal. i. 17 and 18, that "I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." In all these days, is it possible, that, if the conversion miracle had really taken place as stated in the Acts, with the companions on the road and Ananias for witnesses,—he should not have

related to Peter, and, if not spontaneously, at any rate in answer to such questions as a man in Peter's situation could not fail to put, have brought to view, every the minutest circumstance? This then was the time—or at least *one* time—of his trial, on the question, *revelation or no revelation*. Here then, when, with such vehemence, declaring—not his independence merely, but his superiority, in relation to the Apostles—and *that* on no other ground than this alleged revelation, was it, had the judgment in that trial been in his favour—was it possible, that he should have omitted to avail himself of it? Yet no such attempt, we see, does he make:—no attempt, to avail himself of the issue of the trial, or of anything that passed on the occasion of it. Altogether does he keep clear of any allusion to it: and indeed, if his historian—the author of the Acts—is to be believed, —with very good reason: for, whatever it was that, on that occasion, he said, in the Acts it is expressly declared that, by the disciples at least, he was utterly disbelieved. Acts ix. 26: "He assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the Apostles," &c. Why it was, that, after the disciples had thus unanimously declared him and his story unworthy of credit, the Apostles gave him notwithstanding a sort of reception;—and that, by no countenance, which they on that occasion gave him, was any ground afforded, for the supposition that any more credence was given to him and his story, by them than by the disciples at large,—will be explained in its place.

TABLE II.—PAUL DISBELIEVED.

Table—*Showing, at one View, the Passages, from which the Inference is drawn, that Paul's inward Conversion was never believed, by any of the Apostles, or their Disciples.*

Explanations.—The Interviews here seen are between Paul and one or more Apostles. Number of Interviews five,—of Visits the same: whereof, by Paul to Peter, four,—by Peter to Paul,—one: besides the one supposed fictitious. Of the Accounts, Paul's as far as it goes, is taken for the standard. Of Paul's Epistles the genuineness is out of dispute: Acts history is anonymous. Paul's evidence is that of an alleged percipient witness. His historian's,—as to these matters, mostly that of a narrator,—narrating—but from hearsay, Probably from Paul's.

INTERVIEWS, A.D. 35 (I); A.D. 52 (III).

As per Paul, Gal. A.D. 58.

1. *Introduction.*

Gal. 1:1. "Paul, an apostle, not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead, and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our

sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

2. *Independence Declared.*

Gal. 1:6. "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I now persuading men, or God? or am I seeking to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

"For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ."

3. *Conversion Spoken Of.*

Ver. 13. "For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havock of it: and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb and called me through his grace, to

reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus."

4. *Account of Interview I.*

Ver. 18. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ: but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havock; and they glorified God in me."

5. *Account of Interview III. II.*

Gal. 2:1. "Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But from those who

were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they say that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision, for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles."

6. *Partition Treaty.*

Ver. 9. "And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do."

7. *Jealousy, Notwithstanding.*

Ver. 11. "But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, save through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought."

INTERVIEW I. A.D. 35.

Paul's Jerusalem Visit I.

Reconciliation Visit.

(*Departure from Damascus.*)

Acts 9:23-30. "And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him: but their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him: but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket."

(*Arrival at Jerusalem—Results.*)

Ver. 26. "And when he was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. And he was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord."

(*Departure—Cause.*)

Ver. 29. "And he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews; but they went about to kill him. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."

INTERVIEW I. A.D. 35.

Departure—Cause.

In Paul's First Account.

Acts 22:17-21. "And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. And he said unto

me, Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles."

INTERVIEW II. A.D. 43.

Paul's Jerusalem Visit II.

Money-Bringing Visit.

Acts 11:22-30. "And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and then sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch: who, when he was come, 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: for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

"Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judea: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul."

INTERVIEW III. A.D. 52.

Paul's Jerusalem Visit III.

Deputation Visit.

As per Acts xv. 1-21.

Acts 25:1-23. "And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them. But there arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

"And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter. And when there had been much questioning Peter rose up, and said unto them,

"Brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now

therefore why 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? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.

"And all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying,

"Brethren, hearken unto me: Symeon hath rehearsed how first God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

> "After these things I will return,
> And I will build again the tabernacle of
> David, which is fallen;
> And I will build again the ruins thereof,
> And I will set it up:
> That the residue of men may seek after the
> Lord,
> And all the Gentiles, upon whom my name
> is called,
> Saith the Lord, who maketh these things
> known from the beginning of the
> world.

"Wherefore my judgment is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles turn to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood. For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath."

INTERVIEW IV. A.D. 52.

Peter's Visit to Antioch.

Acts 15:22-33. "Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to chose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: and they wrote thus by them, The apostles and the elder brethren unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

"So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the consolation. And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. And after they had spent some time there, they were dismissed in peace from the brethren unto those that had sent them forth."

INTERVIEW A.D. 52.

Paul's Visit.

As per Acts xviii. 19-23.

(*Supposed Fictitious.*)

"And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. And when they asked him to abide a longer time, he consented not; but taking his leave of them and saying, I will return again unto you, if God will, he set sail from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Cæsarea, he went up and saluted the church, and went down to Antioch. And having spent some time there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, stablishing all the disciples."

INTERVIEW V. A.D. 60.

Paul's Jerusalem Visit IV.

Invasion Visit.

(*Visit Proposed. A.D.* 56.)

Acts 19:20-21. "Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. And having sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while."

(*Visit Again Proposed. A.D.* 60.)

Acts 20:16. "For Paul had determined to sail past Ephesus, that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

"And from Miletus he went to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

"Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after that manner I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the lots of the Jews: how that I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more."

Acts 21:7-9. "And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Caesarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him. Now

this man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy."

(*Visit Opposed. A.D.* 60.)

Ver. 10. "And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. (See Acts xi. 27.)

"And coming to us, and taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, 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. And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."

INTERVIEW V. A.D. 60.

Paul's Jerusalem Visit IV.

Invasion Visit—Results.

Arrival.

Acts 21:15-36. "And after these days we took up our baggage, and went up to Jerusalem. And there went with us also certain of the disciples from Cæsarea, bringing with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.

"And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren

received us gladly."

Test, Proposed for Riddance.

"And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he rehearsed one by one the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And they, when they heard it, glorified God; and they said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; and they are all zealous for the law: and they have been informed concerning thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? they will certainly hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; these take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges for them, that they may shave their heads: and all shall know that there is no truth in the things whereof they have been informed concerning thee; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, keeping the law. But as touching the Gentiles which have believed, we wrote, giving judgment that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what is strangled, and from fornication."

The Test Swallowed.

"Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them went into the temple, declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them."

Indignation Universal.

"And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place. For they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple: and straightway the doors were shut. And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion. And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down upon them: and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and inquired who he was, and what he had done. And some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd: and when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd; for the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, Away with him."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Of the word *conversion*, as employed

everywhere and in all times in speaking of Paul, commonly called Saint Paul, the import has been found involved in such a cloud, as, on pain of perpetual misconception, it has been found necessary, here at the outset, to clear away. That, from being an ardent and destructive persecutor of the disciples of the departed Jesus, he became their collaborator, and in *that* sense their ally,—preaching, in speech, and by writing, a religion under the name of the religion of Jesus, assuming even the appellation of an *Apostle* of Jesus,—*Apostle*, that is to say, special envoy—(that being the title by which the twelve most confidential servants of Jesus stood distinguished), is altogether out of dispute. That in this sense he became a *convert* to the religion of Jesus, and that in this sense his alleged conversion was real, is accordingly in this work not only admitted, but affirmed. Few points of ancient history seem more satisfactorily attested. In this sense then he was converted beyond dispute. Call this then his *outward conversion*; and say, Paul's *outward conversion* is indubitable. But, that this conversion had for its cause, or consequence, any supernatural intercourse with the Almighty, or any belief in the supernatural character of Jesus himself; this is the position, the erroneousness of which has, in the eyes of the author, been rendered more and more assured, the more closely the circumstances of the case have been looked into. That, in speech and even in action, he was in outward appearance a convert to the religion of Jesus; this is what is admitted: that, inwardly, he was a convert to the religion of Jesus, believing Jesus to be God, or authorized by any supernatural commission from God; this is the position, the negative of which it is the object of the present work to render as

evident to the reader, as a close examination has rendered it to the author. The consequence, the practical consequence, follows of itself. In the way of doctrine, whatsoever, being in the Epistles of Paul is not in any one of the Gospels, belongs to Paul, and Paul alone, and forms no part of the religion of Jesus. This is what it seemed necessary to state at the opening; and to this, in the character of a conclusion, the argument will be seen all along to tend.

[2] See Ch. 15. Paul's supposable miracles explained.

[3] In regard to the matter testified, that is, in regard to the object of the testimony; it is, first of all, a requisite condition, that what is reported to be true should be possible, both absolutely, or as an object of the elaborative Faculty, and relatively, or as an object of the Presentative Faculties,—Perception, External or Internal. A thing is possible absolutely, or in itself, when it can be construed to thought, that is, when it is not inconsistent with the logical laws of thinking; a thing is relatively possible as an object of perception, External or Internal, when it can affect Sense or Self-consciousness, and, through such affection, determine its apprehension by one or other of these faculties.

A testimony is, therefore, to be unconditionally rejected, if the fact which it reports be either in itself impossible, or impossible as an object of the representative faculties.

But the impossibility of a thing, as an object of these faculties, must be decided either upon physical, or upon metaphysical, principles.

A thing is physically impossible as an object of

sense, when the existence itself, or its perception by us, is, by the laws of the material world impossible.—Hamilton's Logic 460.—Ed.

[4] "*Light*,—great *Light*."—It will be noticed that this "light" is presented first objectively as a phenomenon, a thing, But what is "light"? The universal answer is "That force in nature which, acting on the Retina of the eye produces the sensation we call vision." This vision is the total of the subjective effect of that agency of Nature, the subjective realization through the functions of the Cerebellum. But functions are accomplished through agencies called organs. The retina is one of these organs. Through the operations of these organs and cerebellum subjective apprehension is produced as an effect, but in some cases of very forcible apprehensions they are interpreted as a diseased condition of the organs of sense. Ideas sometimes acquire unusual vividness and permanence and are, therefore, peculiarly liable to be mistaken for their objective prototypes and hence specters, spectral allusions which are very common in cases of emotional excitement.

Further, it will be noticed all the time that the reporter, Luke, wrote what Paul, or some other person or rumor had previously communicated to him. Now Luke, was accustomed to pen these wonders, these superhuman Chimerical prodigies. Take the example of the trial of Stephen, Acts 7. After the Charges of the Complainants, Ib. 6-9, "Libertines" and others had been heard by the High Priest, he inquired of Stephen personally as to the verity of the charges, And Luke reports his responses, And then to make sure of portraying fully the Emotional conditions of the witnesses and the

spectators, he reports, V. 54. "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart and they grabed on him with their teeth; but he, Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the City and stoned him, and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul."

This Saul, now Paul, must have acted as overseer or umpire. Paul, is by chronologers reckoned to have been about 12 years of age; But it will be seen that Luke, the narrator, is just such a superserviceable witness as wholly impairs his credibility. He says first, Stephen was in fact filled with the Holy Ghost, saw the glory of God, for he evidently was gloriable, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and that in addition thereto he states that Stephen, said he saw the same wonders—with the addition that the heavens were opened, &c. If he had been cross-examined and asked whether little Paul, did not behold all these wonders, he no doubt would have answered in the affirmative and volunteered the statement, That they all saw these wonders, the high priest, the accusers, by-standers, and human canines that gnashed their teeth upon Stephen. Consult any author on Psychology on the subject of Emotions, Exstatic illusions, &c.

But in the assembly inquisitors of Stephen, Paul and others before the high priests, what special law or cannons were they accused of violating? Answer, one cannon is quite

conspicuous, to wit:—Ex. 22:28. "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of the people."

When the inquisitor the high priest found the accused guilty, he was delivered over to the witnesses for execution. The detectives enjoyed the luxury of doing the stoning. If Christ's limitation had been in use, to wit:—that none but the guiltless should throw stones, the accusing sleuths might have been less zealous.—Ed.

[5] Historiographer is used purposely by the author to denote a specialist for the occasion.

[6] "Goad" is the word used in the Douay Testament and in the late revisions of The Protestants.

[7] Cor. 15:8—"As unto one born out of due time, He appeared unto me also."

[8] Another question that here presents itself is—How could it have happened that, Jerusalem being under one government, and Damascus under another (if so the case was), the will of the local rulers at Jerusalem found obedience, as it were of course, at the hands of the adequate authorities at Damascus? To the question how this *actually* happened, it were too much to undertake to give an answer. For an answer to the question how it may be *conceived* to have happened, reference may be made to existing English practice. The warrant issued by the constituted authorities in Jerusalem expected to find, and found accordingly in Damascus, an adequate authority disposed to back it. In whatsoever Gentile countries Jews, in a number sufficient to compose a synagogue, established themselves, a habit naturally enough took place, as of course, among them—the habit of

paying obedience, to a considerable extent, to the functionaries who were regarded as rulers of the synagogue. Few are or have been the conquered countries, in which some share of subordinate power has not been left, as well to the natives of the conquered nation as to any independent foreigners, to whom, in numbers sufficient to constitute a sort of corporate body, it happened from time to time to have become settlers. After all, what must be confessed is—that, in all this there seems nothing but what might readily enough have been conceived, without its having been thus expressed.

[9] It is well known that this dogma of Original sin—a disease that the human family enjoys by sad inheritance, Christ treated with negligible indifference. He dealt with the problems of man in a social state, as socially conditioned only. A human being conditioned as isolated from neighbors, friends and society, he did not as he scientifically could not deal with, He discoursed upon social duties, however sublimely, N.B. Acts 18:15, "But if thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him between thee and him alone, If he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them then tell it unto the church. And if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican, Amen I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

Now without quibbling about the translation

this scheme of social arbitration contains the ultimate of justice, It contains the only working hypothesis within any social condition of mankind. There is no such thing as justice in the abstract or concrete, It is like heat and electricity, a mere mode of motion, a form of action. And when a controversy between Citizens is fairly submitted to the judgment of normal men the voice of their consciousness, being the ultimate organ of nature's Creator, must be "binding" so far as man is concerned socially.

And as there does not appear to the natural man any appeal to heaven, the arbitrament of man in the special case carries the seal of the eternities and forecloses all further controversy. The speech of the honorable Consciousness of Man is the voice of the Creator of his personality.—Ed.

[10] Since what is in the text was written, maturer thoughts have suggested an interpretation, by which, if received, the sad inferences presented by the doctrine, that misdeeds, and consequent suffering that have had place, could by a dip into a piece of water be caused never to have happened, may be repelled. According to this interpretation, the act of being baptized—the bodily act—is one thing; an act of washing away the sins—the spiritual act—another. The effect produced is —not the causing the misdeeds and sufferings never to have had place, but the causing them to be compensated for, by acts productive of enjoyment, or of saving in the article of sufferings, to an equal or greater amount.

[11] See Ch. xvii. §. v. 4. Peter's and Cornelius's visions.

[12] See Bentham's *Church of Englandism examined.*

CHAPTER II.

Outward Conversion—how produced—how planned.

SECTION 1.

MOTIVE, TEMPORAL ADVANTAGE—PLAN.

How flourishing the state of the church had at this period become, will be seen more fully in another place. Long before this period,—numbers of converts, in Jerusalem alone, above three thousand. The aggregate, of the property belonging to the individuals, had been formed into one common fund: the management—too great a burden for the united labours of the eleven Apostles, with their new associate Mathias—had, under the name so inappositely represented at present by the English word *deacon*, been committed to seven trustees; one of whom, Stephen, had, at the instance of Paul, been made to pay, with his life, for the imprudence, with which he had, in the most public manner, indulged himself, in blaspheming the idol of the Jews—their temple.[13]

Of that flourishing condition, Paul, under his original name of Saul, had all along been a witness. While carrying on against it that persecution, in which, if not the original instigator, he had been a most active instrument, persecuting, if he himself, in what he is made to say, in Acts xxii. 4, is to be believed, —"persecuting unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women;"—

while thus occupied, he could not in the course of such his disastrous employment, have failed to obtain a considerable insight into the state of their worldly affairs.

Samaria—the field of the exploits and renown of the great sorcerer Simon, distinguished in those times by the name of *Magus*—Samaria, the near neighbour and constant rival, not to say enemy, of Jerusalem;—is not more than about five and forty miles distant from it. To Paul's alert and busy mind,—the offer, made by the sorcerer, to purchase of the Apostles a share in the government of the church, could not have been a secret.

At the hands of those rulers of the Christian Church, this offer had not found acceptance. Shares in the direction of their affairs were not, like those in the government of the British Empire in these our days, objects of sale. The nine rulers would not come into any such bargain; their disciples were not as cattle in their eyes: by those disciples themselves no such bargain would have been endured; they were not as cattle in their own eyes.

But, though the bargain proposed by the sorcerer did not take place, this evidence, which the offer of it so clearly affords,—this evidence, of the value of a situation of that sort in a commercial point of view, could not naturally either have remained a secret to Paul, or failed to engage his attention, and present to his avidity and ambition a ground of speculation—an inviting field of enterprise.

From the time when he took that leading part, in the condemnation and execution, of the too flamingly zealous manager, of the temporal concerns of the associated disciples of that disastrous orator, by whom the preaching and spiritual functions might,

with so much happier an issue, have been left in the hands of the Apostles—from that time, down to that in which we find him, with letters in his pocket, from the rulers of the Jews in their own country, to the rulers of the same nation under the government of the neighbouring state of Damascus, he continued, according to the Acts ix. 1; "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord."

Of these letters, the object was—the employing the influence of the authorities from which they came, viz. the High Priest and the Elders, to the purpose of engaging those to whom they were addressed, to enable him to bring in bonds, to Jerusalem from Damascus, all such converts to the religion of Jesus, as should have been found in the place last mentioned.

In his own person the author of the Acts informs us—that, by Saul, letters to this effect were *desired*[14]. In a subsequent chapter, in the person of Paul, viz. in the speech, to the multitude by whom he had been dragged out of the Temple, in the design of putting him to death, he informs us they were actually *obtained*[15].

It was in the course of this his journey, and with these letters in his pocket, that, in and by the vision seen by him while on the road—at that time and not earlier—his conversion was, according to his own account of the matter, effected.

That which is thought to have been already proved, let it, at least for argument's sake, be affirmed. Let us say accordingly—this vision-story was a mere fable. On this supposition, then, what will be to be said of those same letters?—of the views in which they were

obtained?—of the use which was eventually made of them?—of the purpose to which they were applied? For all these questions one solution may serve. From what is known beyond dispute—on the one hand, of his former way of life and connections—on the other hand, of his subsequent proceeding—an answer, of the satisfactoriness of which the reader will have to judge, may, without much expense of thought, be collected.

If, in reality, no such vision was perceived by him, no circumstance remains manifest whereby the change which so manifestly and notoriously took place in his plan of life, came to be referred to *that* point in the field of time—in preference to any antecedent one.

Supposing, then, the time of the change to have been antecedent to the commencement of that journey of his to Damascus—antecedent to the time of the application, in compliance with which his letter from the ruling powers at Jerusalem the object of which was to place at his disposal the lot of the Christians at Damascus, was obtained;—this supposed, what, in the endeavour to obtain this letter, was his object? Manifestly to place in his power these same Christians: to place them in his power, and thereby to obtain from them whatsoever assistance was regarded by him as necessary for the ulterior prosecution of his schemes, as above indicated.

On this supposition, in the event of their giving him that assistance, which, in the shape of money and other necessary shapes, he required—on this supposition, he made known to them his determination, not only to spare their persons, but to join with them in their religion; and, by taking the lead in it among the heathen, to whom he was, in

several respects, so much better qualified for communicating it than any of the Apostles or their adherents, to promote it to the utmost of his power. An offer of this nature—was it in the nature of things that it should be refused? Whatsoever was most dear to them—their own personal security, and the sacred interests of the new religion, the zeal of which was yet flaming in their bosoms, concurred in pressing it upon their acceptance.

With the assistance thus obtained, the plan was—to become a declared convert to the religion of Jesus, for the purpose of setting himself at the head of it; and, by means of the expertness he had acquired in the use of the Greek language, to preach, in the name of Jesus, that sort of religion, by the preaching of which, an empire over the minds of his converts, and, by that means, the power and opulence to which he aspired, might, with the fairest prospect of success, be aimed at.

But, towards the accomplishment of this design, what presented itself as a necessary step, was—the entering into a sort of *treaty*, and forming at least in appearance, a sort of junction, with the leaders of the new religion and their adherents—the Apostles and the rest of the disciples. As for *them*, in acceding to this proposal, on the supposition of anything like sincerity and consistency on his part, *they* would naturally see much to gain and nothing to lose: much indeed to gain; no less than peace and security, instead of that persecution, by which, with the exception of the Apostles themselves, to all of whom experience seems, without exception, to have imparted the gift of prudence, the whole fraternity had so lately been driven from their homes, and scattered abroad in various directions.

With the Christians at Damascus, that projected junction was actually effected by him: but, in this state of things, to return to Jerusalem was not, at that time, to be thought of. In the eyes of the ruling powers, he would have been a trust-breaker—a traitor to their cause: in the eyes of the Christians, he would have been a murderer, with the blood of the innocent still reeking on his hands: no one would he have found so much as to lend an ear to his story, much less to endure it. In Damascus, after making his agreement with his new brethren, there remained little for him to do. Much had he to inform himself of concerning Jesus. Damascus—where Jesus had already so many followers—Damascus was a place for him to *learn* in: not to *teach* in:—at any rate, at that time.

Arabia, a promising field of enterprise—Arabia, a virgin soil, opened to his view. There he would find none to abhor his person—none to contradict his assertions: there his eloquence—and, under the direction of his judgment, his invention—would find free scope: in that country the reproach of inconsistency could not attach upon him: in that foreign land he beheld his place of quarantine—his school of probation—the scene of his novitiate. By a few years employed in the exercise of his new calling —with that spirit and activity which would accompany him of course in every occupation to which he could betake himself—he would initiate himself in, and familiarize himself with, the connected exercises of preaching and spiritual rule. At the end of that period, whatsoever might be his success in that country, such a portion of time, passed in innocence, would at any rate allay enmity: such a portion of time, manifestly passed, in the endeavour at any rate to render service to the

common cause, might even establish confidence.

At the end of that time, he might, nor altogether without hope of success, present himself to the rulers of the church, in the metropolis of their spiritual empire: "Behold, he might say, in me no longer a persecutor, but a friend. The persecutor has long vanished: he has given place to the friend. Too true it is, that I was so once your persecutor. Years spent in unison with you—years spent in the service of the common cause—have proved me. You see before you, a tried man—an ally of tried fidelity: present me as such to your disciples: take me into your councils: all my talent, all my faculties, shall be yours. The land of Israel will continue, as it has been, the field of *your* holy labours; the land of the Gentiles shall be mine: we will carry on our operations in concert; innumerable are the ways in which each of us will derive from the other—information, assistance, and support."

To Arabia he accordingly repaired: so, in his Epistle to the Galatians, Gal. i. 17, he himself informs us: in that little-known country, he continued three whole years—so also, in the same place, he informs us. There it was, that he experienced that success, whatever it was, that went to constitute the ground, of the recommendation given of him by Barnabas to the Apostles. From thence he returned to Damascus: and, in that city, presenting himself in his regenerated character, and having realized by his subsequent conduct the expectations raised by his promises at the outset of his career[16]; he planned, and as will be seen, executed his expedition to Jerusalem: the expedition, the object of which has just been brought to view. "Then," says Paul himself, "I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with

him fifteen days." Gal. 1:18. There, says the author of the Acts, Acts 9:27, 28, "Barnabas took him and brought him to the Apostles ... and he was with them coming in and going out of Jerusalem."

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SECTION 2.

AT DAMASCUS, NO SUCH ANANIAS PROBABLY.

This same Ananias—of whom so much has been seen in the last chapter—Paul's own imagination excepted, had he anywhere any existence? The probability seems to be on the negative side: and, in the next section, as to whether Paul's companions on the road are not in a similar predicament, the reader will have to judge. But let us begin with Ananias.

At Damascus, at any rate—with such power in his hands, for securing obsequiousness at the hands of those to whom he was addressing himself—with such power in his hands, Paul could not have had much need of anything in the shape of a vision:—he could not have had any need of any such person as the seer of the correspondent vision—Ananias.

For the purpose of aiding the operation of those considerations of worldly prudence, which these powers of his enabled him to present, to those whom it concerned,—there might be some perhaps, who, for yielding to those considerations, and thus putting themselves under the command of this formidable potentate, might look for an authority from the Lord Jesus. But, forasmuch as, in this very case, even at this time of day, visions, *two* in name, but, in respect of probative force, reducible to *one*—are so generally received as conclusive evidence,—no wonder if, at

that time of day, by persons so circumstanced, that *one* vision should be received in that same character. At Damascus, therefore, on his first arrival, there could not be any occasion for any such corroborating story as the story of the vision of Ananias. At Damascus—unless he had already obtained, and instructed as his confederate, a man of that name—no such story could, with any prospect of success, have been circulated: for the purpose of learning the particulars of an occurrence of such high importance, the residence of this Ananias would have been inquired after: and, by supposition, no satisfactory answer being capable of being given to any such inquiries,—no such story could be ventured to be told.

Such was the case, at that place and at that time. As to any such evidence, as that afforded by the *principal* vision, viz. Paul's own,—perhaps no such evidence was found necessary: but, if it *was* found necessary, nothing could be easier than the furnishing it. As to the *secondary* vision, viz. that ascribed afterwards to a man of the name of Ananias, —at that time scarcely could there have been any need of it—any demand for it; and, had there been any such demand, scarcely, unless previously provided, could any such correspondent supply have been afforded.

In other places and posterior times alone, could this supplemental vision, therefore, have been put into circulation: accordingly, not till a great many years after, was mention made of it by the author of the Acts:—mention made by him, either in his own person, or as having been related, or alluded to, by Paul himself. Even the author of the Acts,—though in this same chapter he has been relating the story of

Ananias's vision,—yet, when he comes to speak, of the way, in which, according to him, Paul, by means of his protector and benefactor Barnabas, obtained an introduction to the Apostles, viz. all the Apostles, in which, however, he is so pointedly contradicted by Paul himself,—yet speaks not of Barnabas, as including, in the recommendatory account he gave them, of Paul—his vision, and his merits—any mention of this supplemental vision:—any mention of any Ananias. Acts 9:27.

At Damascus, howsoever it might be in regard to the Christians—neither to Jews, nor to Gentiles, could the production, of any such letters as those in question, have availed him anything. Such as had embraced Christianity excepted, neither over Gentiles nor over Jews did those letters give him any power: and, as to Jews, the character in which—after any declaration made of his conversion—he would have presented himself, would have been no better than that of an apostate, and betrayer of a highly important public trust. To men of both these descriptions, a plea of some sort or other, such as, if believed, would be capable of accounting for so extraordinary a step, as that he should change, from the condition of a most cruel and inveterate persecutor of the new religion, to that of a most zealous supporter and leader,—could not, therefore, but be altogether necessary. No sooner was he arrived at Damascus, than, if the author of the Acts is to be believed, he began pleading, with all his energy, the cause of that religion, which, almost to that moment, he had with so much cruelty opposed. As to the story of his vision,—what is certain is—that, sooner or later, for the purpose of rendering to men of all descriptions a reason for a change so preeminently extraordinary, he employed this story.

But, forasmuch as of no other account of it, as given by him, is any trace to be found;—nor can any reason be found, why that which was certainly employed afterwards might not as well be employed at and from the first;—hence comes the probability, that from the first it accordingly was employed.

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SECTION 3.

ON DAMASCUS JOURNEY—COMPANIONS NONE.

In the preceding chapter, a question was started, but no determinate answer as yet found for it: this is—what became of the men, who—according to all the accounts given by Paul, or from him, of his conversion vision—were his *companions* in the journey? At Damascus, if any such men there were, they would in course arrive as well as he, and at the same time with him. This circumstance considered, if any such men there were,—and they were not in confederacy with him,—the imposition must have been put upon *them*: and, for that purpose, he must, in their presence, have uttered the sort of discourse, and exhibited the sort of deportment, mentioned in the above accounts.

To this difficulty, however, a very simple solution presents itself. *He had no such companions.* Neither by name, nor so much as by any the most general description,—either of the persons, or of the total number,—is any designation to be found anywhere: —not in the account given in the Acts; not in any account, given by himself, in any Epistle of his; or, as from himself, in any part of the Acts. In the company of divers others, a man was struck down, he says, or it is said of him, by a supernatural light: and, at the

instant, and on the spot, has a conversation with somebody. Instead of saying who these *other* men are, the credit of the whole story is left to rest on the credit of this *one* man:—the credit, of a story, the natural improbability of which, stood so much need of collateral evidence, to render it credible.

Not till many years had elapsed, after this journey of his were these accounts, any one of them, made public: and, in relation to these pretended companions—supposing him interrogated at any time posterior to the publication of the account in the Acts,—after the lapse of such a number of years, he could, without much difficulty, especially his situation and personal character considered, hold himself at full liberty, to remember or to forget, as much or as little, as on each occasion he should find convenient.

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SECTION 4.

FLIGHT FROM DAMASCUS: CAUSES—FALSE—TRUE.

ACTS ix. 19-25.

> And when he had received meat he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. —And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.—But all that heard him were amazed, and said: Is not this he that destroyeth them which called on his name in Jerusalem; and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?—But Saul increased the more in strength, and

> confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.—And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him.—But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.—Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

The conception, which it was the evident design of this passage to impress upon the mind of the reader, is—that, as soon almost as he was arrived at Damascus, Paul not only went about preaching Jesus, but preaching to that effect openly, and without reserve, in all the synagogues: and that it was for this preaching, and nothing else, that "the Jews," thus undiscriminating is the appellation, purposely it should seem, employed, "went about to kill him:" that thereupon it was, that he made his escape over the wall, and having so done, repaired immediately to Jerusalem.

In this conception, there seems to be evidently a mixture of truth and falsehood.

That he addressed himself, in a greater or less number, to the disciples,—must assuredly have been true: to the accomplishment of his designs, as above explained, intercourse with them could not but be altogether necessary.

That, when any probable hope of favourable attention and secrecy were pointed out to him—that, in here and there an instance, he ventured so far as to address himself to this or that individual, who was not as yet enlisted in the number of disciples,—may also have been true: and, for this purpose, he might have ventured perhaps to show himself in some

comparatively obscure synagogue or synagogues.

But, as to his venturing himself so far as to preach in all synagogues without distinction,—or in any synagogue frequented by any of the constituted authorities,—this seems altogether incredible.

To engage them to seek his life; to lie in wait to kill him; in other words, to apprehend him for the purpose of trying him, and probably at the upshot killing him,—this is no more than, considering what, in their eyes, he had been guilty of, was a thing of course: a measure, called for—not, for preaching the religion of Jesus; not, for any boldness in any other way displayed; but, for the betraying of the trust, reposed in him by the constituted authorities at Jerusalem: thus protecting and cherishing those malefactors, for such they had been pronounced by authority, for the apprehending and punishing of whom, he had solicited the commission he thereupon betrayed. Independently of all other offence, given by preaching or anything else,—in this there was that, which, under any government whatever, would have amply sufficed—would even more than sufficed —to draw down, upon the head of the offender, a most exemplary punishment.

In this view, note well the description, given in the Acts, of the persons, by whose enmity he was driven out of Damascus; compare with it what, in relation to this same point, is declared—most explicitly declared —by Paul himself.

By the account in the Acts, they were the persons to whom he had been preaching Jesus; and who, by that preaching, had been confounded and provoked. Among those persons, a conspiracy was formed for murdering him; and it was to save him from this conspiracy that the disciples let him down the wall

in a basket.

Such is the colour, put upon the matter by the author of the Acts. Now, what is the truth—the manifest and necessary truth, as related—explicitly related—by Paul himself? related, in the second of his letters to his Corinthians, on an occasion when the truth would be more to his purpose than the false gloss put upon it by his adherents as above? The peril, by which he was driven thus to make his escape, was—not a murderous conspiracy, formed against him by a set of individuals provoked by his preaching;—it was the intention, formed by the governor of the city. Intention? to do what? to put him to death against law? No; but to "*apprehend*" him. To apprehend him? for what? Evidently for the purpose of bringing him to justice in the regular way—whatsoever was the regular way—for the offence he had so recently committed: committed, by betraying his trust, and entering into a confederacy with the offenders, whom he had been commissioned, and had engaged, to occupy himself, in concert with the constituted authorities of the place, in bringing to justice.

"In Damascus," says he, 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33, "the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."

And on what *occasion* is it, that this account of the matter is given by him? It is at the close of a declamation, which occupies ten verses—a declamation, the object of which is—to impress upon the minds of his adherents the idea of his merits: viz. those which consisted in labour, suffering, and perils: merits, on which he places his title to the preference he claims above the competitors to whom he alludes:

—alludes, though without naming them: they being, as he acknowledges therein, ministers of Christ, and probably enough, if not any of them Apostles, persons commissioned by the Apostles. Greater, it is evident, must have been the danger from the ruling powers of the place, than from a set of individual intended murderers:—from the power of the rulers there could not be so much as a hope of salvation, except by escape: from the individuals there would be a naturally sufficient means of salvation; the power of the rulers presenting a means of salvation, and that naturally a sufficient one.

Note here, by the by, one of the many exemplifications, of that confusion which reigns throughout in Paul's discourses: the result, of that mixture, which, in unascertainable proportions, seems to have had place—that mixture of nature and artifice. It is at the end of a long list of labours, sufferings, and perils, that this anecdote presents itself. Was it accordingly at the end of them that the fact itself had taken place?—No: it was *at* the very commencement: or rather, so far as concerned preaching, *before* the commencement. Only in the way of allusion—allusion in general terms—in terms of merely general description, without mention of *time* or *place*, or persons concerned,—are any of the other sufferings or perils mentioned: in this instance alone, is any mention made under any one of those heads: and here we see it under two of them, viz. *place* and *person*: and moreover, by other circumstances, the *time*, viz. the *relative* time, is pretty effectually fixed.

Immediately afterwards, this same indisputably false colouring will be seen laid on, when the account comes to be given, of his departure for Jerusalem:

always for preaching Jesus is he sought after, never for anything else.

According to this representation, here are two governments—two municipal governments—one of them, at the solicitation of a functionary of its own, giving him a commission to negotiate with another, for the purpose of obtaining, at his hands, an authority, for apprehending a set of men, who, in the eyes of both, were guilty of an offence against both. Instead of pursuing his commission, and using his endeavours to obtain the desired cooperation, he betrays the trust reposed in him:—he not only suffers the alleged malefactors to remain unapprehended and untouched, but enters into a confederacy with them. To both governments, this conduct of his is, according to him, matter of such entire indifference, that he might have presented himself everywhere, as if nothing had happened, had it not been for his preaching:—had it not been for his standing forth *openly*, to preach to all that would hear him, the very religion which he had been commissioned to extinguish.

In such a state of things, is there anything that can, by any supposition, be reconciled to the nature of man, in any situation,—or to any form of government?

Three years having been passed by him in that to him strange country, what, during all that time, were his means of subsistence? To this question an unquestionable answer will be afforded by the known nature of his situation. He was bred to a trade, indeed a handicraft trade—tent-making: an art, in which the operations of the architect and the upholsterer are combined. But, it was not to practise either that, or any other manual operation, that he

paid his visit to that country. When he really did practise it, he took care that this condescension of his should not remain a secret: from that, as from everything else he ever did or suffered, or pretended to have done or suffered, he failed not to extract the matter of glory for himself, as well as edification for his readers. In Arabia, his means of subsistence were not then derived from his trade: if they had been, we should have known it:—from what source then were they derived?[17] By the very nature of his situation, this question has been already answered:—from the purses of those, whom, having had it in his power, and even in his commission, to destroy, he had saved.

And now, as to all those things, which, from the relinquishment of his labours in the field of persecution to the first of his four recorded visits to Jerusalem, he is known to have done, answers have been furnished:—answers, to the several questions *why* and by what *means*, such as, upon the supposition that the supernatural mode of his conversion was but a fable, it will not, it is hoped, be easy to find cause for objecting to as insufficient.

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SECTION 5.

ARABIA-VISIT—MENTIONED BY PAUL, NOT ACTS.

Not altogether without special reason, seems the veil of obscurity to have been cast over this long interval. In design, rather than accident, or heedlessness, or want of information,—may be found, it should seem, the cause, of a silence so pregnant with misrepresentation. In addition to a length of time,

more or less considerable, spent in Damascus, a city in close communication with Jerusalem, in giving proofs of his conversion,—three years spent in some part or other of the contiguous indeed, but wide-extending, country of Arabia—(spent, if Paul is to be believed, in preaching the religion of Jesus, and at any rate in a state of peace and innoxiousness with relation to it)—afforded such proof of a change of plan and sentiment, as, in the case of many a man, might, without miracle or wonder, have sufficed to form a basis for the projected alliance:—this proof, even of itself; much more, when corroborated, by the sort of certificate, given to the Church by its preeminent benefactor Barnabas, who, in introducing the new convert, to the leaders among the Apostles, for the special purpose of proposing the alliance,—took upon himself the personal responsibility, so inseparably involved in such a mark of confidence.

In this state of things then, which is expressly asserted by Paul to have been, and appears indubitably to have been, a real one,—considerations of an ordinary nature being sufficient—to produce—not only the effect actually produced—but, in the case of many a man, much more than the effect actually produced,—there was no demand, at that time, for a miracle: no demand for a miracle, for any such purpose, as that of working, upon the minds of the Apostles, to any such effect as that of their maintaining, towards the new convert, a conduct free from hostility, accompanied with a countenance of outward amity. But, for other purposes, and in the course of his intercourse with persons of other descriptions, it became necessary for him to have had these visions: it became necessary—not only for the purpose of proving connection on his part with the departed Jesus, to the satisfaction of all those by

whom such proof would be looked for,—but, for the further purpose, of ascribing to Jesus, whatsoever doctrines the prosecution of his design might from time to time call upon him to promulgate;—those doctrines, in a word, which, (as will be seen), being his and not Jesus's—not reported by anyone else as being Jesus's—we shall find him, notwithstanding, preaching, and delivering,—so much at his ease, and with unhesitating assurance.

A miracle having therefore been deemed necessary (the miracle of the conversion-vision), and reported accordingly,—thus it is, that, by the appearance of suddenness, given to the sort and degree of confidence thereupon reported as having been bestowed upon him by the Apostles, a sort of confirmation is, in the Acts account, given to the report of the miracle: according to this account, it was not by the three or four years passed by him in the prosecution of their designs, or at least without obstruction given to them;—it was not by any such proof of amity, that the intercourse, such as it was, had been effected:—no: it was by the report of the vision—that report which, in the first instance, was made to them by their generous benefactor and powerful supporter, Barnabas; confirmed, as, to every candid eye it could not fail to be, by whatever accounts were, on the occasion of the personal intercourse, delivered from his own lips. "But Barnabas (says the author) took him and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had *seen* the Lord by the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." Acts 9:27.

When in the year 57, Paul,[18] to so many other boastings, was added the sufferings he would have us

think were courted and endured by him, while preaching in the name of Jesus, that gospel, which he proclaims to have been his own, and not that of the Apostles, little assuredly did he think, that five years after, or thereabout, from the hand of one of his own attendants, a narrative was to appear, in which, of these same sufferings a so much shorter list would be given; or that, by an odd enough coincidence, more than seventeen centuries after, by a namesake of his honored patron, Doctor Gamaliel, the contradiction thus given to him, would be held up to view.

In the second of his epistles to his Corinthians, dated A.D. 57,—the following is the summary he gives of those same sufferings. Speaking of certain unnamed persons, styled by him false Apostles, but whom reasons are not wanting for believing to have been among the disciples of the real ones,—"Are they," says he, 2 Cor. xi. 23, "ministers of Christ? I speak as one beside himself, I am more: in labours more abundant: in *stripes* above measure: in prisons more frequent: in deaths, oft.—Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one.—Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned: thrice I suffered shipwreck: a night and a day have I been in the deep." Thus far as per *Paul*.

Add from his former Epistle to the same in the same year, battle with beasts, one. "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me," continues he, 1 Cor. XV. 32, "if the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

Let us now see how the account stands, as per *Acts*. On the part of this his panegyrist, whether any such habit had place as that of cutting down below their

real amount, either the sufferings or the actings of his hero, the reader will have judged. Of both together, let it not be forgotten, the Acts' account comes some five years lower, than the date of the above tragical list: in it are included those sufferings and perils which we have seen, namely, those produced by the voyage to Rome, and which, at the time of Paul's list, had not taken their commencement. Now then for the Acts' list. Stripes, nine-and-thirty in a parcel, none: difference five. Beatings with rods, saving one possible one, of which presently, none; difference, three. Stoning, one[19]. Shipwreck, as yet none: the accident at Malta being three years subsequent. "Night and day in the deep,"—according as it was *on* or *in* the deep—either nothing at all, or an adventure considerably too singular to have been passed over. *Diving-bells* are not commonly supposed to have been, at that time of day, in use; but whoever has a taste for predictions, may, if it be agreeable to him, see those same scientific instruments or the equivalent in this Gospel of Paul's predicted.

As to the parcels of stripes, the self-constituted Apostle takes credit for, they would have been,—supposing them administered,—administered, all of them, according to law, meaning always the law of *Moses*: for, it is in that law, (namely in Deuteronomy XXV. 3) that the clause, limiting to nine-and-thirty, the number to be given at a time, is to be found. Of these statements of Paul's, let it not pass unnoticed, the place is—a formal and studied Epistle, not an extempore speech: so that the falsehood in them, if any, was not less deliberate than the Temple perjury.

Of all these same boasted bodily sufferings, eight in the whole, when put together,—one was, at the

outset, reserved for consideration: let us see what light, if any, is cast upon it by the Acts. One beating, the Acts informs us of: and it was a beating by order of magistrates: and accordingly, a beating according to law. But the law, according to which it was given, was not Jewish law: the magistrates, by whose order it was given, were not Jewish magistrates. The magistrates were heathens: and it was for being Jews, and preaching in the Jewish style, that Paul, and his companion Silas, were thus visited. It was at Philippi that the affair happened: it was immediately preceded by their adventure with the divineress, as per Acts 16:16; 34, Chap. 13: and brought about by the resentment of her masters, to whose established business, the innovation, introduced by these interlopers, had given disturbance: it was followed—immediately followed—by the earthquake, which was so dexterous in taking irons off. Whether therefore this beating was in Paul's account comprised in the eight stripings and beatings, seems not possible, humanly speaking, to know: not possible, unless so it be, that Paul, being the wandering Jew, we have sometimes heard of, is still alive,—still upon the look-out, for that aërial voyage, which, with or without the expectation of an aërostatic vehicle, we have seen him so confident in the assurance of.

Remains the battle with the beasts. What these same beasts were, how many there were of them,—how many legs they respectively had—for example, two or four—in what way he was introduced into their company,—whence his difference with them took its rise,—whether it was of his own seeking, or by invitation that he entered the lists with these his antagonists,—how it fared with *them* when the affair was over,—(for as to the hero himself, it does not

appear that he was much the worse for it);—these, amongst other questions, might be worth answering, upon the supposition, that these antagonists of his were real beings and real beasts, and not of the same class as the arch-beast of his own begetting—Antichrist. But, the plain truth seems to be, that if ever he fought with beasts, it was in one of his visions: in which case, for proof of the occurrence, no visible mark of laceration could reasonably be demanded. Meantime, to prove the negative, as far as, in a case such as this, it is in the nature of a negative to be proved,—we may, without much fear of the result, venture to call his ever-devoted scribe. To this same Ephesus,—not more than a twelvemonth or thereabouts, before the date of the Epistle—he brings his patron,—finds appropriate employment for him,—and, off and on, keeps him there for no inconsiderable length of time. There it is, that we have seen, Chap. 13, §. 7., his handkerchiefs driving out devils as well as diseases: there it is, and for no other reason than that *he* is there—there it is, that we have seen so many thousand pounds worth of magical books burnt—and by their owners: there it is, that with a single handkerchief of his,—which so it were but used, was an overmatch for we know not how many devils,—we saw a single devil, with no other hands than those of the man he lodged in, wounding and stripping to the skin no fewer than seven men at the same time. If, then, with or without a whole skin at the conclusion of it, he had really had any such rencounter, with one knows not how many beasts, is it in the nature of the case, that this same historiographer of his, should have kept us ignorant of it? To be shut up with wild beasts, until torn to pieces by them, was indeed one of the punishments,

for which men were indebted to the ingenuity of the Roman lawyers: but, if any such sentence was really executed upon our self-constituted Apostle, his surviving it was a miracle too brilliant not to have been placed at the head of all his other miracles: at any rate, too extraordinary to have been passed by altogether without notice. The biographer of Daniel was not thus negligent.

After all, was it really matter of pure invention—this same battle? or may it not, like so many of the quasi-miracles in the Acts, have had a more or less substantial foundation in fact? The case may it not have been—that, while he was at Ephesus, somebody or other set a dog at him, as men will sometimes do at a troublesome beggar? or that, whether with hand or tongue, some person, male or female, set upon him with a degree of vivacity, which, according to Paul's zoology, elucidated by Paul's eloquence, entitled him or her to a place in the order of beasts? —Where darkness is thus visible, no light can be so faint, as not to bring with it some title to indulgence.

Of the accounts, given us by the historiographer, of the exploits and experiences of his hero while at Ephesus, one article more will complete the list. When any such opportunity offered, as that of presenting him to view, in his here assumed character, of a candidate for the honours of martyrdom,—was it or was it not in the character of the historiographer to let it pass unimproved? To our judgment on this question, some further maturity may be given, by one more law-case, now to be brought to view. Under some such name as that of the *Ephesian Diana*, not unfrequent are the allusions to it. *Church of Diana silversmiths versus Paul and Co.* is a name, by which, in an English law report, it

might with more strict propriety be designated. Plaintiffs, silversmiths' company just named: Defendants, Paul and Co.; to wit, said Paul, Alexander, Aristarchus, Alexander and others. Acts, 22:41. Action on the case for words:—the words, in tenor not reported: purport, importing injury in the way of trade. Out of the principal cause, we shall see growing a sort of cross cause: a case of assault, in which three of the defendants were, or might have been, plaintiffs: cause of action, assault, terminating in false imprisonment. In this exercetitious cause, defendants not individually specified: for, in those early days, note-taking had not arrived at the pitch of perfection, at which we see it at present. That which,—with reference to the question—as to the truth of the beast-fighting story,—is more particularly material in the two cases taken together, —is this: in the situation, in which these junior partners of Paul found themselves, there was some difficulty, not to say some danger. Pressed, as he himself was afterwards, in his invasion of Jerusalem, —pressed in more senses than one, *they* found themselves by an accusing multitude. What on this occasion does Paul? He slips his neck out of the collar. So far from lending them a hand for their support, he will not so much as lend them a syllable of his eloquence. Why? because forsooth, says his historiographer, Acts xix. 30, 31, "the disciples suffered him not:" *item*, v. 30, "certain" others of "his friends." When, as we have seen him, spite of everything that could be said to him, he repaired to Jerusalem on his *Invasion Visit*,—he was not quite so perfectly under the government of his friends. On the present occasion, we shall find him sufficiently tractable. Was this a man to be an antagonist and overmatch for wild beasts?

Now as to the above-mentioned principal case. Plaintiffs, dealers in silver goods: Defendants, dealers in words. To be rivals in trade, it is not necessary that men should deal exactly in the same articles:—the sale of the words injured the sale of the goods: so at least the plaintiffs took upon them to aver: for, in such a case, suspicion is not apt to lie asleep. The church of Diana was the Established Church, of that place and time. To the honour, the plaintiffs added the profit, of being silversmiths to that same Excellent Church. To the value of that sort of evidence, which it is the province of silversmiths to furnish, no established church was ever insensible. The evidence, furnished by the church silversmiths of these days, is composed of *chalices*: under the Pagan dispensation, the evidence furnished by the church silversmiths of the church of the Ephesian Diana, was composed of *shrines*. When, with that resurrection of his own, and that Gospel of his own, of which so copious a sample remains to us in his Epistles,—Paul, with or without the name of Jesus in his mouth, made his appearance in the market, Plaintiffs, as we have seen, took the alarm. They proceeded, as the pious sons of an established church could not fail to proceed. Before action commenced, to prepare the way for a suitable judgment,—they set to work, and set on fire the inflammable part of the public mind. The church was declared to be in danger, ver. 27: the church of Diana, just as the church of England and Ireland would be, should any such sacrilegious proposition be seriously made, as that of tearing out of her bosom any of those precious sinecures, of which her vitals are composed. In Ephesus, it is not stated, that, at that time, any society bearing the name of the *Vice Society*, or the *Constitutional Association*, was on foot. But, of those pious

institutions the equivalent could not be wanting. Accordingly, the charge of *blasphemy*, it may be seen, ver. 37, was not left unemployed. So the defence shows: the defence, to wit, made by the probity and wisdom of the judge: for, by the violence of the church mob,—who, but for him, were prepared to have given a precedent, to that which set Birmingham in flames,—the defendants were placed in the condition of prisoners: and the judge, seeing the violence, of the prejudice they had to encounter, felt the necessity, of adding to the function of judge, that of counsel for the prisoners.

But it is time to turn to the text: not a particle of it can be spared.

ACTS xix. 22-41.

22. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.—And the same time, there arose no small stir about that way;—For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;—Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.—Moreover 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:—So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should

be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.—And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. —And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.—And when Paul would have entered in, unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.—And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.—Some, therefore, cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.—And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people;—But when they knew he was a Jew, all with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.—And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? —Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.—For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your

> goddess.—Wherefore, if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. —But if ye inquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.—For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.—And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

The *Judge* by whom the principal cause was tried, and the plaintiffs non-suited, is styled, we see "*the Town Clerk*:" the more appropriate and respected title would not on this occasion have been ill-applied to him. Except what we have here been seeing, we know nothing of him that is *positive*: but, seeing thus much of him, we see that he was an honest man: and an honest man is not ill portrayed by negatives. He had no coronet playing before his eyes: no overpaid places and sinecures for relatives. He had not been made judge, for publishing a liturgy of the church of Diana, with an embroidery composed of his own comments,—or for circulating, with anonymous delicacy, a pious warning, never to be absent from the shrine of Diana, when the sacred cup was, proffered by the hands of holy priests. Accordingly, when the charge of *blasphemy* was brought before him,—being a heathen, he found no difficulty in treating it, in that gentle and soothing mode, in which, when, from the bosom of an established church it enters into a man, the spirit, which calls itself the spirit of Christianity, renders him so averse to the treating it. If, when his robes were off, he spoke of Diana what we now think of her,—he did not, when they were on, foam or rave, declare—that

all, who would not swear to their belief in her, were not fit to be believed, or so much as fit to live.

By him, one man was not robbed of his rights, because another man, when called upon as a witness, refused to perjure himself. By him, a man was not refused to be heard as a witness, nor refused protection for the fruits of his industry, nor deprived of the guardianship of his children, because he waited to see Diana, before he declared himself a believer in her existence. In the open theatre was pronounced the judgment we have seen. He did not, by secret sittings, deprive men of the protection of the public eye. He did not, we may stand assured—for we see how far the people of Ephesus were from being tame enough to endure it—he did not keep men's property in his hands, to be plundered by himself, his children, or his creatures, till the property was absorbed, and the proprietors sent broken-hearted to their graves. He did not—for the people of Ephesus would not have endured it—wring out of distress a princely income, on pretence of giving decisions, declaring all the while his matchless incapacity for everything but prating or raising doubts. He did not display,—he could not have displayed—the people of Ephesus could not have endured it—any such effrontery, as, when a judicatory was to sit upon his conduct, to set himself down in it, and assume and carry on the management of it. He would not have sought impunity—for if he had sought it in Ephesus, he would not have found it there—he would not have sought impunity, in eyes lifted up to heaven, or streaming with crocodile tears.

Thus much as to his negative merits. But, we have seen enough of him, to see one great positive one.

When, from the inexhaustible source of inflammation, a flame was kindled,—he did not fan the flame,—he quenched it.

The religion of Diana having thus come upon the carpet, a reflection which could not be put by, is—spite of all efforts of the church silversmiths, in how many essential points, negative as they are, the religion of Diana had, on the ground of usefulness, the advantage of that, which *is* the religion of Paul, and *is called* the religion of Jesus. Diana drove no men out of their senses, by pictures or preachments of never-ending torments. On pretence of saving men from future sufferings, no men were consigned by it to present ones. No mischievous, no pain-producing, no real vice, was promoted by it. It compelled no perjury, no hypocrisy: it rewarded none. It committed, it supported, it blessed, it lauded, no depredation, no oppression in any shape: it plundered no man of the fruits of his industry, under the name of *tithes*. For the enrichment of the sacred shrines,—money, in any quantity, we may venture to say, received: received, yes: but in no quantity extorted. One temple was sufficient for *that* goddess. Believing, or not believing in her divinity,—no men were compelled to pay money, for more temples, more priests, or more shrines.

As to the religion of Jesus, true it is, that so long as it continued the religion of Jesus, all was good government, all was equality, all was harmony: free church, the whole; established church, none: monarchy, none; constitution, democratical. Constitutive authority, the whole community: legislative, the Apostles of Jesus; executive, the Commissioners of the Treasury: not Lords Commissioners, appointed by a King Herod, but trustees or *stewards*; for such should have been

the word, and not *deacons*,—*agents elected by universal suffrage*. In this felicitous state, how long it continued—we know not. What we do know, is—that, *in the fourth century*, *despotism* took possession of it, and made an instrument of it. Becoming *established*, it became noxious,—preponderantly noxious. For, where *established* is the adjunct to it, what does *religion* mean? what but *depredation*, corruption, oppression, hypocrisy? *depredation*, *corruption*, *oppression*, *hypocrisy*—these four: with delusion, in all its forms and trappings, for support.

So pregnant is this same boasting passage—1 Cor. xv. 32, the labour it has thrown upon us, is not altogether at an end. By what it says of the resurrection, the memory has been led back, to what we have seen on the same subject, in one of Paul's Epistles to his Thessalonians: brought together, the two doctrines present a contrast too curious to be left unnoticed. Of the apparatus employed by him in his trade of *disciple-catcher*, his talk about the resurrection, was, it may well be imagined, a capital article. Being, according to his own motto, *all things to all men*, 1 Cor. ix. 22, whatever it happened to him to say on the subject, was dished up, of course, according to the taste of those he had to deal with. To some it was a *prediction*: for such, we have seen, was the form it assumed when the people to be wrought upon were the Thessalonians. To others, when occasion called, it was a statement concerning something *past*, or supposed to be past. On an occasion of this sort it was, that the name of Jesus, another article of that same apparatus, was of so much use to him. True it is, that to the doctrine of the *general* resurrection in time future, he had, it must be remembered, no need of declaring himself beholden to Jesus: at least, if on this point, the Acts'

history is to be believed: for, of the Pharisees,—the sect to which Paul belonged—of the Pharisees, as compared with the other sect the Sadducees, it was the distinctive tenet. But, of the then future, the then past, as exemplified in the *particular* case of Jesus, could not but afford very impressive circumstantial evidence. Of this momentous occurrence, there were the real Apostles, ready to give their accounts,—conformable, it may be presumed, to those we see given, as from them, by the four Evangelists. These accounts, however, would not suit the purpose of the self-constituted Apostle: in the first place, because they came from the real Apostles, with whom, as we have so often seen, it was a declared principle with him not to have had anything to do: in the next place, because the Apostles were too scrupulous: they would not have furnished him with witnesses enough. His own inexhaustible fund—his own invention,—was therefore the fund, on this occasion, drawn upon: and, accordingly, instead of the number of witnesses,—say *a score* or two at the utmost—he could have got from the Apostles,—it supplied him with *five hundred*: five hundred, *all at once*: to which, if pressed, he could have added any other number of percipient witnesses whatsoever, provided only that it was at *different* times they had been such.

So much for explanation: now for the announced contrast. Whoever the people were, whom he had to address himself to,—they had contracted, he found, a bad habit: it was that of *eating and drinking*. Reason is but too apt to be seduced by, and enlisted in the service of her most dangerous enemy—*Appetite*. Not only did they eat and drink; but they had found, as it seemed to them, *reason* for so doing. They ate and drank—why? because they were to die after it. "Let us eat and drink," said the language we have seen

him reproaching them with, 1 Cor. xv. 32. "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The case is—that, in pleasure, in whatever shape they see her,—all men, to whose ambition supernatural terrors supply an instrument of dominion, behold their most formidable rival. Against such a rival, wonderful indeed it would be, if their hostility were not proportionable. No morality accordingly do they acknowledge, that does not include, with or without other things, hatred,—with or without contempt, of pleasure. Such, too, as is their morality, such is their law. Death is scarce severe enough, for a pleasure, which they either have, or would be thought to have, no relish for. So at least says what they teach: but, teaching how to act is one thing; acting accordingly, another. Thus we all see it is, in so many instances: and thus, without much danger of injustice, we may venture to suppose it may have been, in that of the self-constituted Apostle.

Not so Jesus: no harm did he see in eating and drinking, unless with the pleasure it produced greater pain. With this reserve, no harm,—for anything that appears in any one of the four histories we have of him,—no harm did he see in anything that gives pleasure. What every man knows—and what Jesus knew as well as any man—for neither in words nor in acts did he deny it—is,—that happiness, at what time soever experienced,—happiness, to be anything, must be composed of pleasures: and, be the man who he may, of what it is that gives pleasure to him, he alone can be judge.

But, to return to eating and drinking. Eating and drinking—he gives his men to understand—even he, holy as he is, should not have had any objection to,

had it not been for this same resurrection of his, which he was telling them of: eating and drinking—a practice, to which, notwithstanding this resurrection of his, and so much as he had told them of it, he had the mortification to find them so much addicted. So much for his *Corinthians*. It was, as we see, *for want* of their paying, to what he was thus telling them about the resurrection, that attention, to which it was so well entitled,—that *they* still kept on in that bad habit. But his *Thessalonians*—they too, as we have seen, had got the same bad habit. Well: and what was it that gave it them? What but their paying too much attention to this same resurrection of his, dished up in the same or another manner, by the same inventive and experienced hand. In conclusion, on laying the two cases together, what seems evident enough is—that, in whatever manner served up to them, his resurrection, whatever it was, was considerably more effectual in making people eat and drink, than in weaning them from it.

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SECTION 6.

GAMALIEL—HAD HE PART IN PAUL'S PLAN?

Gamaliel—in the working of this conversion, may it not be that Gamaliel—a person whose reality seems little exposed to doubt—had rather a more considerable share, than the above-mentioned unknown and unknowable Ananias?

Gamaliel was "a doctor of law" Acts 5:34—a person of sufficient note, to have been a member of the council, in which the chief priests, under the presidency of the High Priest, Acts 5:24, took cognizance of the offence with which Peter and his

associates had a little before this been charged, on the occasion of their preaching Jesus. Under this Gamaliel, had Paul, he so at least is made to tell us, studied, Acts 22:3. Between Paul and this Gamaliel, here then is a connection: a connection—of that sort, which, in all places, at all times, has existence,—and of which the nature is everywhere and at all times so well understood—the connection between *protegé* and protector. It was by authority from the governing body, that Paul was, at this time, lavishing his exertions in the persecution of the Apostles and their adherents:—who then so likely, as this same Gamaliel, to have been the patron, at whose recommendation the commission was obtained? Of the cognizance which this Gamaliel took, of the conduct and mode of life of the religionists in question,—the result was favourable. "Let them alone," were his words. Acts v. 38. The maintenance, derived by the *protegé*, on that same occasion, from the persecution of these innoxious men—this maintenance being at once odious, dangerous, and precarious,—while the maintenance, derivable from the taking a part in the direction of their affairs, presented to view a promise of being at once respectable, lucrative, and permanent;—what more natural then, that this change, from left to right, had for its origin the advice of this same patron?—advice, to which, all things considered, the epithet *good* could not very easily be refused.

FALSE PRETENCES EMPLOYED.

To the self-constituted Apostle, false pretences were familiar. They were not—they could not have been—without an object. One object was power: this object, when pursued, is of itself abundantly sufficient to

call forth such means. But, another object with Paul was money: of its being so, the passages referred to as above, will afford abundant proofs. A man, in whose composition the appetite for money, and the habit of using false pretences are conjoined, will be still more likely to apply them to that productive purpose, than to any barren one. In the character of a general argument, the observations thus submitted, are not, it should seem, much exposed to controversy.

But, of a particular instance, of money obtained by him on a false pretence,—namely, by the pretence of its being for the use of others, when his intention was to convert it to his own use,—a mass of evidence we have, which presents itself as being in no slight degree probative. It is composed of two several declarations of his own,—with, as above referred to, the explanation of it, afforded by a body of circumstantial evidence, which has already been under review: and as, in the nature of the case, from an evil-doer of this sort, evidence to a fact of this sort, cannot reasonably be expected to be frequently observable,—the labour, employed in bringing it here to view, will not, it is presumed, be chargeable, with being employed altogether without fruit.

First, let us see a passage, in the first of his Epistles to his *Corinthians*, date of it, A.D. 57. In this, we shall see a regularly formed system of money-gathering: an extensive application of it to various and mutually distant countries, with indication given of particular times and places, in which it was his intention to pursue it: also, intimation, of a special charitable purpose, to which it was his professed intention to make application of the produce of it, at a place specified: namely, Jerusalem.

First then comes, 1 Cor. 16:1-8. A.D. 57.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of *Galatia*, even so do *ye*.—Upon the *first day of the week*, let every one of you *lay by him in store*, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.—And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto *Jerusalem*.—And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.—Now I will come unto you when I shall pass through Macedonia; for I do pass through *Macedonia*.—And it may be that I will abide, yea and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.—For I will not see you now by the way: but I trust to tarry a while with *you* if the Lord permit.—But I will tarry at *Ephesus* until Pentecost." At Ephesus, where he becomes an object of jealousy, as we have seen, to the church-silversmiths; and, from his declared business at those *other* places, some evidence surely is afforded of what was his probable business in *that* place.

Next let us see a passage in his Epistle to his *Romans*: date of it, A.D. 58. Here, in two instances, we shall see the success, with which this system was pursued by him: as also a maxim, laid down by him—a maxim, in which the existence of this same system, on his part, is acknowledged: a maxim, in which his hopes of success in the pursuit of it, are declaredly founded.

Rom. 15:24-28. A.D. 58.

"Whensoever I take my journey into *Spain*, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.—But now I go unto *Jerusalem, to minister unto the Saints*.—For it

hath pleased them of *Macedonia* and *Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*.—It hath pleased them verily: and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made *partakers of their spiritual things*, their *duty* is also *to minister unto them in carnal things*.—When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come *by you* into *Spain*."

In the instance in question, money (we see)—of the quantity of course nothing said—is mentioned by him, as being actually in his hands: the purpose, for which it was there,—and to which he would of course be understood to intend applying it,—being also mentioned by him:—applying it, at Jerusalem, to the use of the poor saints. So much for *professed* intentions. Now then for *real* ones. Answer, in his own words: that those Gentiles, who by him had been made partakers of his spiritual things, might, as in "*duty*" bound, "minister" to him, so much the more effectively "in carnal things:" that he, who preached, what he called the Gospel, might, as he had been preaching to his Corinthians also (1 Cor. ix. 14) be enabled so much the more comfortably to "live by" it.

"The poor saints which are at Jerusalem:"—*the* poor saints—to wit, not here and there a saint or two, but the whole Christian population living together on a common stock—if now, A.D. 58, they were living, as A.D. 53 they were (Acts ii. 44; vi. 1) and, in this particular, from the beginning to the end of the history, no change is mentioned—in Jerusalem—was it in the nature of man, in that state of men and things,—was it in the nature of men and things, that any man, who had any knowledge of their situation, and of the terms on which Paul, from first to last, had been with them, could for a moment have

thought of lodging, for *their* use, any the smallest sum of money in *his* hands? as well might it be said, at this moment—a man, whose wish it was to convey money to Spain, for the use of the Cortes, would choose the hand of the Duc d'Angouleme to send it by. All this time, *there* were the Apostles of Jesus—patrons of those same saints: and, anywhere more easily than *there*, could he be. That, with this money in his hands, among his objects was—the employing more or less of it in the endeavour to form a party there, may not unreasonably be supposed, from what we have seen of that *Invasion Visit*, by which his designs upon Jerusalem were endeavoured to be carried into effect. For, according to Acts 19:21, already when he was at Ephesus, as above, was it his known design, to try his fortune once more in Jerusalem, and after that in Rome. This may have been among his designs, or not. Be this as it may, this would have been no more than a particular way, of converting the money to his own use.

Not that, if at this time, and for *this purpose* from even the quarters in question, money had come, as he says it had, there was anything very wonderful in its so doing. As to *us* indeed *we* know pretty well what sort of terms he was on, from first to last, with the community in question: *we* know this, because his historiographer has made us know it. But, as to the people of those same countries respectively,—at their distance from Jerusalem, what, in their situation, might easily enough happen was,—not to have, as to this point, any adequate information till it was too late to profit by it: and, that such would be their ignorance, is a matter, of which he might not less easily have that which, to a man of his daring and sanguine temper, would be a sufficient assurance.

One thing there is, which, on the occasion of any view they took of this subject, may perhaps have contributed to blind their eyes. This is—the fact, of his having actually been concerned, in bringing money to Jerusalem, for a similar purpose, though it must be confessed, not less than fourteen years before this: to wit, from Antioch, as stated in Chapter V., speaking of *that*—his second Jerusalem Visit, by the name of the *Money-bringing Visit*.

But,—what may easily enough have happened, distance in time and place, together considered, is—that to those particulars, which composed no more than the surface of the business, *their* knowledge was confined: while *we*, though at the distance of more than seventeen centuries, know more or less of the inside of it,—let into it, as we have been, by the author of the Acts.

As to their arriving sooner or later, at the suspicion, or though it were the discovery, that the money had not, any part of it, reached the hands it was intended for, nor was in any way to do so,—what bar could the apprehension of any such result oppose, to the enterprise, systematic, as we see it was, of the creator of Antichrist? When, to a man, who occupies a certain situation in the eye of the political world, calls for accounts are become troublesome,—Scipio might have informed him, if he had not well enough known of himself, how to answer them.

When a charge made upon you is true—evidence full against you, and none to oppose to it,—fly into a passion, magnify your own excellence—magnify the depravity of your adversaries. This mode, of parrying a charge, is perfectly well understood in our days, nor could it have been much less well understood in Paul's days. As for *his* adversaries, Paul had a storm

in petto at all times ready for them: for the materials, turn to any page of his Epistles: whatever, in this way, he had for rivals,—*that* and more he could not fail to have for accusing witnesses. To the creator of Antichrist—sower of tares between Pharisees and Sadducees,—whatever were the charges, defence, the most triumphant, could never be wanting: arguments, suited with the utmost nicety, to the taste of judges. He would warn them, against false brethren, and liars, and wolves, and children of Satan, and so forth: he would talk to them, about life and death, and sin and righteousness, and faith and repentance, and this world and that world, and the Lord and resurrection: he would talk backwards and forwards—give nonsense for mystery, and terror for instruction: he would contradict everybody, and himself not less than anybody: he would raise such a cloud of words, with here and there an *ignis fatuus* dancing in the smoke,—that the judges, confounded and bewildered, would forget all the evidence, and cry out *Not Guilty* through pure lassitude.

As to us,—the case being now before us, what shall be our verdict? Obtaining money on false pretences is the charge. Guilty shall we say, or not guilty? Obtainment on a certain pretence, is proved by *direct* evidence—his own evidence: proof, of falsity in the pretence, rests, as it could not but rest, on *circumstantial* evidence.

One observation more: for another piece of circumstantial evidence has just presented itself: it consists of the utter silence, about the receipt of the money or any particle of it,—when, if there had been any such receipt, occasions there were in such abundance for the mention of it. A.D. 57, in his first to his Corinthians,—there it is, as we have seen, that

he urges them to lay by money for him, declaring it is for the saints at Jerusalem; and that on this same errand it is, that he is going to Macedonia,—and that in his way to Jerusalem he will give them another call, to receive, for that same purpose, the intermediate produce of these proposed *saving-banks*. In his letter to the Romans, written the next year, A.D. 58—written at Corinth,—then it is, that he has already made the said intended money-gathering visit, and with success:—with success not only in Macedonia, as he had proposed, but in Achaia likewise: and, with this money in his hand, and for the purpose of delivering the money to those for whom he obtained it;—for this purpose (he says) it is, that he is at that moment on his way to Jerusalem —the place of their abode. This is in the year A.D. 58. Well then: after this it is, that he takes up his abode at Ephesus. And when, after his contests with the church silversmiths there, he departs from thence, whither does he betake himself? To Jerusalem? No: he turns his back upon Jerusalem, and goes for Macedonia (Acts xx. 1.) then into Greece, where he stays three months; and purposes, Acts 20:3, to return through Macedonia. A.D. 60, it is, that, for the first time, Acts 20:16, any intention of his to visit Jerusalem is declared, he having coveted no man's silver or gold, as his historian, Acts xx. 33, makes him assure us. When, at length he arrived there, what his reception was, we have seen. Had any of the *money* been received there, would such as we have seen have been the reception given to the *man*? When, by the Christians at Jerusalem, Agabus was sent to him, to keep him if possible from coming there,—is it in the nature of things, that they should have already received any of it, or been in any expectation of it? In what passed between him

and the Elders, headed by the Apostle James, is any the slightest allusion made to it? When, in Cæsarea, all in tears, Acts 21:12, 13, his attendants were striving, might and main, to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem,—did he say anything about the money —the money he had been so long charged with? Oh no; not a syllable: to Jerusalem he is resolved to go indeed: Oh yes: but not the shadow of a reason can he find for going there.

When arrived at Jerusalem, the brethren, says the Acts 20:17, received him gladly. The brethren: yes, what adherents he had, would of course receive him gladly, or at least appear to do so. But the money? On their side, was anything said about the money? Not a syllable. Either at this time by his own hand, or any time before, by other hands, had they received this money, or any considerable part of it, could they have received him otherwise than not only gladly, but gratefully?

All the time, the hero was thus employed in money-craving and money-gathering, the historian, let it never be out of mind, was of the party: four years before, A.D. 53, had he been taken into it; yet not any the least hint about these money-matters does he give. So far indeed as regarded what was avowedly for Paul's own use, neither could the receipt nor the craving of the money from their customers, have been unknown to him; for this was what they had to live upon. But the letters his master wrote—wrote to their customers everywhere—letters, in which the demand was made, for the so much more extensive purpose,—of these, so many of which have reached these our times, the contents may to him have easily enough remained a secret: little reason had he to expect, none at all to fear, the exposure,—which

now, at the end of more than seventeen centuries, has, at length, been made of them,—confronted, as they may now be, with the particulars he himself has furnished us with.

FOOTNOTES:

[13] Acts vii. ver. 47. Speech of St. Stephen. "But Solomon built him an house. Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?" In itself, perfectly comfortable all this, to the dictates of reason and the instruction of Jesus: but not the less clear blasphemy against the Mosaic law.

[14] Acts ix. ver. 1 and 2. "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, *went* unto the *High Priest*,—And *desired* of him letters to Damascus to the Synagogues, &c."

[15] Acts xxii. ver. 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 to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem for to be punished."

[16] Yet, for even at the outset, after certain "days spent with the disciples," and employed of course in receiving from them the necessary instructions, he preached Jesus with such energy and success as not only to "confound," Acts ix. 19 to 24, the unbelieving among the Jews, but to provoke them to "take counsel to kill him."

[17] Paul, says—2nd Cor. 11:6—"For though I

be rude in speech yet am I not in knowledge nay, in everything we have made it manifest among all men to you-ward, or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the Gospel of God for naught? I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you; and when I was present with you I was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia supplied the measure of my want, and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you and so I will keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia, &c."

When ever we get a Temperamental and psychological view of Paul, we see verified the deductions of the author of this treatise, that he was a transparent imposter. An unscrupulous adventurer. With talent well adapted to dogmatically command the attention of the ignorant and especially those of organized hereditary idolatry, the extreme vanity, the vain glorious pretensions of this new priest was well adapted to obtain obsequious complacence from such people. He always presents himself in a controversial spirit of self-exaltation.

His egotistic diction could hardly be made more manifest than in the terms above quoted, to wit:—"I robbed other Churches taking wages of them that I might minister unto you, &c." It presents a striking contrast to the benevolent and fraternal spirit of Christ and his disciples.

[18] N.B. The editor at this place inserts pages of discussion—which the author exhibited by way of an appendix. At the expense of a little

redundancy and incongruity the editor inserts it in this place.—Ed.

[19] According to the Acts' account, this same stoning, if it was the same, was much in the style of that same resurrection of Eutychus, which we have seen in Chapter xiii. §. 10. As to Paul, when this martyrdom had been suffered by him,—"some" says Acts xiv. 19, were "supposing he had been dead:" and on that supposition, "drew him out of the city." Paul, on the other hand, thought otherwise: he supposed himself alive, and, on that supposition, he walked off, as if nothing had been the matter with him. "Certain Jews ... say verses 19 and 20, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."

CHAPTER III.

Paul disbelieved.—Neither his divine Commission nor his inward Conversion ever credited by the Apostles or their Jerusalem Disciples.—Source of Proof stated.

SECTION 1.

TO PAUL'S CONVERSION VISION, SOLE ORIGINAL WITNESS HIMSELF.

Void, as we have seen, of all title to credence, is the

story of Paul's commission from Jesus:—void may it be seen to be, even if taken by itself, and without need of resort to any counter-evidence. Who could have expected to have found it, moreover, disproved by the most irresistible counter-evidence—by the evidence of the Apostles themselves? Yes: of the Apostles themselves, of whom it will plainly enough be seen, that by not so much as one of them was it ever believed: no, not to even the very latest period, of which any account has reached us: namely that, at which the history of the Acts of the Apostles closes, or that of the date of the last-written of Paul's Epistles, whichsoever of the two may be the latest.

In regard to the story of his conversion, its cause, and manner,—it has been seen, that it is either from himself directly, or from an adherent of his, the author of the Acts,—who had it from himself, unless Ananias was a person known to the author of the Acts, and heard by him,—it is from Paul, and Paul alone, that all the evidence, which the case has happened to supply, has been derived.

In regard to the degree of credence given, to his pretence to the having received a commission from Jesus, still the same remark applies: still, either from himself, or from the same partial, and, as will be seen, not altogether trustworthy, narrator, comes the whole of the evidence, with which the case happens to have furnished us.

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SECTION 2.

COUNTER-WITNESSES, THE APOSTLES. BY THEM, THE STORY WAS PROBABLY NOT HEARD—CERTAINLY NOT CREDITED.

Jerusalem, according to the Acts, was the headquarters of the noble army of the Apostles: the ordinary residence of that goodly fellowship:—a station, which they none of them ever quitted, for any considerable length of time.

In the course of the interval, between the date assigned by Paul to his conversion, and that of the last particulars we have of his history,—mention, more or less particular, may be found of four visits of his—distinctly four related visits, and no more than four,—to that metropolis of the new Church. On no one of these occasions, could he have avoided using his endeavours, towards procuring admittance, to the fellowship of the distinguished persons, so universally known in the character of the select companions and most confidential servants of Jesus: of that Jesus, whom, in the flesh at any rate, he never so much as pretended to have ever seen: *from whom* he had consequently, if they thought proper to impart it, so much to learn, or at least to wish to learn: while *to* them he had nothing to impart, except that which, if anything, it was only in the way of *vision*, if in any way, that he had learned from Jesus.

That on three at least of these four occasions, viz. the 1st, 3d, and 4th, he accordingly did use his endeavours to confer with them, will be put out of dispute by direct evidence; and that, in the remaining one, namely that which in the order of time stands second,—successfully or not, his endeavours were directed to the same purpose,—will, it will be seen, be reasonably to be inferred from circumstantial evidence. In the character of an additional occasion of intercourse, between him and one of the Apostles, namely, Peter, the chief of them, —will be to be added, that which will be seen taking

place at Antioch; immediately upon the back, and in consequence, of the third of these same visits of his to Jerusalem.

As to the mode of his conversion as above stated,—the *time*, for him to have stated it to them, was manifestly that of the first of these four visits;—say his *reconciliation-visit*: and that, of that first visit, to see them, or at any rate the chief of them, namely, Peter, was the object,—is what, in his Epistle to the Galatians, we shall see him declaring in express terms.

After all—that story of his, in which the supposed manner of his conversion is related, as above,—did he so much as venture to submit it to them? The more closely it is examined, the less probable surely will be seen to be—his having ventured, to submit any such narrative, to a scrutiny so jealous, as theirs, under these circumstances, could not fail to be.

One of two things at any rate will, it is believed, be seen to a certainty: namely, Either no such story as that which we see, nor anything like it, was ever told to them by him; or, if yes, it obtained no credit at their hands.

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SECTION 3.

IN PROOF OF THIS, SO MUCH OF THE ACTS HISTORY MUST HERE BE ANTICIPATED.

For proof, of the disbelief, which his story will, it is believed, be found to have experienced, at the hands of those supremely competent judges,—the time is now come, for collecting together, and submitting in a confronted state to the reader, all the several

particulars that have reached us, in relation to these four important visits.

Between the first-recorded and the last-recorded of the four, the length of the interval being so considerable as it will be seen to be, namely, upwards of 17 years at the least,—and, in the course of the interval, so numerous and various a series of incidents being to be seen comprised,—the consequence is—that this one topic will unavoidably spread itself to such an extent, as to cover the whole of the chronological field of the history of the Church in those eventful times. A sort of necessity has thus been found, of taking a view of the principal part of all those several incidents, in a sort of historical order, in a succeeding part of this work: hence, of that which, for the proof of what has just been advanced, will here be necessary to be brought to view,—no inconsiderable portion will be an anticipation, of that which belongs properly to the historical sketch, and, but for this necessity, would have been reserved for it.

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SECTION 4.

TOPICS UNDER HIS SEVERAL JERUSALEM-VISITS.

Thick clouds, and those covering no small portion of its extent, will, after everything that can be done to dispel them, be found still hanging over the field of this inquiry. But, if to the purpose of the present question, sufficient light be elicited; in whatever darkness any collateral points may remain still involved, the conclusion will not be affected by it.

As to the credibility of Paul's story,—taken in itself,

and viewed from the only position, from which we, at this time of day, can view it,—the question has just been discussed.

That which remains for discussion is—whether, from the Church, which Paul found in existence—the Church composed of the Apostles of Jesus, and his and their disciples—it ever obtained credence.

On this occasion, to the Apostles more particularly must the attention be directed: and this—not only because by their opinion, that of the great body of those disciples would, of course, on a point of such vital importance, be governed; but, because, in the case of these confidential servants and habitual attendants of Jesus, the individuals, of whom the body is composed, and who are designated by one and the same denomination, are always determinable: determinable, in such sort, that, at all times, wheresoever they are represented as being, the eye can follow them.

To judge with what aspect Paul with his pretensions was viewed by them, always with a view to the main question—whether, in any particular, the alleged supernatural cause of his outward conversion, and thence of his presumable inward conversion, ever obtained credence from them;—one primary object, which requires to be attended to, is—personal intercourse; viz. the sort of personal intercourse, which between him on the one part, and them, or some of them, on the other part, appears to have had place.

Of this intercourse, the several *interviews*, which appear to have had place, will form the links. Correspondent to those *interviews* will be found to be so many *visits*: all of them, except one, visits made by him to the great original metropolis of the Christian

world—Jerusalem:—the scene of the acts and sufferings of the departed Jesus:—the ordinary abode of these his chosen disciples and successors. If, to these visits of Paul's is to be added any other interview,—it will be in another city, to wit, Antioch: and, in this instance, between Paul, and not, as in the case of the other visits might naturally be expected, the Apostles in a body; but one, or some other small number of members, by whom a visit to that place was made, in consequence of their having been selected for that purpose, and deputed by the rest.

Of the interviews corresponding with these visits, the real number,—and not only the real number, but the number upon record,—is unhappily, in no inconsiderable degree, exposed to doubt; for, considering the terms they were upon, as we shall see, at the interviews produced by Paul's first Jerusalem visit, it does not by any means follow, that, between the persons in question, because there were two more such visits, there was, on each occasion, an interview.

Two of them, however, at any rate, if any degree of credence whatever be given to the documents, remain altogether clear of doubt: and whatever uncertainty may be found to attach upon any of the others, may be regarded as so many fixed points: fixed points, forming so many standards of reference, to which the others may in speaking of them be referred, and by reference to which the reality and time of those others, will be endeavoured to be ascertained.

For the designation of the visits which produced these two unquestionable interviews, the terms *Reconciliation Visit*, and *Invasion Visit*, will here be employed: the former being that which gave rise to

the first-mentioned of the two interviews, which, after the conversion, appear for certain to have had place between the rival and contending powers; the other, to the last.

1. By the *Reconciliation Visit* is here meant—that visit—by which was produced the *first* interview, which, after the conversion of Paul, had place between him and any of the Apostles. Its title to this appellation is altogether unquestionable. After these proceedings of Paul's, by which the destruction of so many of the Christians had already been effected, and that of all the rest was threatened,—it was not possible, that, without a reconciliation,—if not an inward at any rate an outward one,—any interview, on both sides voluntary, should have taken place. Of the Apostles, Peter was the acknowledged chief: that it was for the purpose of seeing Peter, that a visit of Paul's to Jerusalem—the first of those mentioned by him—was made,—is acknowledged by himself: acknowledged, in that Epistle of his, to his Galatian disciples, of which so much will have to be said, Gal. i. and ii.[20] Without the assistance of some mediator, scarcely was it in the nature of the case, that, in any way, any such reconciliation could have been effected. In the person of Barnabas,—a most munificent patron, as will be seen, of the infant church,—this indispensable friend was found.

According to the received chronology, the time of this visit was A.D. 38. In the account, given in the Acts, Acts 16:6, of the conjunct missionary excursion made from Antioch by Paul and Barnabas—an excursion, the commencement of which is, by that same chronology, placed in the year 53,—Galatia stands fifth, in the number of the places, which they are spoken of as visiting. Of any visit, made in that

country, either before this or after it, no mention is to be found in the Acts, except in Acts 18:23: on which occasion, he is spoken of as revisiting Galatia, "strengthening the churches."[21]

Of what passed on the occasion of this visit, the account, given as above by Paul, will be seen receiving explanation, from what is said of this same visit in the Acts.

ACTS ix. 26 to 30.

> 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.—But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the Apostles, 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.—And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.—And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.—Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

2. By the *Invasion Visit* is here meant—that visit of Paul to Jerusalem, by which his arrestation, and consequent visit to Rome in a state of confinement, were produced. *Invasion* it may well be termed: the object of it having manifestly been—the making, in that original metropolis of the Christian world, spiritual conquests, at the expense of the gentle sway of the Apostles: spiritual acquisitions—not to speak of their natural consequences, temporal ones. It was undertaken, as will be seen, in spite of the most strenuous exertions, made for the prevention of it: made, not only by those, whose dominions he was so needlessly invading, but by the unanimous remonstrances and entreaties of his own adherents.

The date—assigned to the commencement of this visit, is A.D. 60. Interval, between this his last recorded visit and his first, according to the received chronology, 22 years.

Neither of the occasion of it, nor of any individual occurrence which took place in the course of it, have we any account—from any other source than the history of the Acts. Paul's account is all in generals.

3. Paul's Jerusalem Visit the Second.—According to the Acts, Acts 11:30, "which also they did, and sent it to the Elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul," between these two indisputable interviews of Paul's with the Apostles occurs another visit, herein designated by the name of the *Money-bringing Visit*. Under the apprehension of a predicted dearth, money is sent from the Antioch to the Jerusalem saints. Barnabas, and with him Paul, are employed in the conveyance of it. Time, assigned to this Visit, A.D. 43. Of this visit, not any the least trace is to be found in any Epistle of Paul's. Yet, in this Epistle of his to his Galatians, he will be seen undertaking in a manner, to give an account, of every visit of his to Jerusalem, in which, with reference to spiritual dominion, between himself and the Apostles, anything material had ever passed.

By this silence of Paul's, no counter-evidence is opposed, to the account given of this visit in the Acts. What may very well be is,—that he went along with the money, and departed, without having had any personal communication with any Apostle, or even with any one of their disciples.

4. *Deputation Visit*. Paul's Jerusalem Visit the Third—say his Deputation Visit. According to the Acts,[22] Paul being at the Syrian Antioch, certain men came thither from Judea, teaching, that Mosaic circumcision is necessary to Christian salvation. Dissension being thus produced, Paul, and Barnabas as usual with him, are dispatched to confer on this subject with the Apostles and the Elders—Time,

assigned to this visit, A.D. 52. Interval between the first and this third visit—years 15.

In addition to the first Jerusalem Visit, mentioned as above by Paul, to wit, in the first chapter of his Epistle to his Galatians,—in the second, mention is made of another.

Of the incidents mentioned by Paul, as belonging to this other visit, scarcely can any one, unless it be that of his having Barnabas for a companion, be found, that presents itself as being the same with any incident mentioned in the Acts, in the account given of the above named Deputation Visit. But, between the two accounts, neither does any repugnance manifest itself: and, forasmuch as, in a statement, the purpose of which required that no interview, in which anything material passed between him and the Apostles, should pass unnoticed,—he mentions no more than one visit besides the first,—it seems reasonable to conclude, that it was but one and the same visit, that, in the penning of both these accounts, was in view.

As far as appears, it is from the account thus given by Paul of the second, of the two visits mentioned by him as made to Jerusalem, that the received chronology has deduced the year, which it assigns to the Deputation Visit, as recorded in the Acts.

In Paul's account alone—in Paul's, and not in that in the Acts—is the distance given in a determinate number of years. According to one of two interpretations, 17—the number above mentioned as adopted in the current chronology—is the number of years mentioned by Paul as intervening between those two visits. But even in this place, a circumstance that must not pass altogether unnoticed

is,—that, according to another interpretation, to which the text presents itself as almost equally open, the length of the interval would be considerably greater. Galatians i. 17: "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which 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, and abode with him fifteen days." After what period?—after that of his conversion? or after the expiration of this his second visit to Damascus? Reckoning from this latter period, the interval may be ever so much greater than that of the three years: for, to the three years may be added an indefinite length of time for the second, and even for the first, of his abodes at Damascus. But, as we advance, reason will appear for concluding, that, being in the eyes of the Damascus rulers, as well as the Jerusalem rulers, a traitor—in the highest degree a traitor—his abode at Damascus could not, at either of these times, have been other than short as well as secret.

Gal. ii. 1: "Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus also." This being supposed to be the Deputation Visit, these fourteen added to the former three, make the seventeen.

5. *Peter's Antioch Visit.*—In Paul's Epistle, addressed to his Galatians, as above,—immediately after the mention of his own second Jerusalem Visit as above, comes the mention of an interview, which he says he has at Antioch with Peter: "Peter being come," he says, "to that place." Gal. ii. 11. In the Acts, 15:22, immediately upon the back of the accounts of the Deputation Visit, as above,—comes an account of what may be called a *counter Deputation Visit*. Of the

former Deputation Visit, according to the Acts, the result is—from the Apostles, the Elders, and the whole Church, a *letter*, concluding with a *decree*: and "by men chosen of their own company," this letter is stated as having been carried to Antioch: and, with these men, so chosen, Paul and Barnabas are stated as returning to Antioch, from which city, as above, they had been deputed. As and for the names of "chosen men," those of Judas, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, are mentioned: "chief men among the brethren" is another title by which they are, both of them, distinguished. To these, no other names are added: in particular, not that of Peter. Thus far the Acts.

As to Paul, in the account *he* gives, of the discussion, to which, after—and apparently, as above, in consequence of—his *secondly mentioned* interview with Peter at Jerusalem,—no mention is made either of Judas Barsabas, or of Silas: of Peter—and him alone—it is, that, on this occasion, any mention is made. Peter comes, as it should seem, to Antioch from Jerusalem; which last city seems to have been his ordinary abode. But, on this occasion likewise, in addition to this visitor, mention is again made of Barnabas, of whom, as far as appears, from the time of the Reconciliation Visit down to this time, Antioch was the ordinary abode. In relation to each of these several Visits, a brief preparatory indication of the topic or topics, which will be brought to view, when an account comes to be given of it, may in this place have its use.

I. *Reconciliation Visit.*—On this occasion, a difficulty that naturally presents itself—is—if the relation is in substance true, and the occasion is the same—how it can have happened, that if Peter was at Antioch—

Peter, the universally acknowledged chief of the Apostles—no mention should be to be found of him in the Acts: instead of him, two men as yet unknown —this *Judas Barsabas*, and this *Silas*—neither of them of the number belonging to the goodly fellowship of the Apostles,—being the only persons mentioned.

But, for this difficulty, conjecture presents a solution, in which there is nothing either in itself improbable, or inconsistent with either of the two accounts—that of Paul as above, and that in the Acts. This is—that those two were the men, and the only men, deputed in the first instance: but, that after them, at no long interval, came thither to their assistance that chief of the Apostles. Whether the importance of the question be considered—to wit, whether, upon being received as Christians, Gentiles should be obliged to submit to Mosaic circumcision—whether the importance of the question, or the strenuousness of the debates to which it is spoken of as having given rise, Acts 15:2, be considered—the visit of the chief of the Apostles at Jerusalem, to the scene of controversy at Antioch, presents not any supposition, to which any imputation of improbability seems to attach.

ACTS xv. 1 to 34.

1. And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.—When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders about this question.—And being brought on their way by the

Church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles, and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.—And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the Church, and of the Apostles and Elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.—But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.—And the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider of this matter.—And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe.—And God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us:—And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.—Now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?—But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they.—Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.—And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me.—Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to

take out of them a people for his name.—And to this agree the words of the Prophets; as it is written,—After this I will return, and 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:—That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord who doeth all these things.—Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.—Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:—But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.—For Moses of old time hath in every city, them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.—Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.—And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.—Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised; and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment:—It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved

Barnabas and Paul;—Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.—We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.—For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;—That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.—So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the Epistle.—Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.—And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.—And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the Apostles.—34. Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

GALATIANS ii. 1 to the end.

1. Then fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.—And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain.—But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.—And that because of false

brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.—To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.—But of those, who seemed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person) for they who seemed *to be somewhat*, in conference added nothing to me.—But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter:—For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles.—And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. —Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.—But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.—For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them *which were* of the circumcision.—And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away by their dissimulation.—But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth

> of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?—We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,—Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.—But if while we seek to be justified by Christ we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.—For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.—For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.—I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. —21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Of the falsity of his story concerning the manner of his conversion,—one proof, that has been given, has been deduced from the inconsistency, of the several accounts which we have of it—all of them originally from himself—as compared with one another.

Of the erroneousness of the notion of his having ever been in the eyes of the Apostles what he professed himself to be—of this, and at the same time of the

want of correctness, and trustworthiness, in every account, which, by him, or from him, is to be seen rendered, of his proceedings, adventures, and dangers—proof will, on the ensuing occasions, be afforded, by evidence of this same kind: by similar instances of inconsistency, which will be all along brought to view.

On the occasion of his *first* visit to Jerusalem—to the metropolis of Christendom—will be to be noted—1. The cause and manner of his arrival. 2. The circumstances of his abode—its duration, and business. 3. The cause and circumstances of his departure. 4. The general result of this his expedition.

1. Of the cause of his visit, and manner of his arrival, we shall see two different accounts: namely, one, given by himself directly, in an epistle of his to his disciples in Galatia; the other, by a man, who afterwards became his adherent and travelling companion—namely the author of the Acts.

2. Of the duration and business of his abode, we shall see, in like manner, two different accounts, delivered respectively by those same pens.

3. So, of the cause of his departure;—from the same two sources.

4. So, of the circumstances of it.

5. Of the general result of this same expedition of his, we have no fewer than three different accounts: namely, the same two as above; with the addition of a third, as reported, in the Acts, to have been given by Paul himself, in the course of the speech he made, at the time of his fourth visit, to an assembled multitude, headed by the constituted authorities among the Jews:—when, after having been dragged

by force out of the Temple, he would—had he not been saved by a commander of the Roman guard—have been torn to pieces.

On this occasion, we shall find, that, by his own confession, made for a particular purpose—for the purpose of saving his life—under an exigency which allowed no time for the study of consistency, and recorded by the blindness and inconsiderateness of his biographer;—we shall find, that the account, whatever it was, which, on the occasion of this his first visit, he gave of himself to the Apostles, failed altogether in its endeavours to obtain credence.

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SECTION 5.

Topics under Visit II.—MONEY-BRINGING VISIT.

Of the occasion and particulars of the second of these four visits, we have but one account: viz. that which is to be seen in the Acts.

Compared with what belongs to the other visits, that which belongs to this is but of small importance. The information, to be collected from it, will, however, be seen to be this: namely, that this was the second, of the attempts he made to join himself to the Apostles: and that it succeeded no better than the first. It did not even succeed so well: for, notwithstanding the claims which the business of it gave him to their regard—it was to bring them a sum of money, the fruit of the liberality of the Church at Antioch—he could not so much as obtain admittance into the presence of any one of them. Without much hesitation, this may be affirmed. If he had, he would have made mention of it: for, it will be seen, that,

whatsoever apparent countenance he ever succeeded in obtaining from them, it was his care to make the most of it.

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SECTION 6.

Remarks on Visit III.—DEPUTATION VISIT.

Of the occasion, and particulars, and termination, of the *third* of these four visits, we have two, and but two, accounts: one—that given in the Acts; the other—that given by Paul himself, as above, in his letter to his Galatians: that in the Acts, the only one which goes into particulars; and which must accordingly be taken for the basis of the narrative, and in that character be brought to view in the first instance: that given by Paul himself confining itself to generals; but, as far as it goes, much more to be depended upon, and affording much more instruction, than that given in the Acts.

Among its immediate consequences, this third visit appears to have had some sort of intercourse between Paul and Saint Peter at Antioch—the next most considerable seat of the new religion after Jerusalem; at Antioch, to which city, Paul,—who, with Barnabas, had been settled there,—was on his return: Peter being then on a temporary visit, made to that place, for the final settlement of the business, by which the last preceding visit of Paul to Jerusalem had been occasioned.

At the time of this visit, the residence of Paul was at this same Antioch. The occasion of it was—the dissemination there, of a doctrine, which, by certain persons not named, had been imported thither from

Jerusalem: a doctrine, according to which it was taught to the brethren—"Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." For the settlement of this important matter,—Barnabas, with Paul for his companion, besides other companions not named, was, by the brethren at Antioch, now, for the second time, sent, as a delegate, to the brethren at Jerusalem.

On every one of these three visits, it was under the protection of this Barnabas (it will be seen) that Paul had presented himself:—on the first of them, for the purpose of making known his conversion, and, if possible, forming a connection with the brethren there;—the second, for the purpose of bringing them money, the fruits of the respect and affection of the brethren at Antioch;—the third time, for the settlement of this important point of doctrine. As for Barnabas, he was a *Cypriot*, who, as will be seen, had an establishment at Jerusalem: and who, by his indefatigable zeal, added to his unrivalled munificence, appears to have obtained an influence not exceeded by any but that of the Apostles.

Of this same Deputation Visit, being the third of the recorded visits of Paul to Jerusalem,—followed by, and coupled with, one of Peter to Antioch—Gal. ii. 11, the place of Paul's residence,—two most important results, or alleged results, are mentioned: the first, mentioned by the author of the Acts alone, the decree, of a council, composed of the Apostles and certain other persons, by the name of Elders, at Jerusalem;—which decree, together with a letter, was from thence sent by the hands of Judas Barsabas and Silas, to the brethren at Antioch; Paul and Barnabas being of the party, on their return to that same place: the other result, mentioned by Paul

alone, a sort of *partition treaty*, by which the field of doctrinal labour, and thence of spiritual dominion was divided between him, (Paul), on the one part, and the Apostles on the other. The *Jewish world*, for a less ambiguous designation would hardly find a sufficient warrant, to remain with the Apostles; the *Gentile world*, to be left free to the exertions of the declared convert and self-constituted Apostle. As to the *decree and letter*, reasons for questioning the authenticity of these documents will be hereinafter brought to view, Ch. 6. Of the *partition treaty*, the reality presents itself as altogether natural and probable—and, by circumstantial as well as direct evidence, sufficiently established: by direct evidence supported, by circumstantial evidence confirmed.

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SECTION 7.

Topics under Visit IV.—INVASION VISIT.

Of the occasion of the fourth and last of these four visits—call it *Paul's Invasion Visit*—we have, though but from one immediate source, what may, to some purposes, be called two distinct and different accounts, included one within another: to wit, that which the historian gives as from himself, and that which he puts into the mouth of his hero, whose adventures he is relating. On this subject, from the mouth of the hero, the historian has not given us, and probably could not give us, anything but mystery. From the circumstances, it will be seen, whether the appellation *Invasion Visit*, by which this last of his recorded visits to Jerusalem is here distinguished, is not fully justified.

Neither, of the occurrences which took place during

the course of it, nor of the mode in which it terminated, have we any more than one account; viz. the account which, speaking in his own person, is given of it by the author of the Acts.[23]

But, upon one part of this account—and that a part in itself in no small degree obscure—light, and that such as, it is believed, will be found to dispel the darkness, will be seen thrown, by an article of the Mosaic law: upon which article, light will be seen reciprocally reflected, by the application here recorded as having been made of it. This regards the *Temple scene*:—an expensive ceremony spun out for days together only to produce the effect of an *Oath*.

On the occasion of this visit, in spite of a universal opposition on the part of all concerned—his own adherents and dependents, as well as his adversaries of all classes included,—Paul, for reasons by himself studiously concealed,—and, if brought to light at all, brought to light no otherways than by inference,—will be seen making his entry into Jerusalem, as it were by force. In the hope of freeing themselves, as it should seem, of this annoyance, it is,—that the rulers of the Christian church, insist upon his clearing himself from certain suspicions, in the harbouring of which the whole church had concurred.[24]

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SECTION 8.

SELF-WRITTEN BIOGRAPHY—ITS SUPERIOR VALUE AND CLAIM TO CREDENCE.

On the occasion of this portion of history, it seems particularly material, to bring to view an

observation, which, on the occasion of every portion of history, it will, it is believed, be of no small use to have in remembrance.

In comparison of self-written biography, scarcely does any other biography deserve the name.

Faint, indeterminate, uninstructive, deceptive, is the information furnished by any other hand, of whatsoever concerns the state of the mental frame, in comparison of what is furnished by a man's own. Even of those particulars which make against himself,—even of those motives and intentions which he would most anxiously conceal,—more clear and correct, as far as it goes, if not more complete—is the information given by him, than any which is commonly afforded, even by an impartial hand. By a man's own hand, not unfrequently is information afforded, of a sort which makes against himself, and which would not, because it could not, have been afforded by any other hand, though ever so hostile. He states the self-condemnatory mental facts, the blindness of self-partiality concealing from his eyes the condemnatory inference: or, even with his eyes open, he lays himself under the imputation: bartering merit in this or that inferior shape, for the merit of candour, or for the hope of augmenting the probative force of his own self-serving evidence, in favour of every other merit for which it is his ambition to gain credence.

FOOTNOTES:

[20] Gal. i. 18. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."

[21] Of any mention made of Galatia, in any

of the Books of the New Testament, the following are, according to Cruden's Concordance, the only instances: 1 Cor. xvi. 1. "... have given order to the churches at Galatia." Times, assigned to these Epistles, A.D. 59. 2 Tim. iv. 10: "Crescens is departed to Galatia." A.D. 66. 1 Pet. i. 1: "to the strangers scattered in Galatia." Date A.D. 60.

[22] Acts xv. 1-4. 1. "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.—When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders about this question.—And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.—And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the Church, and of the Apostles and Elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them."

[23] Be this as it may, that he must have been in the way to hear, from various persons present, accounts, such as they were, of what was said by Paul,—seems to follow almost of course. This seems applicable even to the *latest* of the two occasions; for, though the place, Cæsarea, was some distance from Jerusalem, 56 miles,—yet the distance was not so great, but that the persons, who were attached to him, might, for the most part, be naturally supposed to have followed him: and in particular the historian, who, according to his history, continued in Paul's suite till, at the conclusion of this his forced excursion, he

arrived at Rome.

But, on the subject of *possible materials*, one concluding query here presents itself. On a *subject* such as that in question, on an *occasion*, such as that in question, for a *purpose* such as that in question, a *speech* such as either of those in question, might it not, by a person in the historian's situation—not to speak of other situations—be just as easily made without any special materials, as with any the most correct and complete stock of materials?

[24] Between Paul's third visit, and that which is here reckoned as his fourth, another is, by some, supposed[I.] to, have been taken place; on which supposition, this concluding one, which is here styled the fourth, ought to be reckoned the fifth.

But, for the support of this supposition, the grounds referred to for this purpose do not seem sufficient:—not that, if the supposition were true, any consequence material to the present purpose would follow.

For this supposition, what ground there is, consists in a passage in the Acts:—Acts 18:20, 21, 22.

20. When they, the Jews at Ephesus, desired [him] to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

But bade them farewell, saying, I *must* by all means *keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem*; but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

And when he had *landed* at Cæsarea, and *gone up*, and saluted the *church*, he *went down* to Antioch.

There we have the grounds of the supposition. But, what is the support they give to it?—

declaration, affirming the existence of an intention, is one thing; actually existing intention is another. Even supposing the existence of the intention in question,—intention is one thing; corresponding action, another. Jerusalem is not mentioned. Cæsarea being on the sea-coast, Jerusalem is indeed in the interior: and therefore, it may be said, is a place, to which, if a man went from Cæsarea, he would "*go up*:" but, from Cæsarea, it being on the coast, a man could not go to any place in Judaea not on the coast, without *going up*.

So much for *place*:—and now as to *time*. The time mentioned as the object of the *intention*, is the *passover*; but, that the time, at which, being *gone up*, Paul "*saluted the church*"—this being all which, upon this *going up*, he is here stated as doing—that this time was the passover, is not stated.

As to the *salute* here stated as given to the *church*,—at the conclusion, and as a material part of the result, of this inquiry, it will appear plain beyond all doubt, that, if by "*the church*" be understood any member of it at Jerusalem, besides two, or at most three, of the Apostles, —according to this interpretation, from the time of his Conversion Visit to Damascus antecedently to his first visit to Jerusalem, down to the last visit here reckoned as his fourth—there never was a day on which the *church* would have received his salute.

What will also be rendered manifest is—that it was an object with the author of the Acts, to induce a belief, that Paul, before the conclusion of his first visit, was upon good terms with the church, and so continued to the last: and that, to this end, a purposed misrepresentation was employed by the historian.

Not that, in regard to the visit here in question, to the purpose of the argument—it makes any sort of difference, whether it had place or had not. If it had place, neither the conclusion, nor any part of the argument, will be seen to require any variation in consequence.

[I.] Wells's *Historical Geography of the Old and New Testament*, ii. 271. Ch. 5. Of Saint Paul's Travels and Voyages into Asia. "St. Paul (says Wells very composedly) "*having kept* the passover at Jerusalem, went thence down, &c."—And for this the Acts are quoted as above: but the Acts, it will here be seen, say no such thing.

CHAPTER IV.

Paul disbelieved *continued.—First of his four Visits to Jerusalem after his Conversion; say* Jerusalem Visit I. *or* Reconciliation Visit. *—Barnabas introducing him from Antioch to the Apostles.*

SECTION 1.

PAUL'S PROCEEDINGS BETWEEN HIS CONVERSION AND THIS VISIT.—CONTRADICTION. PER PAUL, IT WAS NOT TILL AFTER THREE YEARS SPENT IN ARABIA; PER ACTS, IMMEDIATELY.

Already on another occasion, and for a different purpose, have the two accounts, between which this self-contradiction manifests itself, been brought to view: viz. on the occasion of the accounts, given or supposed to be given, by Paul, of the cause and manner of his conversion:—accounts given in the first place, in writing, and consequently, with all requisite time for deliberation, in his Epistle to the Galatians:—given, or supposed to be given, in the next place, by a speech spoken, namely, that which, in the Acts is reported as spoken by him, on the occasion of his trial, to Festus and Agrippa:—Festus, the Roman Proconsul, Agrippa, the Jewish King.

In the whole account of this matter, as given by Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians, how much of truth there probably was, and how much of falsehood or misrepresentation,—has been seen already in some measure, ch. II. i. 5, and will be seen more fully as we advance.

As to his motive for this visit, he has endeavoured to keep it to himself: but, by the result, according to the account he himself gives of it, it is betrayed. It was—to effect the so much needed *reconciliation*:—his reconciliation with the Apostles:—the Apostles, in relation to whom his disregard is professed, the need he had of them, no otherwise than virtually, nor yet the less effectually confessed. Without an interval of considerable length between his conversion and this visit, all such reconciliation would have been plainly hopeless. From this circumstance, the length, as alleged by him, of his abode in Arabia, receives obvious and highly probative confirmation. The confirmation is, indeed, reciprocal. The nature of his situation, proves the need he had, of an interval of considerable length, before any hope of

reconciliation could be fulfilled, or, naturally speaking, so much as conceived: by this circumstance, his abode in some other country is rendered probable to us: and this other country may, for aught we know, as well have been the country mentioned by him—to wit, *Arabia*, as any other: and, thus it is, that this assertion, of his having been three years in Arabia, between the time of his departure from Jerusalem to Damascus, and his return to Jerusalem to see Peter, is confirmed:—confirmed, by the natural length, of the interval, requisite to the affording any, the least chance, that Peter could be induced to meet upon terms of amity and intercourse a man, in whom he beheld the murderer of a countless multitude of human beings, linked to him by the closest bonds of self-regarding interest, as well as sympathy and brotherly love.

As to contradiction, contradiction cannot easily be much more pointed, than it will be seen to be, between the account in respect of time, as given in this instance by Paul, and the account given of it by his historiographer in the Acts. On a double ground, it is Paul's account that claims the precedence. Of *his* account, such as it is, the rank, in the scale of trustworthiness, is that of *immediate* evidence; that of his historiographer, no higher than that of *unimmediate* evidence:—evidence once removed; having, for its most probable and least untrustworthy source, that same *immediate* evidence. Paul's evidence is, at the same time, not only more circumstantiated, but supported by the reasons which he has combined with it. Not till three years after his alleged miraculous conversion, did he go near to any of the Apostles.—Why?—Because, though, *at* that time, for reasons which he has left us to guess, he had regarded himself as having

considerable need of them,—*till* that time he did not regard himself as having any need of them. And, why was it, that, for so great a length of time, he did not regard himself as having any need of them?—The answer he himself gives us, Gal. i. 10: ... "do I seek to please men?—I certify to you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. —For I received it not of man, nor was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.—When it pleased God, who called me by his grace,—to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, *immediately* I conferred not with flesh and blood:— Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which 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, and abode with him fifteen days.—But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother."

Thus far Paul himself. Let us now see, what is said in regard to the time, by his subsequent attendant and historiographer. Acts ix.... "as he (Saul) journeyed, he came near Damascus, and, suddenly there shined round him a light," &c.—ver. 8. "And Saul arose from the earth, and ... they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.—And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.—And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision ...—... go into the street called *Straight*, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus....—17. And Ananias ... entered into the house, and ... said, Brother Saul, the Lord ... hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight....—And ... he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.—And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which

were at Damascus.—And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues,....—22.... and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus,....—And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him.—... and they watched the gates day and night to kill him.—Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.—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*.—But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the *Apostles*, 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."

With what the historiographer says in his own person, agrees, as to the particular point now in question, what, in the studied oration, he puts into Paul's mouth. In that account likewise, immediately after the mention of what Paul did at Damascus,—follows, the mention of what he did at Jerusalem: and, as to everything done by him among the Gentiles, not only does the mention of it come after the mention of what was done by him at Jerusalem, but, between the two, comes the mention, of whatever was done by him, in any of the coasts of Judea. Acts 26:19. "Whereupon, O, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:—but showed, first unto them of Damascus, and of Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea; and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

Here then, according to Paul's own account, after his visit to Damascus from Jerusalem, he visited Arabia, and moreover Damascus a second time, before he

made his visit to Jerusalem to see Peter: before this visit did he make both those other visits; and, in making them, pass three years, with or without the addition, of the time, occupied by his first visit to Damascus,—and the time, occupied by his abode in Arabia. According to Paul's own account then, between his second departure from, and his arrival at, Jerusalem from thence, there was an interval either of three years, or of so much more than three years. On the contrary, according to both the accounts given of the matter by his historiographer in the Acts, there was not between the two events in question, any interval other than such as the journey from the one to the other—about 130 British miles as the crow flies, say about 160, allowance made for turnings and windings,—would require.

Now, as between Jews and Gentiles, *alias* heathens: —to which of these two descriptions of persons, were his preachings addressed in the first instance?

According to his Epistle to his Galatians, preaching to the heathen being his peculiar destination, this accordingly is the vocation upon which he proceeded in the first place: and we have seen how probable it is, not to say certain, that, in this particular, what he asserted was true. His appointment being to "the heathen," he conferred not with flesh and blood: *i.e.* with the Apostles, their immediate disciples, or other flesh and blood of the Christian persuasion: for, of any such conference—of any assistance or support from any such quarter, he has, in this same Epistle, been declaring and protesting—most vehemently protesting—that he had no need. Neither then for the purpose of conference with "those who were Apostles," as he says, "before him," nor for any other purpose, went he up to Jerusalem: no, not till either

three years after his conversion, or three years, with the addition of another term of unmeasurable length.

Now then, how stands this matter according to the Acts—according to the speech put into Paul's mouth by the author of the Acts? Instead of the Gentiles being the description of persons, to whom, in the first instance, he applies his labours,—it is the Jews. What he *shows* is "*shown*," in the first place, to those "of Damascus;" then "at Jerusalem;" then "throughout all the coasts of Judea;" and, not till *then*—to the Gentiles: of his abode in Arabia—of any visit of his to Arabia—not any of the slightest mention, or so much as allusion to it. But, all this while, for anything that appears to the contrary, Arabia was completely open to him: whereas, after the offence he had committed against the authority of the ruling powers at Judea, it was not, morally speaking, in the nature of things that he could have continued in any place coming within that description—have continued, long enough to make any sensible impression: and, in Jerusalem in particular, in this same Epistle to the Galatians, from which the above particulars are taken,—it was, as he himself declares, only in secrecy, that, even fourteen years after this, he ventured to disseminate those doctrines, whatever they were, that were peculiar to himself, 2nd Gal.: 1, 2. "Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *privately* to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain."

Thus stands the contrariety:—the contrariety, between Paul's own account of his own proceedings,

and the account, which, by the author of the Acts, he is represented as giving of them, on another occasion. Says Paul *himself*, in his own Epistle to his Galatians—After my conversion, it was to the Gentiles that I applied myself first: to the Jews, not till afterwards; nor then, to any considerable extent. Says the author of the *Acts*, in a speech, which he puts into the mouth of Paul—It was to the Jews that he applied himself first, and *that* to a great extent: to the Gentiles, not till afterwards.

Thus stands the contrariety, taken in itself. As to the *cause*, it will neither be far to seek, nor dubious. In the differences of situations, occasions, and purposes in view—in the differences, that had place in respect of all those particulars—it will be found.

On the occasion, on which Paul himself speaks, what was the persuasion which it was his endeavour to produce? It was—that, for a number of years, commencing from the moment of his conversion,—with no persons, who, to this purpose, could be called *Jews*, had he, to any such purpose as this, had any intercourse: for, this being admitted, it followed, of course, that, if, on the subject of the religion of Jesus, he had really received the information he declared himself to have received, it was *not* from the Apostles, that he had had it, or any part of it. "On them (says he) I am perfectly independent: to them I am even superior. With Jesus *they* had no communication but in a natural way; with the same Jesus *I* have had communication in a supernatural way:—in the way of '*revelation*.' My communication with him is, moreover, of a date posterior to theirs—to any that they can pretend to: in so far as there is any contrariety between that I teach and what they teach, it is for theirs, on both these accounts—it is

for theirs, to yield to mine. From God is my doctrine: in opposition to it, if either they, or any other men presume to preserve, let the curse of God be on their heads. ver. 8. Accordingly, at the time of my first visit to Jerusalem after my conversion, no communication had I with them, for, no such communication, teaching as I did from revelation, could I stand in need of, I had already passed three years at least in Arabia, teaching to the Gentiles there my peculiar doctrine. This peculiar doctrine, as I made no scruple of teaching it to those Gentiles, as little, on the occasion of that visit of mine to Jerusalem, did I make any scruple of teaching it to Jews as well as Gentiles. True it is, I did not then teach it publicly:—I did not teach my peculiar doctrine, so publicly as they did theirs. But, as to this comparative secrecy, it had for its cause the advantage of being free from opposition; for, had the fact of my teaching this doctrine so different from theirs—been known to them,—they might have opposed it, and thus my labours might have been lost."

Whether, in the representation here given of what he says to his Galatians, there be any misrepresentation, the reader may judge.

On the occasion, on which *his historian* represents him as speaking, what now, as to this same matter, was the persuasion, which the nature of his situation required him to endeavour to produce? It was, that Jews were the sort of persons, with whom, during the period in question, he had, to the purpose in question, been holding intercourse: Jews, even in preference to—not to say to the exclusion of—Gentiles: so far is he from being *now* represented, as stating himself to have held converse with Gentiles,

to the exclusion of Jews; which is, that of which he *himself* has been seen taking so much pains to persuade his Galatian disciples. Yes: as far as competition could have place, Jews, on this occasion, in *preference*, at least, to Gentiles: for, on this occasion, what he was labouring at was—to recommend himself to the favour of his Jewish Judge, King Agrippa, Acts 26:8-21, by magnifying the services he had been rendering to the Jews, his very accusers not excepted: services, to the rendering of which, close and continued intercourse, during that same period, could not but have been necessary.

On this occasion, being accused of—his historian does not choose to say what,—his defence was—that, of the persecution he was suffering, his preaching the *resurrection* was the only real cause: that, having been born and bred a Pharisee,—in preaching that doctrine, so far from opposing, he had been supporting, with all his might, the principles maintained by the constituted authorities: adducing, in proof of the general proposition, the evidence furnished by a particular fact, the resurrection, that had place in the case of Jesus, Acts 25:19: that when, in his conversion vision, Jesus gave him his commission, the principal object of that commission was—the instruction of the Gentiles: to wit, by informing them—that, to such of them as would believe in the resurrection, and repent of their sins, and do works accordingly,—the benefit of it would be extended: that to this mandate, it was true, he did not ultimately fail to pay substantial obedience: yet, such was his affection for his brethren the Jews,—that it was not till, for a considerable time, he had been conferring on *them* the benefit of his labours, that he betook himself to the Gentiles. Acts 26:19. "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:—But

showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea; and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent, &c. —For these causes the Jews caught me in the Temple, and went about to kill me."

The repugnancy (says somebody), the repugnancy, is —not between Paul and Paul—but between Paul and the author of the Acts; and, since the facts in question are occurrences in which Paul himself was either agent or patient, to the author of the Acts, and not to Paul, is the incorrectness, wherever it be, to be imputed. Be it so: for the purpose of the argument at least, be it so: but, if so it be, what are we to think of the author of the Acts? Take away the author of the Acts, what becomes of Paul? Take away the authority of the Acts in the character of an inspired writer—writing from supernatural inspiration, after an immediate and continued intercourse, in some unexplained and inexplicable manner, with the Almighty,—what remains, then, of the evidence, on the ground of which the mighty fabric of Paul and his doctrine has been erected?

A man, who is thus continually in contradiction—sometimes with himself, at other times with the most unimpeachable authorities—what credence can, with reason and propriety, be given to his evidence, in relation to any important matter of fact? at any rate, when any purpose, which he himself has at heart, is to be served by it? Of such a man, the testimony—the uncross-examined and uncross-examinable testimony—would it, of itself, be sufficient to warrant a verdict, on a question of the most inconsiderable pecuniary import? how much less then, on questions, in comparison of which those of the greatest importance which the affairs of this life

admit of, shrink into insignificance? Even, suppose veracity, and every other branch of probity, unimpeached and unimpeachable,—if such confusion of mind, such want of memory, such negligence, in relation to incidents and particulars, of too immensely momentous a nature, to escape, at any interval of time, from the most ordinary mind;—if such want of attention, such deficiency, in respect of the most ordinary intellectual faculties and attainments, are discernible in his narrative,—what solid, what substantial ground of dependence can it furnish, or even leave in existence?

Of this sort are the questions for which already no inconsiderable warrant has, it is believed, been found; nor, if so, throughout the whole remaining course of this inquiry, should they ever be out of mind.

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SECTION 2.

GROUNDS OF PAUL'S PROSPECT OF RECONCILIATION ON THIS OCCASION WITH THE APOSTLES AND THEIR DISCIPLES.

On this head, in addition to, and in explanation of, the sort of narrative given in the Acts,—information, of the most instructive and impressive stamp, may be seen furnished by himself: at the head of it, may be placed that, which may be seen in his Epistle to his Galatian converts.

At Jerusalem was the board-room in which sat the Council of the Apostles: of those men, to whom their bitterest enemies would not, any more than their disciples and adherents, have refused the appellation

of constant companions and selected disciples of the departed Jesus. To them was known, everything that, in relation to Jesus, was known to any one else: and moreover, in unlimited abundance, particulars not capable of being known by any one else.

As to Paul, let us suppose him now a believer in Jesus; and, on this supposition, note what could not but have been the state of his mind, with relation to those select servants of Jesus.

In them he beheld the witnesses—not only of the most material and characteristic acts and sayings of their Master, but of his death, and its supernatural consequences—the *resurrection* and *ascension*, with which it had been followed.

In them he beheld—not only the witnesses of his *miracles*, but a set of pupils, to whom such powers of working the like miracles—such miraculous powers, in a word, as it had pleased him to impart,—had been imparted.

In their labours, he beheld the causes of whatsoever prosperity, he found the society, established by them, in possession of.

In himself, he beheld the man, who, with such distinguished acrimony and perseverance, had done his utmost, for the destruction of that society, into which, for the purposes, indication of which has been so clearly given by his own pen, he was preparing to intrude himself.

To form an ostensible cause for his intrusion,—in addition to such information, as, by means of his persecution, it had happened to him to extract from those whom he had been persecuting, what, on his part, had he?—He had his own learning, his own talents, his own restless and audacious temper, and

the vision he had got up:—the baseless fabric of that vision, a view of which has just been given.

Of the representation thus given of the matter,—whether we take his own account of it, or that of the Acts,—suppose the truth to rest upon no other ground than this vision, with or without that other vision, which has been seen so slenderly tacked to it, and so strangely inserted into it,—thus slender is the ground, on which we shall find him embarking upon his enterprize,—assuming to himself, without modification or apology, the name of *an Apostle*,—thrusting himself into the society, and putting himself altogether upon an equality, not to say more than an equality, with the whole company of the men, whose title to that appellation was above dispute:—those of them who, among the chosen, had been the most favoured, not excepted.

GALATIANS i. 11-23.

11. But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man.—For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.—For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it:—And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.—But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,—To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with

> flesh and blood,—Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which 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, and abode with him fifteen days.—But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.—Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. —Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;—And was unknown by face unto the Churches of Judea which were in Christ. —But they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

Thus, however indistinctly and incoherently stated, stands the matter, on the surface of both these accounts. On the surface. But, by a little reflection on the nature of the case—the obvious and indisputable nature of the case—as collected from all accounts, as already brought to view in a preceding chapter II, we shall be led to another conception, and the only tenable one.

The plan of worldly ambition—that plan by which we have already seen his outward conversion produced—had been not only formed, but acted upon:—acted upon, during a course of at least three years: of three years, employed at Damascus in preparation,—in Arabia in probation. What remained, and was now become necessary, was—some sort of countenance from the Apostles: from the Apostles, and thence, if possible, from the rest of the then existing Church. Necessary altogether was this countenance for his support: for, to this plan the

name of Jesus was essential. It was in that *name*, that all his operations were to be carried on:—in that name, from the use of which it was to be universally understood, that it was according to directions, and with support, from the departed Jesus, that by this, his newly-enlisted servant, everything was said and done.

In Damascus—yes:—in Damascus, where were the only persons, with whom, for the purpose of his dominion, he could with safety communicate: that is to say, persons, whom his commission from the Jerusalem authorities had placed under his power. In Arabia—yes: where, though he had made no progress of which he saw any advantage in giving any account—he at any rate had not experienced any opposition, of such a sort as to engage him to drop his scheme. In those comparatively distant countries —yes. But, in Jerusalem—the birthplace of Jesus and his religion,—in that metropolis, within which, or the near neighbourhood of it, all the witnesses of its rise and progress—all the proselytes, that had been made to it, were collected,—and from whence, and to which, the votaries of that religion, out of which it had sprung, would be continually flocking from all quarters;—in this place, for a man, known so notoriously to them all as a persecutor, in whose scheme of persecution they had all of them been involved,—for such a man to have, all on a sudden, begun preaching and acting, in the name of that Jesus, whom, to use his own language, he had persecuted—such an enterprise as this, which, even with the utmost support which it was in their power to give, would have been audacity, would, without some sort of countenance from them,—have been downright madness.

To perfect success it was necessary, that not only these shepherds of the Church pasture, but, through them the whole flock, should thus be brought under management. So far as regarded those same *rulers*, we shall find him, in a certain degree,—and even, with reference to his purpose, in a sufficient degree,—successful. But, with reference to the Disciples in general, and to all those rulers but three,—it will be seen to have completely failed.

Circumstanced as he was, to those rulers alone, was it possible for him to have addressed himself, with any the smallest hope. To any assembly of the faithful at large, to have repaired with no better recommendation than his vision story,—even with Barnabas, ready, as we shall see, to take him by the hand,—would have been plainly hopeless. Not less so would it have been—to present himself to the Apostles,—if, in support of such proposition as he had to make,—nothing more apposite, nothing to them in their situation more credible, than this same vision story,—had been capable of being produced. On them, therefore, the case seems already pretty well ripe for the conclusion, that, no such story was ever attempted to be passed. But, setting aside that aërial argument,—inducements of a more substantial nature, such as we shall find brought to view by Paul himself, were neither on this occasion wanting,—nor could, at any time, have been out of the view of that same Barnabas, whom we shall see appearing so often, in the character of his generous patron and steady friend. "On this plan, might Barnabas say to them,—On this plan, which he has chalked out for himself, he will be acting—not only not in opposition to, but even in furtherance of, your wishes and endeavors. Grecian as he is,—skilled in that language, and that learning, which serves a man as a

passport through the whole of the Gentile world,—it is to that world that his labours will confine themselves; a field surely ample enough for the most comprehensive views. To you he will leave,—and leave certainly without privation, and therefore naturally without regret,—that field, of which you are already in possession,—and, by the boundaries of which, your means of convenient culture are circumscribed."

"On this plan,—not only will your exertions remain unimpeded, but the influence of the name of Jesus—that name, on the influence of which those same exertions are so materially dependent for their success,—will, in proportion to Paul's success, be extended."

In a discourse, to this effect, from the generous and enlightened mediator,—may be seen the natural origin of that agreement, which, further on in its place, under the name of the *partition treaty*, there will be occasion to bring, in a more particular manner, under review.

But, what is little less evident, than the propriety and prudence of this plan, viewed at least in the point of view in which it might not unnaturally be viewed by Barnabas, is—the impossibility, of coming forward, with any tolerable prospect of success, with any such plan in hand, in presence of a vast and promiscuous assemblage. To engage, on the part of any such assemblage, not to say any steady confidence, but any the slightest hope,—that, from an enemy even to death, the same man would become a partner and assistant,—would require a most particular and protracted exposition, of all those facts and arguments, which the requisite confidence would require for its support:—a detail, which no such

assembly would so much as find time to listen to, were it possible for it to find patience.

Even in the case of the Apostles themselves,—taking the whole council of them together, the nature of the plan, it will be seen, admitted not of any successful negotiation. Accordingly, to the chief of them alone, to wit, to Peter, was it so much as the intention of Paul to make any communication of it in the first instance: and, in the whole length of the intercourse, such as it was, that he kept up with, them—in all the four visits, in the course of which that intercourse was kept up—being a period of not less than twenty-five years, to wit, from the year 35 to the year 60,—with no more than three of the eleven, will he be seen so much as pretending to have had any personal interview: *they* not seeing him, except when they could not avoid it; and *the others* never seeing him at all.

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SECTION 3.

OCCASION OF THIS VISIT, AS PER PAUL'S OWN ACCOUNT.

After his conversion—after the time at which, if he is to be believed, he saw that first-mentioned of his visions—that vision, by which the most strenuous opponent of the new religion was changed into one who, in profession, was the most active of its supporters,—what was the course he took? Did he repair immediately to Jerusalem from whence he came? Did he present himself to the eleven Apostles —to the confidential companions of the departed Jesus, to lay before them his credentials? to report to those by whom everything about Jesus that was to be known to man was known—what had been

experienced by him?—by him, Paul, by whom, till the moment of that experience, nothing of it whatever had been known? Not he, indeed. Behold what he says himself.

Instead of so doing, off he goes, in the first instance to Arabia; from whence, at the end of a length of time not specified, he returns to Damascus. At length, however, to Jerusalem he does repair: at length, into the presence of those against whose lives he had so long conspired,—he now uses his endeavours to intrude himself.

At length? at the end then of what length of time? At the end of three years? Yes: but from what point of time computed? From the time of his conversion on the road,—or from the last day of his stay at Damascus, upon his return thither from Arabia? By that man, let an answer to these questions be given—by that man who can find grounds for it.

Thus much, however, may, at any rate, be said:—of the length of this interval three years is the minimum.

In what view did it occur to him to seek this conference? in what view to make the attempt? and in what view delay it?

1. As to his view in seeking it,—it must be left to inference:—to conjecture, grounded on circumstances.

2. Being engaged, as he was, in the plan of making converts to a religion, called by him the religion of Jesus,—and this among the nations at large—among others besides those in the bosom of whose religion the founder of the new religion had been born;—feeling, as it seemed to him, the need, of information in various shapes—concerning the acts and sayings

of Jesus;—not having, for the purpose, had, as yet, access, to any of the persons, to whom the benefit, of an interview with Jesus, upon terms of peculiar confidence, had been imparted;—he was desirous, of taking this—his only course—for rectifying the misconception, under which, to no small extent, he must probably have been labouring,—and filling up the deficiencies, under which he could not but be labouring.

3. Obvious is the need he had, of countenance from these universally acknowledged chiefs, of the religion professed to be taught by him.

Good, says some one: but, having, from the first, been thus long labouring, under the need of information,—how happened it, that he so long delayed, the exertions he made at length, for the obtaining of it?

The answer is surely not unobvious.

Had the time, of his presenting-himself, been when the memory of his conversion was fresh,—when the memory, of the vision, by which it was to be stated as having been effected, would, supposing it really experienced, have been fresh also,—in such case, the narrative, true or untrue, would have found, opposed to its reception, all imaginable repugnance, in so many ulcerated minds: and, on the supposition of its being untrue, he—the supposed percipient and actually narrating witness—he, who knew nothing about the subject of his testimony, would have had to submit himself to the severest imaginable cross-examination, at the hands of those, to whom everything about Jesus was matter of perfect knowledge.

Thus the matter would have stood, in the first

instance. On the other hand, as time ran on, several results, favourable to his design, would naturally have taken place.

1. The exasperation, produced by the experience of the persecution suffered at his hands, would have been diminished.

2. His own recollection, of the particulars, might be supposed less vivid.

3. The curiosity, respecting them, would have become less eager.

4. Time might have given admission to behaviour on his part, of a sort, by which distrust might be lessened, confidence strengthened.

Well; now we have him at Jerusalem,—and for the first time after his conversion. When thus, at Jerusalem,—of those whom he went to see, whom did he actually see? Answer, Peter for one; James, whom he styles the Lord's brother, and who, according to him, though not literally a brother, was, however, a kinsman of Jesus:—these two, according to his own shewing; these two, and no more. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But of the other Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother." Gal. 1:18, 19.

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SECTION 4.

OCCASION, AS PER ACTS ACCOUNT COMPARED WITH PAUL'S.

Such as hath been seen is Paul's account of the matter:—Paul's own account, of the interval that

elapsed, between his conversion, and the first of his subsequent visits to Jerusalem:—to the residence of the Christians, whom he had been persecuting, and of the rulers, under and by the authority of whom, the persecution had been carried on. Such, loose as it is, is his account, of the interval between these two events: and of the place, in which, either almost the whole, or at any rate the greatest part of it, was passed.

Such was Paul's own account of his own proceedings, —at the distance of twenty-five years and more. Compare with it, now, the account, given by his historiographer—given, of the interval, that, according to him, had place, between these same two events. Acts 9:19-29.

Here, no three years' sojournment in Arabia: no visit to that country: no notice, of any place, other than Damascus, as being a place, in which the whole, or any part, of the time in question, was passed. In a position, with respect to each other, scarcely different from that of contiguity,—are the two events brought together. The blood of their disciples scarce washed from off his hands, when, with Barnabas for his introducer, he presents himself to the Apostles!

At the very time, when the Jerusalem rulers, would have been expecting to receive from him, the proofs of his punctuality, in the execution of the important plan, of official oppression, of which, at his own instance, he had been solemnly constituted and appointed the instrument; when, after going over to and forming a league with the criminals, for such they must have been called, whom he had been commissioned by these rulers to bring to justice;—at this very time it is, that he returns to the seat of their dominion:—to the place in which, at that very time,

his return to them, with the intended victims in captivity, could not but be the subject of universal expectation!

Let any one now judge, whether, in any state of things, natural or supernatural, the sort of conduct thus supposed is credible.

At Damascus, instead of presenting himself to the Damascus rulers, to whom the commission of which he was the bearer was addressed,—the first persons, whom, according to this account, Acts 9:19, he sees, are "the disciples," *i.e.*, the persons whom, by that commission, he was to arrest: and, with them, instead of arresting them, he passes "certain days."

These certain days ended,—does he thereupon, with or without an apology, present himself to these same rulers? Not he, indeed. Not presenting himself to them, does he, by flight or otherwise, take any measures, for securing himself, against their legitimate and necessarily intended vengeance? No such thing:—instead of doing so, he runs in the very face of it. He shows himself in the Jewish synagogues, in the public places of worship: and there, instead of preaching Moses and his law, he preaches Christ,—that Christ, whose disciples he was commissioned to extirpate.

This breach of trust—this transgression, which, however commendable in itself, could not but,—in the eyes of all those by whom, or for whom, he was in trust,—be a most flagitious and justly punishable act of treachery,—could it even from the first, for so much as two days, together, remain unknown? Not it, indeed: if, in this particular, to this same conversion story, as related by this same author, any credit is due. For, according to this same account,—

in this same journey, and at the very time of his conversion vision, was he alone? No; he had companions: companions, who, whatsoever became of him, would, at the very time of his entrance, unless any cause can be shown to the contrary, have entered thither in due course. Well, then—ask the men in authority,—"This Paul, in whose train you came,—where is he, what has become of him?" Such would of course have been the questions put to these, his companions, even on the supposition, that by these same companions, no visit had, of their own accord, been paid to these same rulers, under whose authority they went to place themselves.

At length,—and the days which by this time had elapsed were "*many*,"—he finds it expedient to quit Damascus. He is driven from thence: but by what force? By the exercise of the legal authority of the offended rulers? in a word, by public vengeance? No: but by a private conspiracy—nothing more: for, to these rulers,—so different are they from all other rulers,—whether their authority is obeyed or contemned, has, all the while, been matter of indifference.

ACTS ix. 19-30.

19. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul *certain days* with the *disciples* which were at Damascus.—And straightway he preached *Christ* in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.—But all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?—But Saul

> increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.—And after that *many days* were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:—But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.—Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a *basket*.—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.—But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, 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.—And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.—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 Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

In the above account—a remarkable incident is presented, by the occasion and manner of his escape from Damascus. In part, it has for its support an assertion made by Paul himself; but, as usual, as to part it is scarcely reconcileable with the account he gives of it. In respect of the adventure of the *basket*, the two accounts agree: and thus the occasion is identified and fixed. It is in respect of the description of the persons, by whom the attack upon him was made or meditated, that the accounts differ.

According to the Acts, the hostile hands are those of the Jews, who are spoken of as so many unauthorized and criminal conspirators: but, according to Paul, they are those of the constituted authorities—a governor acting under a king.

31. "In Damascus"—says he, in 2 Cor. 11:32-33—"In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."

Now, supposing the adverse force to have been that of a band of conspirators, it was natural for them to watch the "city gates": a more promising resource they could scarcely have had at their command. But, suppose it to have been that of the governor,—what need had he to watch the gates? he might have searched houses. By the reference made, to a matter of fact, which, supposing it real, must in its nature have been notorious—to wit, the existence of a king, of the name in question, in the country in question, at the time in question—a comparative degree of probability seems to be given to Paul's account. A curious circumstance is—that, in this Epistle of Paul's, this anecdote of the Basket stands completely insulated; it has not any the slightest connection with anything that precedes or follows it.

In the Acts' account, as already observed, Chap. 4, it looks as if it was immediately after the adventure of the basket, that he went on this his first visit to the Apostles at Jerusalem: for, as we see, it is immediately thereupon that his arrival at that city is mentioned. If so, the abode he had *then* been making at Damascus, was probably *after* his return from Arabia: that return from Arabia, which we have seen him speaking of in his Epistle to the Galatians, Gal. i.

15. "When it pleased God ... to reveal his son to me, that I might preach him to the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; Neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which 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." &c.

"After three years?"—three years, reckoning from what *time*? Here we see the ambiguity, and along with it the difficulty. If reckoning from his conversion,—then we have the three years, to be spent—partly in Damascus, partly in Arabia: in Damascus, in obtaining, perhaps, from the Christianized Jews—in return for the impunity given to them by the breach of the trust committed to him by the Jerusalem rulers—money, for defraying his expenses while in Arabia. If, reckoning from his escape from Damascus in a basket, then we have three years, during which not so much as any the faintest trace of him is perceptible. All, therefore, that is clear is—that according to his account of the matter, there was an interval of at least three years between his conversion, and this first of his subsequent Jerusalem visits—this visit of his to Jerusalem, to see the Apostles.

Between the two interpretations,—in respect of length of time, observe here the difference. According to one of them, between the conversion and the first Jerusalem visit, we have an interval of three years, and no more: and, in this interval, three lengths of time—one passed in Damascus, another in Arabia, a third, terminated by the basket adventure, passed also in Damascus, are all included: the entire interval determinate: but its parts, all of them, indeterminate. According to the other interpretation,

we have also three lengths of time: the first, indeterminate, passed in Damascus; the second, as indeterminate, passed in Arabia; the third, passed in Damascus, and this a determinate one—namely, the three years. Thus, upon the first supposition, the interval consists of three years, and no more: upon the second supposition, it consists of three years, preceded by two lengths of time, which are both indeterminate, but one of which—that passed in Arabia—may have been to any amount protracted.

Upon either supposition,—it seems not unlikely, that it was immediately after his escape from Damascus, that this first visit of his to Jerusalem took place. And, the greater the preceding interval of time, whether passed in Arabia or Damascus, the less unpromising his prospect, that the resentments, produced by the provocations given by him to the Christians, by his persecution of them,—and to the Jewish rulers, by his treachery towards them,—should, both, have to such a degree subsided, as to render even so short a stay, as that of fifteen days which he mentions, consistent with personal safety. Yet, as we see in the Acts, are these two events spoken of as if they had been contiguous: at any rate, it is in contiguity that they are spoken of.

Uncertainties crowd upon uncertainties. At the time of Paul's conversion,—had Damascus already this same king, named Aretas, with a governor under him? If so, how happens it, that, of this state of the government, no intimation is perceptible, in the account given of that conversion in the Acts? Was it —that, at that time, there existed not any such monarchical personage? but that, before the adventure of the basket, some revolution had placed him there?

According to Paul's account,—the state of things, produced in Damascus by his exertions, was somewhat curious. On the face of this account, in ordinary there was no *garrison* in Damascus: it was only by special order from the monarch, and for no other purpose than the bringing to justice—or what was called justice—the person of the self-constituted Apostle,—that a garrison was put into the town, with a governor for the command of it.

What a foundation all this for credence! and, with it, for a system of religious doctrine to build itself upon! —religious doctrine—with the difference between eternal happiness and eternal misery depending upon it!

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SECTION 5.

CAUSE OF THE DISCORDANCE BETWEEN THE TWO ACCOUNTS.

Between these two accounts, such being the discordance—where shall we find the *cause* of it? Answer: in the different views, in which, at the time of writing, the two accounts were penned: in the different objects, to the accomplishment of which, at the time of penning their respective accounts, the endeavours of the two writers were directed.

The author of the Acts—what, then, was *his* object? To obtain for his patron—his chief hero—alive or dead—a recognition, as universal as possible, in his assumed character of an Apostle. The more complete the recognition, bestowed upon him by those most competent of all judges,—the more extensive the recognition he might look for, at the hands of all

other their fellow-believers.

Sufficient was this—sufficient for the general purposes of the party—in the eyes of a person other than Paul, even though that other person was a protegé, a retainer, a satellite.

Sufficient this was not, however, to the arrogance of the head of the party—Paul himself: at least, at the time of his writing this his letter to his Galatian converts.

Think you, says he, that any relation, I have ever borne to any of those who were Apostles before me, had, on my part, anything in it of dependence? Think you, that I ever stood in need of anything at their hands? Think you, that I had ever any more need of them, than they of me? Not I, indeed. The Gospel, which I have always preached—neither from them did I receive it, nor from them, in preaching it, did I ever seek or receive any assistance. Gal. i. 11, 12. Think you, that I stood in any need, or ever supposed myself to stand in any need, of any acceptance or acknowledgement at their hands? Not I, indeed. When my revelation had been received by me, did I present myself to them, for any such purpose as that of remuneration and acceptance? Not I, indeed. I went not to them: I went not so much as to Jerusalem, where they then were: I conferred not with flesh and blood:—off I went to Arabia; and when my business in Arabia was at an end, even then, did I repair to Jerusalem? Not I, indeed. I returned again to Damascus. True it is, to Jerusalem I did go at last.—But when?—Not till three years afterwards. Well—and, when I was at Jerusalem, how many, and which of them, think you that I saw? Think you, that I put myself to any such trouble, as that of seeing them all together? the whole herd of

them? No. Peter was naturally a chief among them: with him I had accordingly some business to settle:—him, accordingly, I saw, as also James, whom, as being a brother, or other near kinsman, of Jesus, I had a curiosity to see.

Paul himself wrote at one time; this his disciple at another: each of them pursued the purpose of the time. Not on this occasion, at any rate,—perhaps not on any other, was there anything, that either wrote, concerted between them.[25] Of this want of concert, what has just been seen is one of the consequences.

Reserved as we have seen him, in regard to time and other circumstances,—one circumstance more there is, for which our curiosity is to no small amount, debtor, to the author of the Acts. This is—information, of the means—of the channel, through which Paul obtained the introduction, which, without mention made of the object, we have seen him acknowledging that, so far as concerned Peter, he was desirous of: and *that* to such a degree, as to undertake a journey from Damascus to Jerusalem, some 120 or 130 miles, for the purpose.

Repugnancy, so natural, and naturally so vehement—even at the end of three years, or the still greater number of years—by what means could he remove it, or so much as flatter himself with a prospect of being able to remove it? To this question, it is to the author of the Acts that we are indebted for an answer: and that answer a satisfactory one:—it was by the assistance of Barnabas, that the object, so far as it was accomplished, was accomplished.

To the religion of Jesus, after as well as before this,—to the Apostles in particular before this,—Barnabas was a supporter of no small importance.

At the time when the financial arrangements were for the second time settled;[26]—when, from the substance of the opulent among the faithful, enough was collected for the support of all the indigent;—among those, by whom, on this second occasion, lands and houses, were for this purpose sold, particular persons are, on this second occasion, for the first time mentioned. The first place is occupied by this Barnabas: and not till after him come Ananias and Sapphira—the unfortunate pair, of whose fate mention will have to be made in another place.

Joses was, it seems, the original name—the proper name of this beneficent protector: Barnabas, the *Son of consolation*, Acts 4:36, was no more than a title of honour,—a token of gratitude. A title of honour? and by whom conferred? Even by the Apostles. By Barnabas, therefore, whatsoever thereafter comes to be reported as done,—it is by *the Son of consolation* that we are to understand it to have been, and to be, done.

As to the arguments, by which this son of consolation succeeded,—in prevailing, upon two, and, if we are to believe Paul, no more than two, of these so lately persecuted or threatened servants of Jesus,—to be, for a few days, upon speaking terms, with him, who so lately had been their deadly, as well as open enemy,—it is from imagination, with judgment for her guide, that they must, if at all, be deduced from the surrounding circumstances of the case.

As to these arguments, however,—whatever were the rest of them, of two of them a hint is given by the author of the Acts: these are,—the story of the conversion,—and the boldness of the preaching, which at Damascus was among the first-fruits of it. Those which, under the guidance of judgment,

imagination would not find much difficulty in adding, are,—the evil—that might result from his enmity, in case the advances then made by him were rejected,—and the useful service, which, by the blessing of God, might be hoped for at his hands, if admitted in the character of an ally and cooperator: at any rate, so long as the whole field of his exertions, and in particular the geographical part of it, continued different from theirs.

With Peter, on whatever account, it was Paul's own desire to hold a conference:—so we have seen him declaring to the Galatians. To this Peter, whom he was desirous of seeing, and whom at length he succeeded in seeing,—to this Peter did he then himself tell the story of his vision, of his conversion, and the mode of it? If at any time he did,—at any rate, if the author of the Acts is to be believed,—it was not till Barnabas, the son of consolation, had told it for him. Had it been by himself that his story had been to be told in the first instance,—he would thereby have stood exposed to cross-examination: and, among those things, which Barnabas might in his situation say for him,—were many things, which, if at all, he could not, with anything like an equal prospect of good effect, have said for himself. To any asseveration of his own,—in any promises of future amity, it was not in the nature of the case, that from his own mouth they should give credence. But, when by Barnabas, of whose zeal in their cause they had received such substantial proofs—when from this son of consolation they received assurance, that Paul had actually engaged himself in that line of service, which he professed himself desirous to embrace;—that he had engaged so far, that no prospect of safe retreat could reasonably be in his view;—then it was,

that, without imprudence, they might, venture to hold at least a conference with him, and hear and see what he had to say for himself.

As to the account, given on this occasion by Barnabas, of the famous vision,—had it been but preserved, it would probably have been no less curious than those which we have been already seeing. Though we cannot be precisely assured in what way,—we may be pretty well assured, that, in some way or other, additions would have been to be seen made in it, to the list of *variations*.

But, the great advantage,—producible, and probably produced, by the opening of the matter, as performed by Barnabas,—was this: in company with those arguments, by which the sincerity of Paul was to be demonstrated,—would naturally come those, by which intimation would be given, of the advantage there might be, in forbearing to apply too strict a scrutiny, to this important statement. The interests, which, in the character of motives, pleaded for the acceptance, of the advance made towards reconciliation and mutually advantageous cooperation,—would, in this manner, prepare the way, for receiving, without any troublesome counter-interrogation, the important narrative: or, perhaps, for considering the matter, as already sufficiently explained, by the son of consolation,—in such sort that, to the new Apostle, the trouble of repeating a narrative, which he must already have so frequently found himself under the necessity of repeating, might be spared.

The greater was the importance, of the service thus rendered to Paul by the son of consolation,—the more studiously, in giving the account, as above, of the intercourse with the Apostles at Jerusalem,—the

more studiously, would he avoid all mention of it. [27]

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SECTION 6.

LENGTH OF THIS VISIT—PAUL'S EMPLOYMENT DURING IT.

Fifteen days, if Paul is to be believed—fifteen days, and no more,—was the length of time, during which his intercourse with Peter continued: Gal. i. 18, that same length of time, and no greater, it may without much rashness be inferred, was his stay at Jerusalem.

These fifteen days,—or whatever, if anything longer, was the duration of his stay in that seat of their common religion,—in what occupations were they employed? It is in the Acts, if anywhere, that this question will receive its answer. It was in "disputing against the Grecians." Acts 9:29.

That such should have been his occupation, is in his situation altogether natural.

Of a sort of *partition treaty*, as having, at one time, been entered into between himself and Peter,—Paul, in his so-often mentioned letters to the Galatians, informs us in express terms. As to the time, which, on that occasion, he has in view,—it was, according to appearance, not the time of *this* his first visit, but of the third. At that third visit, the treaty was, at any rate, either entered into for the first time, or confirmed: receiving, at the same time, what was on both sides agreed upon, as an amendment requisite to add to it, in respect of clearness, correctness, or completeness.

But, at this visit, it seems altogether natural, that,

with more or less of these same qualities, a treaty of this sort took place. By the sort of relation, produced between them, by the state of interests,—the existence of an agreement of this sort seems sufficiently probabilized: and, from the few words, in which, by the author of the Acts, mention is made of the Grecians, and of Paul's disputes with them,—the inference receives the confirmation afforded by *direct* evidence.

With the Grecians then it was, that these disputations of Paul were held. Why with the Grecians, and no other? The reason is no mystery. Greek was the language of Paul: Greek, for anything that appears, was not the language of Peter, or of any other of the Apostles. Applying himself to the Grecians, and to them alone,—Paul might, to any amount, have given additional extent to his own dominion, without subtracting anything from theirs.

Not productive, it should seem, of much fruit,—was this portion, of the new Apostle's labours. No sooner are we informed, of the boon thus offered to these Grecian Gentiles, than comes, moreover, the further information, that some there were, that "went about to slay him. Which when the brethren knew, they brought him," it is added, "to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus." Acts 9:29.

Meantime, those men, who went about to slay him, —who were they? Possibly they were Grecians, if by the disputation in question, the annoyance produced was so intolerable to them, as to be productive of a wish and enterprise thus flagitious: and, if the evidence afforded by the rules of grammar be in this case regarded as conclusive,—the pronoun *they* having for its last possible antecedent the substantive *Grecians*—these, and no other, must have been the

intended murderers. On the other hand, among the heathen—the philosophical disputants of this nation, —disputations, having any such abstractions for their subject, were not wont to be productive, of any such practical and flagitious consequences. Among the heathens, moreover, it appears not, that, antecedently to his conversion, the zeal of Paul had led him to put any to death: on the other hand among the Christianized Jews, his fellow-religionists, the number of persons, of whom he had put to death some, and in other ways plagued others, was unhappily but too great. By the religion *into* which they had been converted,—revenge, it is true, was not (as in that which they were converted *from*) magnified, but prohibited: but, the influence of it has never been equally efficient upon all minds.

Be this as it may,—upon his leaving Jerusalem, it was to the region of Syria and Cilicia, that, at this time, he betook himself. So, in his letter to his Galatians, he himself says, Gal. 1:21; and, by what is said in the Acts, he is not contradicted, but confirmed. By himself what is mentioned is—the *region*, viz. Syria and Cilicia: by the Acts what is mentioned is—the *cities*, viz. Cæsarea and Tarsus. Cæsarea,—whether at that time it was in Syria or not,—was, at any rate, little, if anything, out of the way, from Jerusalem to Tarsus. Cæsarea was a town upon the coast:—one among those maritime towns, which, whether parts or not of Syria, are in the way between the inland city, of Jerusalem, and the coast of Cilicia: with which coast, by a river,—Tarsus, marked in the map with the mark of a capital town, appears to communicate.

In speaking of this change of place, the terms employed by Paul, are general terms,—"*I came.*" By

what *means* he came, he does not mention: nor does there appear any particular reason why he should have mentioned them.

In the Acts, the account is more particular:—he was, in a manner, forced from the one place to the other:—he was, at any rate, *escorted*: it was by "*the brethren*," he was so dealt with. "Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus." Acts 9:30.

By the brethren?—Yes.—But by what brethren? By the general body of the Christians, or any that belonged to it? No:—for, it was from their wrath, that he was making his escape. No:—not by the justly exasperated many; but by such few adherents as, under such prodigious disadvantage, his indefatigable artifice and energy had found means to conciliate.

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SECTION 7.

MODE AND CAUSE OF ITS TERMINATION.

In relation to this subject, we have two, and no more than two, accounts,—both from the same pen,—that of the historiographer in the Acts; and these two accounts, as usual, contradictory of each other. The first, in the order of the history, is that given by him in his own person: Acts 9:27, 28, 29. The other, is that given by him in the person of Paul: namely, in the course of his supposed first-made and unpremeditated speech,—when, on the occasion of his last visit to Jerusalem—his Invasion Visit, he was pleading for his life before the angry multitude. Acts 22:17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

Now then, let us compare the two accounts.

Speaking in his own person,—it is to the fear of certain Grecians, that the historiographer ascribes Paul's departure for Jerusalem. In disputing with them, he had been speaking "boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus": and *thereupon*,—and as we are desired to believe, *therefore*,—came certain designs and endeavours to slay him. Designs? on the part of whom? Answer:—on the part of those same Grecians: cause of these designs and endeavours, irritation, so it is intended we should suppose,—irritation, produced in the breasts of those same Grecians;—and produced by the dispute.

Now, as to the words of the historiographer, speaking in his own person. It is immediately after the mention of Paul's transactions with the Apostles and the other disciples, that after saying, Acts 9:28, that "... he was with them coming in and going out of Jerusalem," the narrative continues thus: ver. 29; "And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians, but *they* went about to slay him: ver. 30; Which when *the brethren* knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."

Such is the account given, of the departure of Paul from Jerusalem, on the occasion in question—given by the historiographer, speaking in his own person, of the manner of the departure, and at the same time of the cause of it. Behold now how different is the account given, of the same matter, by the same historiographer, in the same work, when speaking in the person of his hero. Nothing now as to any disputes with Grecians: nothing now of these, or any other human beings, in the character of beings who were angry with him, and *that* to such a degree, that,

to save his life, it was deemed necessary by his adherents,—styled on this occasion "*the* brethren," to take charge of him, as we have seen, and convey him from Jerusalem to Cæsarea and elsewhere.

The case seems to be—that, between the time of writing the account which has just been seen, and the time for giving an account of the same transaction in the person of the hero, as above,—a certain difficulty presented itself to the mind of the historiographer: and, that it is for the solution of this difficulty, that he has recourse, to one of his sovereign solvents—*a trance*. The difficulty seems to have been this: The class of persons, whom, on that first visit of his he had exasperated, were—not "*Grecians*," or any other Gentiles, but Christians: Christians, the whole body of them—Apostles and Disciples together: the same class of persons, to which belonged those who, on the occasion of this his last visit—the *Invasion Visit*—were to such a degree exasperated, by this fourth intrusion of his, as to be attempting his life. How hopeless any attempt would have been, to make them believe, that it was not by themselves, but by a set of Heathens, that his life was threatened on that former occasion, is sufficiently manifest. Here then comes a demand, for a substitute, to that cause, which, distant as the time was, could not, however, be altogether absent from their memory: and which, so far as it was present, could not but heighten their exasperation:—this substitute was *the trance*.

The cause of the departure is now—not the fear of any human being, but the express command of "*the Lord*":—a command delivered in the course, and by means, of this same *trance*. Moreover, as if, from such a quarter, *commands* were not sufficient of

themselves; on the present occasion, it will be seen, they came backed by *reasons*. Was it that, as the historiographer has been telling us in his own person, certain Grecians were exasperated? No: but that the persons, to whom, with Barnabas for his supporting witness, Acts 9:27, he had been telling his story, gave no credit to it: so that, by a man with his reputation in this state, nothing in the way of his business was to be done.

But now let us see the text. It comes immediately after that passage, in which Paul is made to speak of Ananias, as giving orders to him, in the name of the Lord: orders, concluding in these words: Acts 22:16: ... "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." This said,—his story, as told to the multitude, continues thus: "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*: And saw him saying unto me, Make *haste*, and get thee *quickly* out of Jerusalem: *for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me*. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting to his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live."

It may now be seen, how useful and convenient an implement this same trance was: how well adapted, to the occasion on which it was employed. Taken by itself, this story about the enraged Grecians might

serve to impose upon readers in general: but, to the knowledge of the really enraged Christians, whose wrath he was endeavouring to assuage,—it was not only too palpably false to be related to them, but too much so, to be even for a moment supposed to be related to them: hence came the demand for the supernatural cause. Nothing, it is evident, could be better suited to the purpose. The assertion was of the sort of those, which, how palpably soever untrue, are not exposed to contradiction by direct evidence: and which, supposing them believed, ensure universal respect, and put all gainsayers to silence.

An incident not unworthy here of notice, is—the sort of acknowledgment contained in the words—"for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." In this may be seen—a confirmation of the important fact, so fully proved on the occasion of the first or *Reconciliation Visit*: and we see—with what consistency and propriety, the mention of it comes in, on the present occasion: namely, in a speech, made to a multitude, of which, many of those,—by whom he had been disbelieved and rejected on that former occasion,—must of course have formed a part.

Such is the fact, which, after having communicated to us, in his own person, Acts 9:26, "they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple," the historiographer is frank enough to communicate to us a second time, through the mouths of Paul and "the Lord," the one within the other. *True* enough this information: and, moreover, at Jerusalem, as well when the historiographer was writing, as when Paul was speaking, *notorious* enough: or we should hardly have had it *here* and *now*. But, what a truth to put into the mouth of Paul,

whose title to credence for his claim, is so effectually destroyed by it!

To return to what, on the occasion of the first visit, is said by the historiographer, in his own person, about the Grecians. That it was false, as to the main point, —namely, that it was by the fear of those same Gentiles that he was driven out of Jerusalem,—is now, it is hoped, sufficiently evident. But, as to his having held disputation with them,—in this there seems not to be anything inconsistent or improbable: and this part, supposing it true, might, in so far as known, help to gain credence for that which was false.

A circumstance—not altogether clear, nor worth taking much trouble in the endeavour to render it so, is—on the occasion of this dialogue, the change made, of the supernatural vehicle, from a *vision* into a "*trance*." Whatsoever, if any, is the difference,—they agree in the one essential point: namely, that it is in the power, of any man, at any time, to have had as many of them as he pleases: hearing and seeing, moreover, in every one of them, whatsoever things it suits his convenience to have heard or seen.—"I saw a vision:" or, "I was in a trance": either postulate granted, everything whatsoever follows.

This *trance*, it may be observed, is of a much more substantial nature than any of the *visions*. By Paul in his *road vision*,—vision as it was,—neither *person* nor *thing*, with the exception of a quantity of light, was seen: only a voice, *said to be the Lord's*, heard. In this trance, the Lord is not only heard, but seen. In those visions, that which is said to have been heard, amounts to nothing: on the present occasion, what is said to have been heard, is material to the purpose, and perfectly intelligible. Not that there could be any

use in Paul's *actually* hearing of it: for what it informed him of, was nothing more than that which, at the very time, he was in full experience of. But, in a situation such as his, it was really of use to him, to be *thought* to have heard it: and therefore it is, that, in the speech ascribed to him, he is represented as *saying* that he heard it.

FOOTNOTES:

[25] In the current chronology, this Epistle to the Galatians is placed in the year 58; on the part of the author of the Acts, the first mention of his being in the company of Paul is placed in the year next following, to wit, 59. Note, that at the end of the Epistle to the Galatians, it is stated to be written from Rome: yet, according to the current chronology, his arrival at Rome, in custody, from Jerusalem,—at which time unquestionably he had never as yet visited Rome,—did not take place till the year 62.

[26] First time, Acts ii. 45. Second time, Acts iv. 34.

[27] "I conferred not with flesh and blood." (Gal. ii. 16.) "Of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me." Not till "after three years" did I go "up to Jerusalem to see Peter." With language in this strain, it would have harmonized but indifferently, to have added, "nor should I have seen him then, had it not been for Barnabas."

CHAPTER V.

Paul disbelieved continued.—*Jerusalem Visit II. Money-bringing Visit.—Barnabas accompanying him from Antioch.*

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SECTION 1.

AT ANTIOCH, AGABUS HAVING PREDICTED A DEARTH, MONEY IS COLLECTED FOR THE JERUSALEM SAINTS.

At his own house it was, that we last left our self-declared Apostle: at his own birthplace—Tarsus: what we have next to see is—what drew him from thence.

All this while there were other disciples that had not been idle. To the new religion, already was Antioch, Antioch in Syria, become a new Jerusalem.

Upon the dispersion of the Jerusalem Christians, occasioned by the judicial murder of the sainted trustee of the poor's fund—Stephen,—some of them, among whom were some natives of Cyprus,—in which island was situated the property of the son of consolation, Barnabas,—had betaken themselves to that same island, others to that same city of Antioch in Syria.

ACTS xi. 19-24.

19. Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to

> none but unto the Jews only.—And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.—And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.—Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.—Who, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.—For he was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

Of these, some addressed themselves exclusively to the *Jews*: others ventured so far, as to make an experiment upon the *Grecians*. Unfortunately, these terms are, neither of them, wholly free from ambiguity. By the word *Jews*, may have been meant either Jews by *birth* and *abode*, or Jews by *religion*: by the word *Grecians*, either Jews who, born or dwelling within the field of quondam Grecian dominion, used the Greek as their native language,—or Greeks, who were such, not only by language, but by religion. In this latter case, their lot was among the Gentiles, and much more extraordinary and conspicuous was the importance of the success.

"They which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel." Such, in his own words, 1 Cor. 9:14, is the maxim laid down by Paul, for the edification of his Corinthian disciples. To save doubts and disputation,

he prefaces it with the assurance—"even so hath the Lord ordained." No great need of support from revelation, seems to attach upon a maxim so natural, and so reasonable: from the time of the first planting of the Gospel, it appears to have been, as indeed it could not fail to be, universally acted upon; saving such few exceptions as a happy union of zeal, with sufficient pecuniary means, might render possible.

How, under the Apostolical aristocracy, it had been acted upon in Jerusalem, has been seen already. The time was now come,—for its being established, and acted upon in Antioch.

At Jerusalem, under the spiritual dominion of the Apostles, lived a man of the name of *Agabus*. Among the endowments,—of which, in the character of *qualifications*, a demand was by some understood to be created, by the business of propagating the new religion,—qualifications, a list of which, according to his conception of it, Paul, 1 Cor. 12:10, has given us, —was one, which, among these endowments, was called the "*gift of prophecy*":—a gift, under which, as under that of speech in general, particularly when applied to occasions of importance, the faculty of *prediction*—of forming correct judgments respecting future contingencies—would, if not necessarily, very frequently at least, come to be included.

In the instance of the *prophecy* here in question, this same prospective faculty, it should seem, was actually included.

The *fact*, for the purpose of predicting, or giving information of which, this useful emissary was, on the present occasion, sent from Jerusalem to Antioch,—was—that of signifying, that there should be a great dearth: an *inference* deduced from it, was

—that, at this same Antioch, for the relief of the brethren at Jerusalem, *contributions* should be collected, and sent to Jerusalem.

ACTS xi. 27-30.

> 27. And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.—And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.—Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea:—Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

In the calamity of *dearth* may be seen one of those events, of which—especially if the time of it be not predesignated with too rigid an exactness—a prediction may be hazarded,—and even by any man,—without much risk of falling under the disgrace attached to the appellation of *a false prophet*. Of this observation, an exemplification seems to have been afforded, in the present instance. With not unaccustomed prudence,—"the spirit," by which, on this occasion, the calamity was "signified," forbore, as we see, from the fixation of any particular year—either for the prophecy, or for the accomplishment of it. "The days of Claudius Caesar" are mentioned as the time of the accomplishment. By agreement of all chronologists,—the duration of his reign is stated as occupying not less than thirteen years. Whether this same reign had then already commenced,—is not, on this occasion, mentioned: from the manner in which

it is mentioned, the negative seems not improbable; if so, then to find the time which the prophecy had for finding its accomplishment to the definite term of thirteen years, we must add another, and that an indefinite one.

According to the situation, of the individuals by whom the word is employed,—*worlds* vary in their sizes. Of the dearth in question, the whole world, "all the world," is, by the author of the Acts, stated as having been the afflicted theatre: "great dearth throughout all the world." Acts 11:28. As to the rest of the world, we may leave it to itself. For the purpose then and now in question, it was and is sufficient—that two cities, Jerusalem and Antioch, were included in it. The calamity being thus universal,—no reason of the ordinary kind is given, or seems discoverable—why, of any such contribution as should come to be raised, the course should be—from Antioch to Jerusalem, rather than from Jerusalem to Antioch. Inquired for, however, on religious ground,—a *reason* presents itself, without much difficulty. What Rome became afterwards, Jerusalem was then—the capital of *that world*, which now, for the first time, received the name of *Christian*. According to one of the sayings of Jesus—if Paul, his self-appointed Apostle, is to be trusted to—of them it was pronounced "*more blessed to give than to receive*":[28] but in the eyes of the successors of St. Peter at all times,—and at this time, as it should seem, in his own—it was *more blessed to receive than give*.

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SECTION 2.

BARNABAS AND PAUL DISPATCHED WITH THE MONEY TO JERUSALEM.

Of the *amount* of the eleemosynary harvest, no intimation is to be found. As to the *consequence* of it, Barnabas, we see, is the man stated as having, with obvious propriety, been chosen for the important trust: Barnabas—of whose opulence, trustworthiness, steadiness, and zeal, such ample proofs, not to speak of those subsequent ones, which will be seen in their place, had already manifested themselves. In consequence of the information, already received by the Mother Church in Jerusalem, of the prosperity of the Daughter Church, Acts 11:20, 21, planted, as above, in the capital of Syria,—this most active of all Christian citizens had been sent to give increase to it.

But, of the talents and activity of Paul, his indefatigable supporter and powerful patron had had full occasion to be apprized. Accordingly, without the aid of this his not less indefatigable helper, still was the strength of the rising church, in the eyes of the patron, incomplete. "A prophet," says a not ill-grounded proverb, "has no honor in his own country." In his native city, among the witnesses of his youth, Paul had indeed found *safety*: but, as the nature of the case manifests, in a circle, from which respect stood excluded by familiarity, safety had not been accompanied with *influence*: and, in eyes such as those of Paul, safety without influence was valueless. Under these circumstances,—the patron, going to Tarsus in person in quest of his protegé, could not naturally find much difficulty in regaining possession of him, and bringing with him the so highly-valued prize, on his return to Antioch. "Then," says the Acts, 11:25, 26, "departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found

him, he brought him unto Antioch."

At this place, with their united powers, they had been carrying on their operations for the space of a twelvemonth, when the petition for pecuniary assistance was received there.

As for Paul,—from the moment of his conversion, notwithstanding the ill success of his first attempt,—the prime object of his ambition—the situation of President of the Christian Commonwealth—had never quitted its hold on his concupiscence. Occasions, for renewing the enterprise, were still watched for with unabated anxiety:—a more favourable one than the one herein question, could not have presented itself to his fondest wishes. The entire produce, of the filial bounty of the Daughter Church, was now to be poured into the bosom of the necessitous Mother. For the self-destined head of that rising Church, two more acceptable occupations, than those which one and the same occasion brought to him, could not have been found:—First, the collection of the contributions;—and then the conveying of them, to the place of their destination. Of the labours of such agents, in such circumstances, the success, we are told, they found, was a natural result. "Then," says the Acts 11:29, 30, "Then the disciples, every one according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea:—Which also they did; and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." Thus much as to the *public* purpose. Very different was the lot of Paul's *personal* project. What the elders could not have any objection to the receipt of, was—the money. But, what they had an insuperable objection to, was—the receipt of the yoke of this their outwardly-converted, but once already rejected,

persecutor. This second enterprise,—though still under the same powerful leader, and produced by such flattering prospects,—succeeded no better than the first. Five-and-twenty verses after, we are told of the *termination* of this their second Jerusalem visit; and this is all we hear of it: "And Barnabas and Saul," says the Acts 12:25, "returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark." This same John Mark they got by their expedition: and this, for anything that appears, was all they got by it.

Between the mention of their arrival at Jerusalem, and the mention of their departure from thence,—comes the episode about Peter:—his incarceration and liberation under Herod; and the extraordinary death of the royal prosecutor,—of which, in its place. As to the interval,—what the length of it was, and in what manner, by Paul, under the wing of the Son of Consolation, it was occupied,—are points, on which we are left altogether in the dark: as also, whether the *time* of these adventures of Peter, the *mention* of which stands inserted between the mention of the two occurrences in the history of Paul, was comprised in that same interval.

FOOTNOTE:

[28] Acts 20:35. It is in the parting scene—when about to break from his dissuading disciples, and enter upon his invasion project—that Paul is represented as saying to them: "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Whence this self-appointed and posthumous Apostle of Jesus got these words of Jesus—if such they were—must be left to conjecture. In the works of the four received biographers of Jesus, with *Cruden* and his *Concordance* for guides, all search for them has been fruitless.

CHAPTER VI.

Paul disbelieved continued.—His third Jerusalem Visit.—Paul and Barnabas delegated by Antioch Saints, to confer on the Necessity of Jewish Rites to Heathen Converts to the Religion of Jesus.

SECTION 1.

OCCASION OF THIS VISIT.

We come now to the transaction, on the occasion of which, the grand object of Paul's ambition received,

in part, its accomplishment: namely, that, by which,—though without any such popular election as, in the instance of Matthias, had been necessary to constitute a man an associate to the Apostles,—he was, in some sort, taken by them into fellowship, and admitted, with their consent, into a participation of their labours.

This occasion was—the dispute, which, in the Syrian Antioch, took place, according to the author of the Acts, on the question—whether, under the religion of Jesus, circumcision was necessary to salvation: a question, in which,—whether explicitly or no,—was implicitly, it should seem, and perhaps inextricably, understood to be involved, the so much wider question—whether, under that same new religion, the old ceremonial law should, in any part of it, be regarded as necessary.

On this same occasion, two important subjects present themselves to view at the same time: the one, a question of *doctrine* relative to circumcision, as above; the other, a question about *jurisdiction*, as between Paul on the one part, and Peter, with or without the rest of the Apostles.

As to what concerns the debate about circumcision, we have no other evidence than the statement of the author of the Acts.

As to what concerns the jurisdiction question, we have the evidence of Paul himself, as contained in his letter to the Galatian converts: and an original letter, howsoever dubious the correctness of the author in respect of matters of fact, is more trustworthy than a multitude of anonymous narratives.[29]

In respect of the progress made by the religion of

Jesus,—Antioch, it has already been observed—the Syrian Antioch—had become a second Jerusalem; and, so far as concerned the Gentiles at large, its maritime situation gave to it a convenience, that was not shared with it by that inland city.

At the time here in question,—the Gentiles had received more or less of instruction, from three different sets of teachers:—1. from the disciples who had been driven from Jerusalem by the tragical death of Saint Stephen; 2. from Saint Peter, principally on the occasion of the excursion made by him to Lydda, Saron, Joppa, and Cæsarea; and 3. from Paul and Barnabas, on the occasion, and by the means, of the long tour, made by them for that special purpose, as above.

At this maritime metropolis of the faith, the new religion was spreading itself,—and, as far at least as depended on exemption from all disturbance from without, in a state of peace and tranquility;—when, by a set of *nameless* men from Judea,—if to the author of the Acts credit is to be given on this point, for by him no mention is made of any one of their names,—the harmony of the Church was disturbed.

Converts as they were to the religion of Jesus, yet,—in their view of the matter, if the author of the Acts is to be believed, without circumcision, no salvation was to be had.

By Paul it is said, "they came from James," Gal. 2:12, which is as much as to say that they were sent by James: and accordingly, when James's speech is seen, by him will these scruples of theirs be seen advocated.

If the Gospel history, as delivered by the Evangelists, is to be believed,—nothing could be more

inconsistent, on many occasions with the practice, and at length with the direct precepts, of Jesus, than this deference to the Mosaic law: if human prudence is to be regarded,—nothing could be more impolitic —nothing more likely to narrow, instead of extending, the dominion of the Church. On this principle, no man who was not born a Jew, could be a Christian without first becoming a Jew, without embracing the Mosaic law; and thus loading himself with two different, and mutually inconsistent, sets of obligations.

From Paul, this conceit,—as was natural,— experienced a strenuous resistance. No recognition as yet had Paul received, from the body of the Apostles. In Jerusalem, for anything that appears,—though this was at least seventeen years after the death of Jesus—they remained alive—all of them:—at any rate the two chiefs of them, if Paul is to be believed, who, Gal. i. 19, says he saw them, namely, Saint Peter "and James, the Lord's brother": which two, he says, he saw, out of a number, the rest of whom, he studiously assures his Galatians that he did not see: though by his historiographer, Acts 15:4, by his all-comprehensive expression, "*the Apostles*," we are desired to believe, that he saw all of them.[30] Whichever be the truth,—at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judaism, no employment could, under these circumstances, be reasonably expected for Paul: whereas, *out* of Judea,—wherever the language of Greece was the mother tongue, or familiarly spoken, —the advantage, which, in every address to the Gentiles, he would have over those unlearned Jews, was universally manifest.

Such, however, were the impressions, made by these unnamed manufacturers and disseminators of

scruples, who, if Paul is to be believed, came from James the brother of our Lord—that, by the whole Church, as it is called, of Antioch, a determination was taken—to send to Jerusalem, to the Apostles and the Elders that were associated with them, a numerous mission, headed by Paul and Barnabas, who are the only two persons named. Accordingly, out they set, "after having been brought on their way," says the author of the Acts, 15:3, "by the *Church*," which is as much as to say, by the whole fraternity of Christians there established.

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SECTION 2.

THE DELEGATES HOW RECEIVED.—COUNCIL OF APOSTLES AND ELDERS.

Against the pretensions of a man thus supported, vain, on the part of the original and real Apostles, would have been any attempt, to resist the pretensions of this their self-constituted rival: they, Barnabas and Paul, were received, says the author of the Acts, of the Church and of the Apostles and Elders.[31]

Arrived at Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas told their own story—related their adventures and experiences —declared, to use the language of the Acts 15:4, all things that God had done unto them.

Notwithstanding the utmost exertion of Paul's ever-ready eloquence,—some, it is stated, there were, who, believers as, in a certain sort, they were in the religion of Jesus,—were not to be persuaded, to give up so much as a single tittle of the Mosaic law: these were, as it was natural they should be, of the sect of

Pharisees. "There rose up," says the Acts 15:5, "certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them (the Gentiles), and to command them to keep the law of Moses."

Of these private discussions, the result was—the convocation of an assembly of the managing body, in which, associated with the Apostles, we find others—under the name of *Elders*.

How, on an occasion, on which the proposed subject of determination was a question of such cardinal importance to the religion of Jesus;—how it should have come to pass, that the Apostles, to whom alone, and by whom alone, the whole tenor of the acts and sayings of Jesus had been made known—made known by an uninterrupted habit of exclusive intimacy, and especially during the short but momentous interval between his resurrection and ascension;—how it should have happened, that, to the Apostles, any other persons not possessed of these first of all titles to credence and influence, should have come to be associated,—is not mentioned. Upon no other authority than that of this author, are we to believe it to be true? On the supposition of its being true,—there seems to be, humanly speaking, but one way to account for it. That which the Apostles, and they alone, *could* contribute to the cause, was—the authority and the evidence resulting from that peculiar intimacy: what they could *not* contribute was—money and influence derived from ordinary and external sources: to the exclusive possession of these latter titles to regard, will, therefore, it should seem, be to be ascribed, supposing it credited, the circumstance of an incorporation otherwise so incongruous.

"Received," say the Acts 15:4, they were.—But by whom received?—By the Church, by the Apostles, by the Elders, says that same history in that same place. By *the* Apostles: to wit—so as any one would conclude—by *all* the Apostles—by the whole fellowship of Apostles.

Whether in any, and, if so, in what degree that conclusion is correct, we have no determinate means of knowing.

If, however, it was so to the utmost,—nothing appears in favor of the notion, that between Paul on the one part, and the Apostles and their disciples on the other, there existed at this time any real harmony. For, in what character was it that he made his appearance? In that of a commissioned envoy, from the whole body of the Church, established in that station, which was next in importance to Jerusalem, to which he was sent. And who was it that, at that time, as on both the former times, he, Paul, had in his company? Still his constant patron and associate Barnabas—the munificent friend and patron of that church which he was visiting—the indefatigable Barnabas.

By Paul himself, in his Epistle to the Galatians, 2:9, 10, 11, the idea of any such extensive cordiality,—say rather of cordiality to any the smallest extent,—is pretty plainly negatived.[32] On that occasion, it was that of the Partition Treaty, what his interest required was—that, on the part of the Apostles and their disciples, the concurrence given to it, should appear as extensive as possible. If then they had all of them, really and personally concurred in it,—or even if the contrary had not been notorious, this is the conception which he would have been forward to convey and inculcate. No such notion, however, does

he venture to convey. When speaking of them in general terms—of no affection on either side, more kindly than that of ill humor, does he give any intimation. Gal. 2:6. "Of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepted no man's person: for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me."

When, again, he comes to speak of the sort of intercourse, such as it was, which he had with the Apostles,—who are the persons that he speaks of? All the Apostles? the body of the Apostles in general?—No: James, Cephas, the Hebrew name of which Peter is a translation, and John: these three, and no more. These are the men, whom, to him Paul and his protector Barnabas in conjunction, he on that same occasion speaks of, as "giving the right hand of fellowship:" to wit, for the purpose of the Partition Treaty, the terms of which immediately follow.

And, even of these men, in what way does he speak? As of men "who seemed to be pillars:" so that, as to what concerned the rest of the Apostles, he found himself reduced to speak no otherwise than by conjecture. And this same "right hand of fellowship"—what was their inducement for giving it?—It was, says he, that "they perceived the grace that was given unto me": *i.e.*, in plain language, and ungrounded pretension apart,—the power, which they saw he had, of doing mischief:—of passing, from the character of a jealous and restless rival, into that of a declared enemy: into that character, in which he had originally appeared, and with such disastrous effect.

Immediately after this comes the mention of the visit, made by Peter to Antioch: and therefore it is,

that, no sooner is Peter—that chief of the Apostles of Jesus—mentioned,—than he is mentioned, as a man whom this Paul "withstood to his face, because he was to be blamed." Gal. 2:11.

Peter was to be blamed: those other Jews that were come to Antioch from James—they were to be blamed. Barnabas, under whose powerful protection, —by the Church at Jerusalem, her justly odious persecutor had, at three different times, been endured,—he too was to be blamed. He too was, at that time, to be blamed; and, as will be seen presently after, openly quarrelled with; and, if on this point the Acts are to be believed, parted with. Acts 15:39. "And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus."

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SECTION 3.

DEBATES—COURSE CARRIED BY JAMES AGAINST PETER.

Of what passed at this assembly, the only account we have—the account given to us by the author of the Acts—is curious:—curious at any rate; and whether it be in every particular circumstance true or not,—in so far as it can be depended upon, instructive.[33]

We have the persons mentioned as having spoken: they are, in the order in which they are here enumerated, these four:—to wit, Peter, Barnabas, Paul and James. Of the speech of Peter, the particulars are given: so likewise of that of James: of Barnabas and Paul, nothing more than the topic.

Against the Mosaic law *in toto*, we find Peter; and such contribution as he is represented as furnishing to this side of the cause in the shape of argument. On the same side, were Barnabas and Paul: what they furnished was matter of fact:—namely, in the language of the Acts, "what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them:"—in plain language, the success they had met with among the Gentiles.

On this question, on the side of the chief of the Apostles, were—the manifest interest of the religion of Jesus as to extent of diffusion,—the authority derived from situation,—the express command of Jesus as delivered in the Gospel history,—and Jesus' own practice: not to speak of the inutility and unreasonableness of the observances themselves. Yet, as far as appears from the author of the Acts,—of these arguments, conclusive as they would or at least should have been,—it appears not that any use was made: the success, he spoke of as having been experienced by himself among the Gentiles,—in this may be seen the sole argument employed in Peter's speech. Thus,—in so far as this report is to be believed,—thus, upon their own respective achievements, did,—not only Paul but Peter,—rest, each of them, the whole strength of the cause.

Spite of reason, religion, and Jesus, the victory is in this account, given to James—to Jesus' kinsman, James. The motion is carried: the course proposed, is a sort of middle course—a sort of compromise. At the hands of Gentile proselytes, in deference to the Mosaic law, abstinence from four things is required: namely, meats offered to idols, blood, things strangled: these, and the irregularities of the sexual appetite,—whatsoever they were, that were meant

by the word, rendered into English by the word *fornication*.

If any such decision were really come to,—by nothing but necessity—necessity produced by the circumstances of place and time—will it be found excusable. Abstinence from food killed in the way of sacrifice to heathen gods, on the occasion of public sacrifices: yes; for, for such food, little relish could remain, on the part of persons devoted to the religion of Jesus: from fornication, yes; for, for a sacrifice in this shape, even among the Gentiles, some preparation had been made by stoicism. But, as to blood and things strangled,[34] that is to say, animals so slaughtered as to have more blood left in their carcasses than the Mosaic law would allow to be left in them—animals slaughtered otherwise than in the Jewish manner,—thus forbidding teachings of the religion of Jesus, to eat a meal furnished by Gentile hands,—this, as above observed, was depriving them of their most favourable opportunities, for carrying their pious and beneficent purposes into effect, by adding to the number of believers.

Altogether remarkable is the consideration, upon the face of it, by which, if the historian is to be believed, this decision was produced. "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in synagogues every sabbath day," Acts 15:21. "May be so: but what if he has? what is that to the purpose? Good, if the question were about the Jews: but, it is *not* about the Jews: the Gentiles, and they only, are the subjects of it. And the Gentiles—what know or care *they* about Moses? what is it that is to send *them* into the synagogues, to hear anything that is "read in synagogues"?

By this imaginary abstinence from blood,—for, after all, by no exertion of Mosaic ingenuity could the flesh ever be completely divested of the blood that had circulated in it,—of this perfectly useless prohibition, what would be the effect?—Not only to oppose obstacles, to the exertions of Christian teachers, in their endeavors to make converts among the Gentiles,—but, on the part of the Gentiles themselves to oppose to them a needless difficulty, in the way of their conversion, by rendering it impossible for them, consistently with the observance of this prohibition, to associate with their unconverted friends and families at convivial hours. Thus much as to what concerns the Gentiles.[35]

Since, and from that time, the religion of Jesus has spread itself:—we all see to what extent. Spread itself: and by what means? By means of the decision thus fathered upon the Apostles? Upon the Apostles, the Elders, and the whole Church?—No: but in spite of it, and by the neglect of it.

Charged with a letter, containing this decision, did Paul, together with his friend Barnabas, return from Jerusalem,—if the author of the Acts is to be believed,—to the society of Christian converts, by which he had been sent thither: charged with this letter, carrying with it the authority of the whole fellowship of the Apostles. Paul himself—he Paul—what sort of regard did he pay to it? *He wrote against it with all his might.* No more Jewish rites! No more Mosaic law! Such is the cry, that animates the whole body of those writings of his which have reached us.

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SECTION 4.

RESULT, SUPPOSED APOSTOLIC DECREE AND LETTER TO ANTIOCH, WHICH, PER ACTS, PAUL CIRCULATES.

Of a decision, agreed upon and pronounced to the above effect—a decision expressed by a decree;—and of a copy of that decree, included in and prefaced by a letter addressed to the saints at Antioch,—were Paul and Barnabas, along with others who were associated with them, on their return to that city, the bearers:—that is to say, if, as to these matters, credence is given, to the statement, made by the author of the Acts; by whom the alleged decree and letter are given, in words, which, according to him, were their very words:—these words are those which follow:

ACTS 15:22 to 32.

> 22. Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.—And they wrote letters by them after this manner: The Apostles and elders, and brethren, *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.—Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye *must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:—It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,—Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our

> Lord Jesus Christ.—We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.—For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;—That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.—So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.—*Which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.—And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed *them*.

Supposing it genuine,—a most curious, important and interesting document, this letter and decree must be allowed to be. Supposing it genuine: and, in favor of its genuineness, reasons present themselves, which, so long as they remain unopposed, and no preponderating reasons in support of the contrary opinion are produced, must decide our judgment.

Not long after the account of the acceptance given at Antioch to this decision,—comes that of a conjunct missionary excursion from that place made by Paul, with Timotheus, and perhaps Silas, for his companion. At the very commencement of this excursion—if, in the decree spoken of, this decree is to be understood as included; and there seems no reason why it should not be, they are represented as taking an active part in the distribution of it. Acts 16:4. "And says the historian, as they" (Paul, &c.)

"went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders that were at Jerusalem."

That, by Paul, this token, of association with the Apostles, should at that time be exhibited and made manifest, seems altogether natural. It affords a further proof, of the need, which, at that period of his labors, he regarded himself as having, of the appearance—the outward signs at least—of a connection with the Apostles.

True, it is, that the persuasion of any such need is altogether inconsistent with that independence, which, in such precise and lofty terms, we have seen him declaring in his Epistle to his Galatians,—is sufficiently manifest. But, in the current chronology, the date, ascribed to that Epistle, is by five years posterior, to the date ascribed to the commencement of this excursion: date of the excursion, A.D. 53; date of the Epistle, A.D. 58: difference, five years: and five years are not too great a number of years, for the experience of success and prosperity, to have raised to so high a pitch, the temperature of his mind.[36]

Even before this time, we find him even outstretching the concessions, which, in that decree, in the case of the Gentiles, in compliance with the scruples of the Jewish disciples they had to deal with, we have been seeing made by the Apostles, in favor of the Mosaic law. Abstinence—from meat offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication—composed all the Mosaic observances exacted in that decree. To these, he, in his practice, at this time, added another, and *that*, in respect of extent, in a prodigious degree a more important one: to wit, the submitting to circumcision. For, to this painful observance,—in

which a submission to all the other Mosaic observances was implied,—he had already subjected his new convert Timotheus, whom, in this excursion, in addition to Silas, he took with him for a companion. Born of a Greek father as he was,—adult as he was,—he took him, says the historian, and circumcised him. Circumcised him—and why? —"*Because of the Jews, which were in those quarters.*"[37]

FOOTNOTES:

[29] Acts xv. 1 to 4:—"1. And certain men which came down from Judea, taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. —2. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders about this question.—3. And being brought on their way by the Church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.—4. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the Church, and of the Apostles and Elders; and they declared all things that God had done with them."

[30] Gal. i. 18, 19. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.—9. But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."

Acts 15:4. "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the Church,

and of *the* Apostles and Elders; and they declared all things that God had done with them."

The cause of this contrariety lies not far beneath the surface. Paul had one object in view; his historiographer another. In the two passages, they wrote at distant times, and with different purposes. In his address to his Galatian disciples, Paul's object was to magnify his own importance at the expense of that of the Apostles: to establish the persuasion, not only of his independence of them, but of his superiority over them. The generality of them were not worth his notice; but having some business to settle with them, Peter, the chief of them, he "went" to see, and James, as being "the Lord's brother," he vouchsafed to see. On that particular occasion, such was the conception which Paul was labouring to produce: and such, accordingly, was his discourse. As for the historiographer, his object was, of course, throughout, to place the importance of his hero on as high a ground as possible. But, in this view, when once Paul had come to a settlement with the Apostles, the more universal the acceptance understood to have been received by him—received from the whole body of Christians, and from those their illustrious leaders in particular,—the better adapted to this his historiographer's general purposes would be the conception thus conveyed: accordingly they were received, he says, "of the Church, and the Apostles, and Elders."

[31] Acts xv. 4. "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the Church and of the Apostles and Elders, and they declared all things that God had done unto them."

[32] Gal. ii. 6. "But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me.—And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.—Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.—But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

[33] Acts 15:5-21. 5. "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.—And the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider of this matter.—And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel and believe.—And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us;—And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.—Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?—But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.—Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.—And after they had held

their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:—Simon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.—And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,—After this I will return, and 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:—That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.—Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.—Wherefore my sentence is,—that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:—But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.—For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day."

[34] After the word blood, the mention made of things strangled seems to have been rather for explanation than as a separate ordinance. Of strangling, instead of bleeding in the Jewish style,—what the effect would be, other than that of retaining blood, which the Mosaic ordinance required should be let out, is not very apparent.

[35] Another observation there is that applies even to the Jews. By Moses were all these several things forbidden. True: but so were a vast multitude of other things, from, which (after the exceptions here in question) the prohibition is, by this decision, taken off. These things, still proposed to be prohibited, as often as they entered a synagogue, they would hear prohibited: but, so would they all

those other things, which, by this decision, are left free.

[36] In the account of this excursion, Galatia—now mentioned for the first time in the Acts,—is mentioned, in the number of the countries, which, in the course of it, he visited. It stands fourth: the preceding places being Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Phrygia. Acts 16:1 to 6. In Acts 18:23, "He ... went over [all] Galatia ... strengthening the disciples."

[37] Acts 16:1 to 3. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess and believed: but his father was a Greek:—Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.—Him would Paul have to go forth to him, and took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

CHAPTER VII.

Paul disbelieved continued.—After His Third Jerusalem Visit, Contest Between Him and Peter at Antioch.
Partition Treaty: Paul *for Himself*: Peter, James *and* John, *for the Apostles*.

SECTION 1.

CONTEST AND PARTITION TREATY, AS PER ACTS, AND

PAUL'S EPISTLES.

GALATIANS ii. 1 to 16.

1. Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.—And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.—But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:—and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.—To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.—But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me;—but contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, *as the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter;—For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:—and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the

> heathen, and they unto the circumcision.—Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.—But *when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face*, because he was to be blamed.—For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.—And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.—But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?—We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,—knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

So much for the question about Jewish rites.

We come now to the state of affairs between Paul and Peter. Concerning this, we have little, as hath been seen, from the author of the Acts: from Paul himself, not much: but what there is of it is of prime importance.

On this occasion, to judge from the account given in the Acts,—between Paul and Peter, all was harmony.

In their principles, in their speeches, they may be seen pleading on the same side: arguing, and arguing in vain, both of them against the superior influence of James: of that James, of whose written works, in comparison of those we have from Paul, we have so little. But presently, on one side at least,—we shall see contention—preserving contention—and rival ambition, for the cause of it.

In this pregnant and instructive letter,—Paul's second letter to his Galatians,—the authenticity of which seems to be altogether out of the reach of doubt,—among the particulars, that bear relation to this the third visit, the following are those, by which the greatest share of attention seems demanded at our hands.

In the first place, let us view them in the order in which they *stand*: that done, the degree of *importance* may determine the order in which they are *considered*.

1. Fourteen is the number of years, between this third visit of his to Jerusalem, reckoning either from the first of his visits made to that same holy place after his conversion, or from his departure from Damascus after his return thither from Arabia.

2. On this journey of his to Jerusalem, he has with him not only Barnabas, as mentioned in the Acts, but *Titus*, of whom no mention is there made.

3. It is by revelation, that this journey of his was undertaken.

4. The Gospel, which he then and there preaches, is a Gospel of his own.

5. Private at the same time, and for reasons thereupon given, is his mode of communicating it.

6. Titus, though at his disposal, he leaves uncircumcised.

7. *False brethren* is the appellation he bestows upon those, who, on this occasion, standing up for the Mosaic law, give occasion to this debate.

8. Elders, Apostles, kinsmen of Jesus,—be they who they may,—he, Paul, is not on this occasion a man to give place to any such persons: to give place by *subjection*: say rather in the way of *subordination*.

9. Unnamed are the persons, on whom the vituperation he discharges, is poured forth. Thus much only is said of them: namely, verse 12, that they "came from James," the brother of our Lord. Contemptuous throughout is the manner in which he speaks of all those persons whom he does not name. Quere, Who are they, to whom, in everything that goes before that same verse, he is alluding? It seems from thence, that it was with James, from whom they received support, that those scruples of theirs, out of which sprung these differences and negotiations, originated.

10. Leaving the Jews to Peter—he claims to himself as his own the whole population of the Gentiles.

11. To this effect, an explicit agreement was actually entered into; parties, he and Barnabas of the one part; James, Peter, by his Hebrew surname of Cephas, and John, of the other part.

12. Of this agreement, one condition was—that, of such pecuniary profit, as should be among the fruits of the labors of Paul among the Gentiles, a part should be remitted, to be at the disposal of Peter.

13. Paul, at the time of this visit, stood up against Peter.

14. The cause, of his doing so, was—an alleged weakness and inconsistency in the conduct of Peter, and his gaining to his side—not only Jews of inferior account, but Barnabas.

15. The weakness and inconsistency consisted in this: viz: that whereas he himself had been in use to act with the Gentiles, yet after the arrival at Antioch of those who came from James at Jerusalem,—he from fear of the Jewish converts, not only ceased to eat with the Gentiles, but to the extent of his influence forced the Gentile converts to live after the manner of the Jews.

16. On the occasion of this his dispute with Peter, he gave it explicitly as his opinion,—that, to a convert to the religion of Jesus, Jew or Gentile,—observance of the Mosaic law would, as to everything peculiar to it, be useless, not to say worse than useless, Gal. 2:16, "for by the works of the law shall no "flesh be justified."

1. As to his place in relation to the Apostles. His was not inferior to anybody's: upon terms altogether equal did he treat with the Apostles: in and by the first partition treaty,—he, with Barnabas for his colleague,—Barnabas, from whom, according to the Acts, he afterwards separated,—obtains the whole of the Gentile world for the field of their labors. Thus elevated, according to his account of the matter, was the situation, occupied by him on the occasion of this his third visit to Jerusalem, in comparison of what it had been at the time of his first,—and, to all appearance, at the time of the second. At the time of his first visit, the Apostles,—all but Peter and James, upon which two Barnabas forced him,—turned their backs upon him: upon his second visit, none of them, as far as appears, had anything to do with him: now,

upon his third visit, they deal with him upon equal terms: and now, not only Peter and James, but John, are stated as having intercourse with him.

2. Of this partition treaty, important as it is, no mention is to be found in the Acts. From first to last, —in the account given in the Acts, no such figure does he make as in his own. In the Acts, of the speech of Peter, and even of that of James, the substance is reported: of Paul's, nothing more than the subject: viz. his own achievements among the Gentiles: against Paul's opinion, as well as Peter's, the compromise, moved by James, is represented as carried.

3. As to the cause, or occasion, of his third visit to Jerusalem. In the account given in the Acts, it is particularly and clearly enough explained. It is in conjunction with Barnabas that he goes thither: both of them, to confer with the Apostles and elders, on the subject of the notion, entertained by numbers among the Jewish converts, that, by conversion to the religion of Jesus, they were not set free from any of the obligations imposed by the law of Moses.

Of this commission,—creditable as it could not but have been to him,—Paul, in his account of the matter, as given to the Galatians, makes not the least mention. No: it is not from men on this occasion nor on others, it is not from men, that he received his authority, but from God: it is by revelation, that is, immediately from God, and by a sort of miracle.

4. What, in obedience to this revelation, he was to do, and did accordingly, was,—the preaching of a gospel of his own; a gospel which as yet he had not preached to any body but the Gentiles. Preaching? how and where? in an assembly of the whole body of

the believers in Jesus, the Apostles themselves included? No: but privately, and only to the leading men among them: "to them which were of reputation."

A gospel of his own? Yes: that he did. Further on, it will be seen what it was: a Gospel, of which, as far as appears from the evangelists, no traces are to be found, in anything said by Jesus: especially, if what, on that occasion, he, Paul, taught by word of mouth at Antioch, agreed with what we shall find him teaching in his Epistles.

5. "False brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring up into bondage." Liberty? what liberty? evidently that liberty which consisted in exemption from the ceremonials of the Mosaic law. Who then were these false brethren, these sticklers for the ceremonial law? If the account in the Acts is to be believed,—they were the greater part of the fraternity of Christians in Jerusalem: a party so considerable, that Peter, the chief of the Apostles, though in his sentiments on this subject so decidedly and completely opposite to them, was obliged to give way to it: and, as to several of the obligations,—by which, as above stated, no small obstacle was opposed to the progress of the religion of Jesus,—the whole body of the Apostles found themselves under the like necessity. If he himself is to be believed, Gal. 2:12, the men in question were men, who, if they continued in those scruples in which they went beyond the brother of our Lord, had, at any rate, in the first instance, received from that highly distinguished personage their instructions. And shortly after this, Acts 16:3, in deference to this party, Paul himself "took Timothy, a

Gentile, and circumcised him." But, supposing the public transactions, thus reported in the history of the author of the Acts, to have really had place;—namely, mission of Paul and Barnabas, from the Christians of Antioch to Jerusalem,—mission of Judas Barsabas and Silas, from the Apostles and elders, with Paul and Barnabas in their company, to Antioch,—letter of the Apostles and elders sent by them to the Christians of Antioch,—all this supposed, how erroneous soever in their opinions, in affirmance of the obligatoriness of these ceremonials,—this majority, to whose scruples the whole body of the Apostles saw reason to give way,—could they, by this self-intruded convert, be considered as persons to whom the epithet of *false brethren*, would be admitted to be applicable?

6. Does it not seem, rather, that this story, about the deputation of Paul and Barnabas to the Apostles and brethren at Jerusalem from the Apostles at Antioch, and the counter deputation of Judas Barsabas, and Silas, to accompany Paul and Barnabas on their return to Antioch, bearing all of them together a letter from the Apostles at Jerusalem,—was an invention of the anonymous author of the Acts? or else a story, either altogether false, or false in great part, picked up by him, and thus inserted?

7. Mark now, in this letter of Paul, another circumstance: and judge whether it tends not to cast discredit on what is said of Peter in the Acts.

In the Acts account we have seen Peter in the great council, supporting, in a sort of speech, the liberty side—of the question,—Jesus against Moses,—supporting it in the great council, in which, in that same account, Paul, though present, is, as to that point, represented as silent: in that same account,

shall we see Peter, five years before this time, addressing himself to the Gentiles,—using this same liberty,—and, when called to account for doing so, employing *his* pair of visions, his and Cornelius's, Acts 10:30-41, in and for his defence: we shall see him in this new part of his career,—in this part, for which he was by both education and habits of life so ill qualified,—we shall see him so much in earliest in this part of his labors, as to have expended miracles, —a supernatural cure, and even a raising from the dead,—for his support in it.

Had any such facts really happened—facts in their nature so notorious,—would Paul, in this letter of his to the Galatians, have spoken of Peter, as if he had never made, or attempted to make, any progress in the conversion of the Gentiles? Speaking of the sticklers for Moses, as well as of Peter,—would he have said "When they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was to Peter?" Gal. 2:7, "For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles?"

That, in some way or other, Peter had tried his hand upon some persons who were Gentiles—in this there is nothing but what may well enough be believed: provided it be also believed—that, in the experiment so made by him, he had little or no success:—for, that after the expenditure of two such miracles of so public a nature, besides a pair of visions,—he had after all made so poor a hand of it, as to be content to give up to Paul the whole of his prospects from that quarter,—does it seem credible?

8. As to the partition-treaty itself,—whatsoever were the incidents that had brought it about, nothing

could be more natural—nothing more probable—nothing more beneficial to the common cause—to the religion of Jesus, meaning always so far as the religion taught by Paul was comfortable to it. Each retained to himself the only part of the field, for the cultivation of which he was qualified: each gave up no other part of the field, than that, for the cultivation of which he was *not* qualified.

9. Gal. 2:12. "For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

10. "But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.

11. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

12. Gal. 2:10. "Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

13. "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

14. "For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.—And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him: insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

15. "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

16. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Note, in this same letter, the mention made of Peter's eating with the Gentiles. "For before that certain came from James, he, Peter, did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision."

Note here, an additional reason for discrediting the whole story of Peter's expedition,—*miracles* and visions included,—as reported in the Acts. In regard to the *visions*,—from this circumstance it may be seen, that either no such visions were, as stated in the Acts 11:1-13, related by Peter, on his defence against the accusations preferred against him on this ground,—or that, if any such relation was given, no credit was given to it: for, it is after this, and, according to appearance, long after,—that, according to the Acts 15:1-33, not less than five years after, the meeting at Jerusalem took place; that meeting, at which, at the motion of James, the adherence to the Mosaic law was indeed in part dispensed with; but, so far as regards the practice charged upon Peter as an offence,—namely the eating with the Gentiles, insisted on and ordained.

If Paul's evidence was good and conclusive evidence

in support of Paul's visions,—how came Peter's evidence not to be received as good and conclusive evidence in support of Peter's visions? Paul's evidence, with the visions reported by it, was not better evidence, in support of his claim to the Apostleship,—than Peter's visions, if the account in the Acts is to be believed, in support of the abrogation of the Mosaic law. Yet, as, according to the author of the Acts, by Paul's account of his visions, the Apostles were not any of them convinced; so here, according to Paul, by Peter's account of his visions, if ever really related to the fellowship of the Apostles, and to the elders,—their associates,—that same goodly fellowship was not convinced.

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SECTION 2.

PARTITION-TREATY—PROBABILITY GIVEN, BY THE FINANCIAL STIPULATION, TO PAUL'S ACCOUNT OF IT.

Of this important treaty, mention may have been seen above. In the financial stipulation which may have been observed in it,—may be seen a circumstance, by which an additional degree of credibility seems to be given, to Paul's account of the transaction; at the same time that light is thrown upon the nature of it. Paul alone, with his adherents, were to address themselves to the Gentiles: but, in return for the countenance given to him by Peter and the rest of the Apostles, he was to *remember the poor*; which is what, says he, "I also was forward to do." Now, as to the remembering the poor, what is meant by it at this time of day, was meant by it at that time of day, or it would not have been meant by it at this:

—supplying money, need it be added? for the use of the poor. Whatsoever, in relation to this money, was the intention of the rulers,—whether to retain any part in compensation for their own trouble, or to distribute among the poor the whole of it, without deduction;—in other words, whether profit as well as patronage,—or patronage alone, and without profit, —was to be the fruit;—human nature must, in this instance, have ceased to be human nature, if, to the men in question—Apostles as they were—the money could have been altogether an object of indifference. According to a statement, to which, as above, ch. ii., though contained in this anonymous history, there seems no reason to refuse credence,—community of goods—a principle, even now, in these days, acted upon by the Moravian Christians—was a principle, acted upon in those days, by the Jewish Christians. The property of each was thrown into one common stock: and the disposal of it was committed to a set of trustees, who—it is positively related—were confirmed, and, to all appearance, were recommended by,—and continued to act under the influence of,—the Apostles.

On neither side were motives of the ordinary human complexion—motives by which man's nature was made to be governed—wanting, to the contracting parties. By Peter and the rest of the Apostles, much experience had been acquired, of the activity and energy of this their self-constituted colleague: within that field of action, which alone was suited to their powers, and within which they had stood exposed to be disturbed by his interference, within that field to be secured against such interference,—was, to them and their interests, an object of no small moment. Such seems to have been the consideration, on the part of the acknowledged and indisputable Apostles.

Not less obvious was the advantage, which, by the stipulation of this same treaty in his favour, was in a still more effectual manner, secured to Paul. That, when the whole transaction was so fresh,—all that Paul was able to say for himself, with all that Barnabas was able to say for him, had not been sufficient, to induce the Apostles to give credence to his story about the manner of his conversion,—in a word, to regard him in any other light than that of an impostor,—is directly asserted by the author of the Acts. So again, in his unpremeditated speech to the enraged multitude, Acts 22:18, "They will not receive thy testimony concerning me," is the information which the Acts make him report as having been communicated to him by the Lord, when "while I prayed in the Temple," says he, ver. 17, "I was in a trance." Should a charge to any such effect happen to encounter him in the course of his labours;—should he, in a word, find himself stigmatized as an impostor;—find himself encountered by a certificate of impostorship;—a certificate, signed by the known and sole confidential servants, as well as constant companions, of that Jesus, whom—without so much as pretending any knowledge of his person, he had thus pretended to have heard without seeing him,—and at a time and place, in which he was neither heard nor seen by anybody else;—it is obvious enough, in any such case, how formidable an obstruction of this sort was liable to prove. On the other hand, so he were but once seen to be publicly recognized, in the character of an associate and acknowledged labourer in the same field,—a recognition of him in that character—a virtual recognition at least, if not an express one—would be seen to have taken place:—a recognition, such as it would scarcely, at any time after, be in

their power to revoke: since it would scarcely be possible for them, ever to accuse him of the principal offence, without accusing themselves of the correspondent connivance. Note, that, of this treaty, important as it was—this partition-treaty—by which a division was made of the whole Christian world—no mention, not any the least hint, is to be found in the Acts.

Thus much for this third visit of Paul's to Jerusalem, reckoning from the time of his conversion: thus much for this third visit, and the partition-treaty that was the result of it. In and by his fourth visit to that original metropolis of the Christian world,—we shall see how this same treaty was violated—violated, without any the slightest reason or pretext, or so much as an attempt, on the part of his anonymous biographer,—either by his own mouth, or by that of his hero,—to assign a motive. Violated—that is to say, by and on the part of Paul: for, of Peter, no further mention is, in all this history, to be found.

The truth is—that, instead of "the Acts of the Apostles," the History of Paul—namely, from the time of his conversion to the time of his arrival at Rome—would have been the more proper denomination of it. Of any other of the Apostles, and their acts,—little, if anything, more is said, than what is just sufficient, to prepare the reader, for the history of Paul, by bringing to view the state of the Christian world, at the time of his coming upon the stage. As to Saint Peter,—the author's chief hero being all along Saint Paul, in whose train, during this last-mentioned of his excursions, he represents himself as being established,—what is said of Saint Peter and his achievements, stands, as it were, but as an episode. And though, by this historiographer, no

mention is made of the *partition-treaty*, it has eventually been of use to us, by serving to show what, at the time of entering into that engagement, was the situation of St. Peter; and how good the title is, which the transaction presents to our credence,—as being so natural, because so manifestly for the advantage of both the contracting parties, as well as of the religion of Jesus, in so far as that of Paul was conformable to it.

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SECTION 3.

TIME OF THE PARTITION TREATY, MOST PROBABLY THAT OF VISIT I.

The time, at which this partition-treaty took place, appears involved in much obscurity, and presents some difficulties: question—whether it was at the first, or not till the third, of these visits—of these four visits of Paul's to Jerusalem.

The consideration, by which the assigning to it the time of the first visit has been determined, is—that it was at this first visit, that the demand for it, in respect of all interests concerned, namely, that of the religion of Jesus—that of the existing Christians in general,—as well as that of the individuals particularly concerned on both sides,—took place: that, from that time, so, as far as appears, did the observance of it: and that it was not till a long time after, that either symptoms, or complaints of non-observance, seem to have made their appearance.

4. Among the conditions of the treaty, the financial stipulation has been brought to view:—party to be remembered, the poor—then under the gentle sway

of the Apostles: party, by whom they were to be remembered, Paul—their recognized, though, for aught appears, no otherwise than locally and negatively recognized, associate. In and by the Deputation Visit, on the part of Paul, with the assistance of Barnabas,—we see this stipulation actually conformed to and carried into effect. From the Christians at Antioch to the Apostles at Jerusalem,—for the benefit of the poor, at that metropolis of the Christian world, by the conjoined hands of Paul and Barnabas,—money, it has been seen, was actually brought.

On the other hand, an observation which, at first sight, may seem to shut the door against this supposition, is—that whereas in his letter, to his Galatians, Gal. i. 18, 19, after saying, "I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days," and adding, "But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother"; he, not more than fourteen verses afterwards, Gal. 2:9, in the verse in which his account of this important treaty is continued,—speaks as if it was at that very time that he had seen—not only the above two Apostles, on this occasion designated by the names of James and Cephas—but John likewise: and that this must have been his third Jerusalem visit, because it is after *mention* made of that same third visit, which, in a passage intermediate between these, namely, Gal. 2:1, is stated, in express terms, as being by fourteen years posterior to his first visit,[38] that this circumstance, of his seeing John likewise, is mentioned as having had place.

But, in neither of these considerations, is there anything, that presents itself as conclusive, against the supposition—that whatever treaty there was,

took place at the first visit.

1. As to the first, at that time it is, that for giving intimation of the treaty, *giving the right hands of fellowship* is the expression employed: and that if this union were to be taken in a literal, and thence in a physical sense, as an agreement in which, as a token of mutual consent, the physical operation of junction of hands was employed,—here must have been an actual meeting, in which John was seen as well as the two others—and, consequently, on the supposition that the account thus given by Paul, is, in this particular, on both occasions correct,—this must have been a different meeting from the first: on which supposition, on comparison with the account given in the Acts of Paul's second visit,—there can be no difficulty in determining that this visit cannot have been any other than the third. But, so evidently figurative is the turn of the expression,—that, even in the language used in this country at this time, slight indeed, if it amounted to anything at all, would be the force, of the inference drawn from it, in favour of the supposition of mutual presence. To signify an agreement on any point—especially if regarded as important—who is there that would scruple to speak of his having given the right hand of fellowship to another, although it were known to be only by letter? or, even through the medium of a common friend, and without any personal intercourse?

2. As to the other consideration, whatsoever might be the force of it, if applied to a composition of modern times—after so many intervening centuries, during several of which the arts of literary composition have, with the benefit of the facilities afforded by the press, been the subject of general

study and practice;—whatsoever on this supposition might be the force of it, applied to the style and character of Paul, little weight seems necessary to be attached to it. Of the confusion—designed or undesigned—in which the style of this self-named Apostle involves every point it touches upon, not a page can be read without presenting samples in abundance, to every eye that can endure to open itself to them: in this very work, some must probably have already offered themselves to notice; and before it closes, many will be presented in this express view: the point in question belongs to the field of chronology: and, of the perturbate mode of his operation in this field, a particular exemplification has been already brought to view, Ch. 2, in a passage, in which, of a long train of sufferings and perils,—some real, some to all appearance not so—the one first undergone is last mentioned.[39] From the order in which two events are mentioned by this writer, no argument, in any degree conclusive, can be deduced, for the persuasion, that that which stands first mentioned, was so much as intended by him to be regarded as that which first took place.

In the very passage, in which the giving the right hands of fellowship to him and Barnabas is mentioned, and immediately after these very words, —it is said—that "we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." Thus, then, the conjunct excursion of Paul and Barnabas—an excursion, not commenced till about ten years after this same first visit, Acts 13 and 14, is mentioned, as an incident at *that* time future. True it is, that the word directly expressive of the future is, in the English translation, but an interpretation, and as such marked. But, had any prior excursion of this kind taken place before, there seems no reason to suppose, that the event,

which, by the context, would surely have been taken for an event then as yet to come,—would, had the intention been to represent it as no more than a repetition of what had taken place already, have received a form, so ill adapted to its intended purpose.

But, two verses before, stands that, in which mention is made of the circumstance, by which, according to Paul, the course taken by the Apostles, in respect of their entering, into this treaty, is brought to view. "But contrariwise," says he, Gal. 2:7, "when they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the Gospel* of the circumcision was unto Peter:" 9. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, *perceived* the grace that was given to me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen," ... &c.

Now these *perceptions*—the perceptions thus ascribed by him to the Apostles—when was it that they were obtained? Evidently at no time whatever, if not at the time of his *first* visit: for, these were the perceptions—say rather the conceptions—the conveyance of which is beyond dispute manifest, not only from the whole nature of the case, according to the accounts we have of it, but from the account expressly given by the author of the Acts; and that account, in some part confirmed, and not in any part contradicted, by Paul himself, and in this very epistle.[40]

To conclude. That, at the time of the Deputation Visit, Visit III., the treaty in question could not but have been on the carpet, seems, it must be confessed, altogether probable, not to say unquestionable. But, that at the time of the Reconciliation Visit, Visit I.,—

it was already on the carpet, seems, if possible, still more so. For, without some understanding between Paul and the Apostles—and that to the effect of this same treaty (the impossibility that Paul's conversion story should have been the cause, having, it is believed, been hereinabove demonstrated) without some understanding of this sort, neither the continuance ascribed to the Reconciliation Visit, nor the existence of either of the two succeeding visits, to wit, the Money-bringing Visit, and this Deputation Visit, seem within the bounds of moral possibility. [41]

FOOTNOTES:

[38] Gal. 2:1. "Then fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also."

[39] 2 Cor. 2:32. "In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me," &c. namely, on his conversion.

[40] To this same Partition Treaty, allusion seems discernible in Paul's Epistle to his Roman adherents. Romans 15:15 to 22. "Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you, in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,—That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.—I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.—For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles

obedient by word and deed,—through mighty signs and wonders by the power of the spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ.—Yea, so I have strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:—but, as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.—For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you."

[41] From this passage in Paul's Epistle to his Galatians[II.], compared with a passage in his first Epistle to the Corinthians[III.]—the Bible edited by Scholey, in a note to Acts xv. 39, (being the passage in which the rupture between Paul and Barnabas is mentioned), draws the inference, that, after this rupture between Paul and Barnabas, a reconciliation took place.

From the passage in question, if taken by itself, true it is that this supposition is a natural one enough. For, according to all appearances, the date of this Epistle to the Corinthians is posterior to that of the rupture: and, from the conjunct mention of the two names, if there were no evidence on the other side, it might naturally enough be supposed probable, how far soever from certain, that the intention was thereby, to report the two persons, as operating in conjunction, and even in each other's company. But, to the purpose of the argument no such supposition (it will be seen) is necessary. Labouring they both were herein represented to be, and to all appearance were, in the same field, viz. the field of the Gentiles: labouring, after and in conformity to this same treaty—the agreement made by them with the

Apostles—the partition treaty so often mentioned. But, from this it followed not, by any means, that they were labouring in the *same part* of that field. For the purpose of the argument, the question was—What was the sort of relation, that had taken place, between these two preachers on the one part, and their respective disciples on the other? It is of this relation that it is stated by Paul, and stated truly, that as between him and Barnabas, it was the same: both being actual labourers in their respective parts of the same field: both being equally at liberty to cease from, to put an end to, their respective labours at any time: not that both were labouring in the same place, or in any sort of concert. "Or I only, and Barnabas, have not we, says Paul, power to forbear working?"

Thus inconclusive is the argument, by which the existence of a reconciliation is inferred. Against evidence so weak, the contrary evidence seems decisive. After mention made by him of the rupture,—had any reconciliation ever taken place, within the compass of time embraced by his history, would the author of the Acts have left it unnoticed? That, among his objects was the painting every incident, in colours at least as favourable, to the church in general, and to Paul in particular, as he durst, —is sufficiently manifest. By a rupture between two such holy persons,—a token, more or less impressive, of human infirmity, could not but be presented to view: and, to any reflecting mind—in those marks of *warmth* at least, to say nothing worse, which, from first to last, are so conspicuous, in the character and conduct, of this the historian's patron and principal hero, ground could scarce fail to be seen, for supposing—that it was to *his* side rather than that of Barnabas—the

generous and ever-disinterested Barnabas—that the blame, principally, if not exclusively, appertained.

[II.] Gal. ii. 9. "They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

[III.] 1 Cor. ix. 6. "Or, I only, and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?"

CHAPTER VIII.

Interview the Fourth.—Peter at Antioch.—Deputies to Antioch from Jerusalem, Judas and Silas.—Paul disagrees with Peter and Barnabas, quits Antioch, and on a Missionary Excursion takes with him Silas. What concerns the Partition Treaty, down to this Period, reviewed.—Peter and the Apostles justified.

SECTION 1.

PAUL'S ACCOUNT OF THIS INTERVIEW QUOTED.—ACTS ACCOUNT OF WHAT FOLLOWED UPON IT.

We now come to the last of the four different and more or less distant occasions on which a personal intercourse, in some way or other, is recorded as having had place, between Paul on the one part, and

the Apostles or some of them on the other, antecedently to that, on which Paul's history, so far as any tolerably clear, distinct, and material, information has descended to us, closes. Of this interview, the scene lies at Antioch: Peter having, for some consideration no otherwise to be looked for than by conjecture, been led to pay a visit, to that place of Paul's *then* habitual abode, after, and, as seems probable, in consequence of, Paul's third recorded visit to Jerusalem—his *Deputation Visit*.

Let us now cast an eye on the documents. Respecting Paul's disagreement with Peter, the only one we have, is that which has been furnished us by Paul himself. It consists of the following passage in his Epistle to his Galatians.

GALATIANS 2:11 to 16.

> But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.—For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.—And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.—But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?—We *who are* Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles,—knowing that a man is not justified by the works of

> the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Let us now see the account, given in the Acts, of what passed in Antioch, in relation to Paul, Barnabas and Silas,—during a period, which seems to be either the same, or one in contiguity with it, probably antecedent to it.

ACTS 15:35 to 41.

> Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with *many others* also.—And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren, in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.—And Barnabas determined to take with them John whose surname was Mark.—But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.—And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus;—And Paul chose Silas and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.—And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

With regard to Paul's separation from Barnabas,

departure from Antioch, and taking Silas for a companion,—we have nothing from Paul himself: nothing, from any other source, than, as above, the Acts.

In Paul's account, however, may be seen a passage, Gal. 2:13, by which some light is thrown upon the breach of Paul with Barnabas. In the Acts, though the *"contention" is said to be "sharp,"* no cause is stated for it, other than a difference respecting the choice of a companion: namely, on an excursion, which they are represented as having agreed to make, in the company of each other, as before.

But, according to Paul, he had had cause of complaint, against his old friend Barnabas, on another account. Barnabas had sided with the Apostles: Barnabas had been "carried away with their dissimulation"; by the dissimulation of those Apostles of Jesus, the virtuous simplicity of the self-constituted Apostle, so he desires his Galatian disciples to believe, had been foiled.

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SECTION 2.

PAUL DISAGREES WITH PETER—AND BARNABAS—QUITS ANTIOCH, TAKING SILAS FROM THE APOSTLES.

In no place can this man exist, but to exercise hostility or provoke it: with no man can he hold intercourse, without acting towards him, if not in the character of a despot, in that either of an open and audacious, or in that of a secret adversary, or both. Against Peter, at Jerusalem, in his Deputation Visit, he is intriguing, while he is bargaining with him. With the same Peter, when arrived at Antioch, he

quarrels: for, at Antioch, Peter was but a visitor—a stranger; Paul, with Barnabas for his constant supporter, was on his own ground: no betrayed rulers *there* to fear—no persecuted Christians. He quarrels—so he himself informs his Galatians—he quarrels with the chief of the Apostles: he "withstands him to his face." Why? because, forsooth, "he was to be blamed." In conclusion, to such a pitch, —by the degree of success, whatever it was, which by this time he had experienced,—to such a pitch of intemperance, had his mind swelled—he quarrels even with Barnabas: with Barnabas—in all his three antecedent visits to Jerusalem, his munificent protector, and steady adherent: with that Barnabas, in whose company, and under whose wing, one of his missionary excursions had already been performed. Acts 11:19-27; Ib. 2:37-40.

At Antioch, the number of his competitors could not but be considerable: at Antioch, the number of years, which he appears to have passed in that city, considered,—the number of his enemies could not be small. He accordingly plans, and executes, a new missionary excursion. He stands now upon his own legs: no Barnabas now,—no necessary protector, to share with him in his glory: to share with him, in equal or superior proportion, in the profit of his profession: in that profit, the image of which, in all its shapes, was flitting before his eyes,—and which we shall accordingly see him gathering in, in such unequalled exuberance. He now looks out for a humble companion—an assistant: he finds one in Silas: that Silas, whom, with Judas Barsabas, we have seen come to Antioch, deputed by the Apostles and their disciples, to conclude, in that second metropolis, the negotiation, commenced in the first metropolis of the new Christian world. Deserter from

the service in which he was sent, Silas enlists in that of the daring and indefatigable adventurer. Thus much, and no more, do we learn concerning him: for, in the picture drawn in the Acts, no character is given to him, except the being found in company with Paul, in some of the places which Paul visits: except this exercise of the locomotive faculty, nothing is there to distinguish him from the common stock of still-life.

From this fourth recorded epoch in the intercourse between Paul and the Apostles, we now pass to that which stands fifth and last, to wit: that which was produced by his fourth and last visit to Jerusalem:—his *Invasion Visit*, A.D. 62.

In the interval, come four years,—occupied by a series of successive excursions and sojournments,—in the course of which, all mention of Silas is dropped, without remark: dropped, in the same obscure and inexplicit manner, in which the historian affords to the reader, supposing him endowed with the requisite degree of attention, the means of discovering, Acts 16:10, that not long after the commencement of this same period, the historian himself, whoever he was, was taken into the train of the self-constituted Apostle. To the reader is also left the faculty, of amusing himself in conjecturing, about what time, and in what manner, this latter event may have taken place; an event, from which such important consequences have resulted.

Of these portions of Paul's life, some view will come to be taken, in a succeeding chapter, under another head:—under the head of Paul's supposed miracles: for, it is in the account given of his achievements and adventures, and of the transactions in which, in the course of this period, he was engaged,—it is in the

course of this account, that we shall have to pick up, the supposed accounts of supposed miracles, which, in this part of the Acts history lie interspersed. This review must of necessity be taken, for the purpose of placing in a true light, the evidence, supposed to be thus afforded, in support of his claims to a supernatural commission.

To this change of connection on the part of Silas,—from the service of the Apostles of Jesus to that of the self-constituted Apostle,—the character of *defection* on the part of Silas,—*seduction* on the part of Paul,—may here be ascribed without difficulty. By the Apostles, one Gospel was preached—the Gospel of Jesus:—we see it in the Evangelists. By Paul, another and different Gospel was preached:—a Gospel, later and better, according to him, than that which is to be seen in the Evangelists:—a Gospel of his own. If, even down to this time, mutual prudence prevented an open and generally conspicuous rupture,—there was on his part, at any rate, an opposition. If, to men, whose conduct and temper were such as they uniformly appear to have been,—any such word as *party* can, without disparagement, be applied, here were two *parties*. He, who was *for* the self-constituted Apostle, was *against* the Apostles of Jesus. In a word, in the language of modern party, Silas was a *rat*.

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SECTION 3.

THE PARTITION TREATY, AND THE PROCEEDINGS, IN RELATION TO IT, DOWN TO THIS PERIOD, REVIEWED.

In regard to the Partition Treaty,—taking the matter from Paul's first, or Reconciliation Visit, A.D. 35, to

his departure from Antioch, on his missionary excursion, after the interview he had had at that city with Peter,—the state of the affairs, between Paul and the Apostles, seems to have been thus:—

1. On the occasion, and at the time, of his first Jerusalem Visit—his Reconciliation Visit—a sort of reconciliation—meaning at least an outward one—could not,—consistently with the whole train, of what is said of his subsequent intercourse and interviews with the Apostles,—could not but have taken place.

2. Of this reconciliation, the terms were—that, on condition of *his* preaching in the name of Jesus,—*they* would not, to such persons in Jerusalem and elsewhere, as were in connection with them,—*speak* of him any longer in the character of a persecutor: for, by his disobedience and breach of trust, as towards the Jerusalem constituted authorities,—such he had put it out of his power to *be* any longer: not speak of him as a persecutor, but, on the contrary, as an associate:—he taking up the name of Jesus: and preaching—never in his own, but on every occasion in that holy, name.

3. On this occasion,—it being manifest to both parties, that, by his intimate acquaintance with the Greek language, and with the learning belonging to that language, he was in a peculiar degree well qualified to spread the name of Jesus among the Gentiles in general;—that is, among those to whom the Jewish was not a vernacular language;—whereas their acquaintance with language was confined to their own, to wit, the Jewish language;—on this occasion, it followed of course, from the nature of the case, and almost without need of stipulation, that,—leaving to *them*, for the field of their labours,

Jerusalem, and that part of the circumjacent country, in which the Jewish alone was the language of the bulk of the population,—*he* should confine his exertions, principally if not exclusively, to those countries, of which Greek was, or at any rate Hebrew was not, the vernacular language.

To him, at that time, it was not in the nature of the case, that absentation from Jerusalem, or any part of the country under the same dominion, should be matter of regret. Within that circle, he could not, for any length of time, abide publicly, for fear of the legal vengeance of the constituted authorities: nor yet among the Christians; although from their chiefs he had obtained, as above, a sort of prudential endurance; considering the horror, which his persecution of them had inspired, and the terror, with which, until his conversion had been proved in the eyes of all by experience, he could not as yet fail to be regarded.

Whatever was the object of his concupiscence,—whether it were the fund—and we have seen how attractive the bait was—which, at that time, in that metropolis of the Christian world, offered itself to an ambitious eye,—still, though his opportunities had as yet confined his exertions to the *second* city in that increasing world, his eyes never ceased looking to the *first*.

Twice, accordingly, between the first of his Visits,—his Reconciliation Visit—and this his last interview with Peter,—we see him visiting that inviting spot: each time, protected and escorted by the munificent Barnabas and his influence—to make him endurable: each time with a public commission—to make him respected:—- the first time with money in his hand—to make him welcome.

That, all this while, neither *good faith* nor *prudence* were capable of opposing to the violence of his ambition, any effectual check,—- is abundantly manifest.

That *good faith* was not, we learn distinctly from himself. For though, from the very nature of the two correlative situations, it is out of all question, as above, that, without some agreement to the effect above mentioned, he could not, even with the benefit of every possible means of concealment, have been preserved for two days together from the vengeance which pressed upon him, from *below* as well as from *above*; yet still was he, by his secret intrigues, Gal. 1:11, violating the treaty, at the expense of those upright, patient, and long-suffering men, to whose observance of it, he was every day indebted for his life.

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SECTION 4.

PETER AND THE APOSTLES JUSTIFIED AS TO THE FINANCIAL STIPULATION IN THE TREATY, AND THE SUCCEEDING MISSIONARY LABOURS OF PETER AMONG THE GENTILES.

Of the financial stipulation, the account we have has been seen:—an account given by one of the parties to it—Paul:—the other party being—the Apostles. In the instance of Paul, in the demonstration, supposed to be given of it, the worldliness, of the motives which gave birth to it, has in a manner been taken for granted. Well, then, if in the one instance such was the character of it,—in the other instance, can it have been any other? The question is a natural one; but not less so is the answer. For note, the stipulation

is express—that, by Paul—by Paul out of the profits of his vocation—the poor, meaning the poor of Jerusalem—the poor among the disciples of the Apostles—should be remembered. Remembered, and how? Remembered, by payment of the money—into the hands, either of the Apostles themselves, or, what comes to the same thing, some other persons, in connection with them, and acting under their influence. Now, then, once more. Of the man, by whom the money was to be *paid*—of this man, the motives, you say, were worldly: is it credible then, that they should have been less so, in the instance of the men by whom they were to be *received*?

Answer. Oh! yes, *that* it is. Between the two cases, there is this broad difference. Whatever Paul might receive, he would receive for himself: whatever, after payment made, under the treaty, to the use of the Jerusalem poor, he retained,—he might retain for his own use. But the Apostles—that which, if anything, they received, in the name of the poor, and as for the use of that same poor,—would they—could they, for their own use, retain it, or any part of it? Not they, indeed. Not in their hands were the poor's funds: not in theirs, but in a very different set of hands:—in the hands of a set of trustees—of the trustees already mentioned in this work, Ch. 2—of those administrators, whose function, to every reader who has not the Greek original in view, is so unfortunately disguised by the word *Deacons*. And these deacons, by whom appointed? By the Apostles? No; but, by the whole communion of the saints—by the whole number of the members of the Christian commonwealth;—and in the way of free election,—*election, on the principle of universal suffrage*. Monarchists and Aristocrats! mark well!—*of universal suffrage*.

So much for the treaty itself. Now, as to the subsequent conduct of the parties, under it, and in relation to it. As to the partition—Paul to the Gentiles, Peter and his associates to the Jews—such was the letter of it. Such being the letter—what, at the same time, was the spirit of it? Manifestly this: on the one hand, that the field, to which Paul's exertions should apply themselves, and confine themselves, should be that field, for the cultivation of which, with any prospect of success, he was exclusively qualified: on the other hand, that the field, to which their exertions should apply themselves and confine themselves, should be that, for the cultivation of which, they were—if not exclusively, at any rate more peculiarly, qualified. In a word—that, of all that portion of the world, that presented itself as open to the exertions, of those who preached in the name of Jesus,—they should reserve to themselves that part which was already in their possession, to wit, Jerusalem, and its near neighbourhood, together with such parts of Judea, and its neighbourhood, of which their own language, the Hebrew, was the vernacular language: this minute portion of the world reserved, all the rest was to be left open to him: over every other part of it he was to be at liberty to cast forth his shoe. Judea—the country of the Jews? say, rather, the Jews themselves:—the Jews wherever found: for, revelation apart, it was in *language*, that Paul's pretensions—his exclusive qualifications—consisted. The Apostles spoke nothing but Hebrew: Paul was learned, and eloquent, in a certain sort, in Greek.

In regard to the interpretation to be put upon this treaty,—suppose any doubt to have place,—in the word *Gentile*, would obviously the seat and source of it to be to be found. Suppose, on the one hand

persons to be the objects, of which it was meant to be designative,—then, let there be but so much as one single uncircumcised man in Jerusalem, or elsewhere,—to whom, in the view of gaining him over to their communion, the Apostles, or, with their cognizance, any of their disciples, addressed themselves,—here would, on *their* part, be a breach of the treaty. Suppose, on the other hand, *places* to be the objects, of which it was meant to be designative,—on that supposition, within that tract of country, within which alone, the necessary means, of communicating with the bulk of the population, were in their possession,—they might apply themselves, to all persons without restriction: and this, still without any real breach of the agreement—of the spirit and real import of the agreement.

In respect either of *persons or places*, by the agreement, according to this—the obvious sense of it—what was it that Paul gave up? In truth, just nothing. Had his mind been in a sober state,—strange indeed, if the field thus afforded by the whole heathen world, was not wide enough for his labour: in all parts of it he could not be at once; and the most promising parts were open to his choice. Cessation of Paul's hostilities excepted, what was it that the Apostles gained? Not much more.

As already observed—what was not gained by it, is what is above: what was really gained by it, is what follows.

What Paul gained was—exemption from the annoyance, which otherwise he would everywhere have been exposed to have received, by being designated as the quondam notorious persecutor, and still unreconciled enemy, of the Apostles and their disciples:—in a word, of all others who preached in

the name of Jesus.

That which the Apostles actually gained, was—that confirmation and extension of their influence, which followed of course, upon every extension, received by that field, within which the influence of the name of Jesus was extended.

That which, besides what is above, they *ought to* have gained, but did not gain, is—exemption from all such annoyance, as could not but be inflicted on them, in proportion as Paul, preaching to persons, to whom *they* had access, a Gospel which was his, and not theirs,—should, while in pretence and name an associate, be, in truth and effect, an adversary and opponent.

This is what—though they not only should have gained, but might also reasonably have expected to gain—they did *not* gain. For, not to insist any more on his secret intrigues in Jerusalem itself, and his open opposition in the second Jerusalem, Antioch, as above; we shall—when we come to the next and last of his interviews with the Apostles on the occasion of his Invasion Visit—see, to what lengths the madness of his ambition carried him, in that birthplace and metropolis of the Christian world.

By the sort of connection, which, notwithstanding such obvious and naturally powerful principles of discrimination, have on each occasion, been visible, as between the undoubted Apostles, and this self-styled one—three distinguishable questions cannot but, from time to time, have been presenting themselves:—1. The sort of countenance—partial, cold, and guarded as it was—shown by the old established and goodly fellowship to the ever-intruding individual—is it credible? 2. Can it, in fact, have been manifested, in conjunction with a

disbelief, on their part, of his pretensions to a degree of supernatural favour with the Almighty, equal or superior to their own? 3. And, if not only possible, but actual—was it, in point of morality, justifiable?

By a few obvious enough considerations, an answer —and, it is hoped, a not altogether unsatisfactory one,—may be given to all these questions.

As to whatever was natural in the course of the events, Barnabas was necessary to the rising Church: and Paul was, all along, necessary, or, at least, was so thought, to Barnabas.

1. Barnabas was necessary to the Church. Already, it has been seen, how preeminent was the support received by it from his munificence. In him, it had found at once the most liberal of benefactors, and, unless Peter be an exception, the most indefatigable of agents. On the part of no one of even the chosen servants of Jesus, do proofs of equal zeal and activity present themselves to our view.

In an ensuing chapter, we shall see Peter trying his strength among the Gentiles. Yet, from the direction thus given to his Apostolic zeal, no violation of the treaty, it will be seen, can with justice be imputed to him, if the interpretation above given to the word *Gentiles* be correct.

1. In the first place,—according to the Acts, the date of this excursion is *antecedent* to that third interview, which took place on the occasion of Paul's third Jerusalem Visit—his Deputation Visit: that is to say, to the time, at which, and not before, though, if the above reasoning be just, in a sort of general terms the preliminaries had been agreed upon, the general preliminary arrangements were followed, confirmed, explained, and liquidated, by more particular ones.

2. In the next place—of all the places,—which, in the course of this excursion of Peter's, are mentioned as having been visited by him,—there is not one, that Paul is mentioned as having ever visited: whereas, in the first of them that is mentioned, the Apostles are mentioned as having already a band of disciples.[42]

3. In the third place,—the date, assigned to this excursion of Peter's, is, by several years, antecedent even to the first, of the several excursions of Paul's, of which mention is made in the Acts. In the received chronology—date assigned to the commencement of Peter's excursion, A.D. 35; date assigned to Paul's first excursion, A.D. 45.

While Peter was thus occupying himself, Paul was still at Tarsus:[43] at Tarsus—his own birthplace—whereto,—in consequence of the danger, to which his life had been exposed by his first Jerusalem Visit, his Reconciliation Visit,—he had taken his flight.[44]

4. In the fourth place,—notwithstanding the perpetual hostility of Paul's mind, as towards Peter and the rest of the Apostles,—on no occasion, on the score of any breach of this article in the partition treaty, is any complaint, on the part of Paul, to be found. When dissatisfaction is expressed, doctrine alone is mentioned by him as the source of it: doctrine, the ostensible; dominion, the original and real source.

Spite of the treaty,—spite of the manifest interest, of the only genuine religion of Jesus—the Gospel taught by the Apostles,—still in places to which they had access—in places in which, in consequence, they had formed connections,—he persisted in intruding himself: intruding himself, with that Gospel which he says himself, was his, not theirs—and not being

theirs, was not Jesus's:—intruding himself, in places, in which, even had his Gospel been Jesus's, *their* connections being established, there existed no demand for him and *his*. Can this be doubted of? If yes, all doubt will at any rate be removed, when,—spite of all the endeavours that could be employed, either by them or by his own adherents, to prevail upon him to desist,—we shall see him entering Jerusalem on his Invasion Visit: as if, while, for preaching the religion of Jesus, all the world, with the exception of the Jewish part of it, was not enough for this intruder,—the Apostles of Jesus—eleven in number, with their elected associate, Matthias,—were not, all together, enough, for that small part of it.

The *name* he preached in, *that* indeed not his own, but Jesus's: but the *doctrine* he preached—the Gospel, as he called it—not *Jesus's*, nor anybody else's, but his own. All this, as he has the assurance to declare, —all this did he preach without their knowledge. And why without their knowledge? because, as he himself has the still more extraordinary assurance to *declare*—for *confession* is the result not of assurance, but weakness—because, as he himself acknowledges, —if so it had been, that this Gospel of his had come to the knowledge of the Apostles—of those associates, to whom he was all along holding out the right hand of fellowship, this Gospel of his could not have been listened to—this preaching of his would have been in vain.

Already, however—for in this he may be believed—already, throughout this *first* intercourse, though the expression is not used till he came to speak of the *third*,—already must the right hand of fellowship have been held out, and on both sides: and, what

followed of course,—and was not only affirmed by his statement, but demonstrated by the result,—on this last occasion was the treaty again brought upon the carpet and confirmed, after such modifications as it may naturally have received, from the consideration of intervening incidents.

FOOTNOTES:

[42] Acts 9:32. "And it came to pass, as Peter passed through all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda."

[43] Acts 11:25. "Then departed Barnabas for to seek Saul." A.D. 43.

[44] Acts 9:30, "Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea and sent him forth to Tarsus."

CHAPTER IX.

Paul disbelieved continued—The Fourth and Last Jerusalem Visit. The Purpose concealed: Opposition universal; among his own Disciples, and among those of the Apostles.

SECTION 1.

MOTIVES TO THIS VISIT.

Of this momentous visit to say what were the real

objects, must in a great part be left to conjecture:—to inferences drawn from the known circumstances of the case. By himself, as will be seen, they were concealed with the most persevering anxiety.

But, in default of direct evidence, the point may without much danger of error be settled by circumstantial evidence. The common objects of political concupiscence—money, power and vengeance—were all before his eyes: *money*—in no less a quantity than that of the aggregate mass of the property of the whole church:—that fund, for the management of which, the Apostles' seven trustees, under the name of Deacons, were not more than sufficient:—that fund, by which the repulsed concupiscence of the sorcerer of Samaria had so lately been excited:—*power*, that which was exercised by the direction of the consciences of the whole number of the faithful, some time before this, not less in number than three thousand: *vengeance*, for the repeated rebuffs, by which, at the interval of so many years from each other, his endeavours to supplant the Apostles had been repelled.

In a general point of view, ambition,—rival ambition,—the same motive which sent Caesar to Rome, may be stated as having sent Paul, at this time, to Jerusalem: to Jerusalem—the metropolis of the Christian world, by design; and thence, eventually and undesignedly, to the metropolis of the whole civilized world.

By two opposite desires—two antagonizing but correspondent and mutually explanatory desires—desires, in both parts intense and active, the external marks of which are sufficiently visible in two different quarters,—the nature as well as prevalence of this motive, will, it is believed, be found

sufficiently proved:—a desire, in the breast of the self-constituted Apostle, to establish himself in the original metropolis of the Christian world:—a desire on the part of the Apostles—of the Apostles constituted by Jesus—to keep him out of it.

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SECTION 2.

THE VISIT ANNOUNCED BY PAUL AND DEFERRED.

Ephesus, at which place he had arrived not long after his departure from Corinth, where he had made a stay, as it should seem, of more years than one,[45] touching in the way at Cenchrea, where he shaved his head for the performance of a vow—Ephesus is the place, at which, by the author of the Acts, Paul is for the first time made to speak of himself, as harbouring, having in mind the making of this visit: and on that occasion, the visit is spoken of, as being the subject of a settled determination, and in particular as being the time fixed upon by him for the execution of this design. Acts 18:20, 21. "When they, the Jews at Ephesus, desired him to tarry longer with them, he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I must *by all means keep this feast* that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again to you if God will."

As to the keeping of this or any other feast at Jerusalem or at any other place—if it was under any such notion as that of contributing to his own personal salvation by any such Mosaic work, it was an object inconsistent with his own principles—with his own so repeatedly and strenuously advocated principles:—and the like may be said of the head-shaving and the vow, performed by him, at

Cenchrea, in his way to Ephesus from Corinth: and moreover, in this last-mentioned instance, more particularly in contradiction with a precept so positively delivered by Jesus, namely, *Swear not at all*,—if, under swearing, the making of vows is to be understood to be included.

Of this design, the next intimation which occurs in the Acts, is in the next chapter, Acts 19:21, "When these things were ended," namely, the discomfiture of the exorcists, and the burning of the books of curious arts at Ephesus,—"Paul, it is said, *purposes in the spirit*, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Fortunate it is for the credit—either *of the spirit*, or of Paul, or of the author of the Acts, that it was on this second occasion only, and not on the first, that it was *in the spirit* that he proposed to go to Jerusalem by the then next feast: for, notwithstanding the "*must*" and the "*by all means*,"—so it is, that between those his two determinations as above, no less a space of time than two years is stated as elapsing, on one occasion, at one and the same place.[46] And this place—what was it? it was Ephesus: the same place, at which, on his departure from it, the first determination was declared: after which, and before this his second visit to Ephesus,—he is represented as having visited Cæsarea and Antioch.

The next mention, is that which occurs in the next chapter, chapter 20:16. "Paul," we are there told, being then at Miletus, "had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost."

At Miletus it is, that he sends for, and receives, from

Ephesus, a number of his adherents in that place. Upon their arrival, he is represented as making a formal speech to them: and now, he not merely proposes in the spirit, as before, but is "*bound in the spirit*," to go thither.[47] Vain would be the attempt to ascertain, with any approach to exactness, the interval of time, during which the operation of the spirit remained in a sort of suspense between *purpose* and *obligation*: it may have been months, only: it may have been years.

While, by one spirit, Paul was thus urged on, every now and then, towards Jerusalem;—by the same spirit, or by another spirit, he was pulled back.[48]

In the very next verse, Acts 20:22, in which he speaks of his being "bound in the spirit unto" that place, not knowing, as, in his speech, he thereupon adds,—"not knowing the things that shall befall me there,"—he goes on, and says: "Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things," says he, ver. 24, "move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

To raise, in the breast of Paul, the expectation, that of his proceeding in the course it was his way to take in preaching that religion, to which, from a persecutor, he had, in appearance, become a convert, affliction, in a variety of shapes, might prove to be the fruits,—needed no information from the spirit; if, by receiving information from the spirit, he meant any communication of a supernatural kind—anything beyond information in the ordinary shape;—be the effect—be the purpose, good or bad,—such

is the lot, that awaits innovation in the field of politics—the spiritual part included, as well as the temporal—at all places, and all times.

A passage, which now presents itself, helps to show how easily and copiously, out of a few words, written in ancient times, mysteries and miracles have been manufactured in modern times. In Acts 20:22, we have seen Paul, "*bound in the spirit*," as he is made to assure us, to go unto Jerusalem. In the next chapter, 21:4, we find disciples ... who said to Paul, "*through the spirit*," that he should *not* go up to Jerusalem. Oh! what a useful word this word *spirit*! Let a man say plainly and simply, I shall go, or be going, to Jerusalem—or, Don't go to Jerusalem,—his words go for no more than they are worth: in either case, with a proper proposition to introduce it, add the word "spirit," the matter becomes serious. Out of a word or two, you thus add to the Godhead a third person, who talks backward and forward for you, and does for you whatever you please.

At so small a price, even to this day, are manufactured, every day, a sort of *verbal* miracles, which, as many as are disposed, are welcome to improve into real ones.

To reconcile men to this expedition of Paul's, the spirit was the more necessary,—inasmuch as it was not in his own power, or even in that of any one of his numerous attendants and dependants, to assign so much as one ostensible reason for it.

That, to the advancement of religion—of the religion of Jesus—no such presence of his was necessary;—that no good could result from it;—that much evil could not but result from it;—was obvious to all eyes. Of the original number of the Apostles,—for aught that appears, not less than eleven were still

remaining on the spot: men, to every one of whom, all acts and sayings of Jesus were, by memory, rendered so familiar:—men, on the part of some of whom, and, at any rate, on the part of the chief of them, Peter,—there was no want of zeal and activity. While to these men a single city, or, at the utmost, one small region—composed the whole field of exertion—the whole earth besides is left open by them to Paul: still, such is the ravenousness of his ambition, nothing can content him, but he must be intruding himself—thrusting his restless sickle into their ripening harvest.

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SECTION 3.

THE DESIGN INDEFENSIBLE.

All this—is it not enough? Well then, take this one other—this concluding proof. In the teeth of all their endeavours, and among them, some that will be seen extraordinary enough, to prevent it,—was undertaken the fourth and last of his four recorded visits to their residence—Jerusalem.

But, in the first place, in the utter indefensibility of the design, shall be shown the *cause*, of the opposition so universally made to it.

Tired of a mixture of successes and miscarriages,—disdaining the conquests he had been making in so many remote, and comparatively obscure regions of the world,—he had formed—but at what precise time, the documents do not enable us to pronounce—the determination, to exhibit his glories on the two most illustrious of theatres:—in the two capitals—Jerusalem, of the Jewish, and now of the Christian

world; Rome, of the whole classical heathen world:—and in the first place, Jerusalem, now, for the fourth time since his conversion. It was at Ephesus, as we have seen, this determination was first declared.

To Rome, he might have gone, and welcome: namely, in so far as his doctrines could have confined themselves within the limits of those of Jesus: which, however, it will be seen, they could not: but, success being moreover supposed, nothing but good could such visit have had for its result.

But, by a visit to any place other than Jerusalem, various were the points of spleen and ambition, that could not have been satisfied. Nothing would serve him, but, over that Edom Jerusalem, he would, in the first place, cast forth his shoe.

Unless the eleven most confidential servants, selected by Jesus himself to be the propagators of his religion, were altogether unworthy of the task thus allotted to them,—nothing to the good purposes of that religion could be more palpably unnecessary, nothing to the purposes of peace and unity more pernicious, than the intrusion thus resolved upon. That the number of these legitimately instituted Apostles had as yet suffered any diminution, is not, by any of the documents, rendered so much as probable. Neither in the works of Paul himself, nor in that of his historiographer, is any intimation to any such effect to be found. In their own judgments, had there been any need of coadjutors—any deficiency of hands for the spiritual harvest,—they well knew how to supply it. Of the sufficiency of such knowledge, they had given the most incontestable proofs: the election of Matthias was the fruit of it. They showed—and with a disinterestedness, which has never since had, nor seems destined to have, any imitators—that, in the

Christian world, if government in any shape has divine right for its support, it is in the shape of democracy;—representative democracy—operating by universal suffrage. In the eye of the Christian, as well as of the philosopher and the philanthropist, behold here the only legitimate government: the form, the exclusion of which from the Christian world, has been the object of that league, by which, by an unpunishable, yet the most mischievous—if not the only mischievous—sort of blasphemy, the name of Christian has been profaned.

This method of filling offices, was no more to the taste of Paul, than to that of a Napoleon or a George. He determined to open their eyes, and prove to them by experience, that monarchy,—himself the first monarch—was the only legitimate form of government. The difficulties of the enterprise were such as could not escape any eyes:—least of all his own: but to die or conquer was his resolve: so he himself declares.[49] What, in case of success, would have been the use made by him of it? The fate of the Apostles may be read in the catastrophe of Saint Stephen: the vulgar herd would, in his eyes, have been as declaredly foolish as the Galatians. Gal. 3:1. "O, foolish Galatians!" Who did bewitch you, etc.

The invasion was not less inconsistent with good faith, than with brotherly love, peace and unity. It was a direct violation of the *partition-treaty*: that treaty, of which he gives such unquestionable evidence against himself, in the boast he makes of it to his Galatians. Gal. 2:9. "When James, Cephas (Peter), and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and

they unto the circumcision."

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SECTION 4.

OPPOSITION MADE TO IT BY HIS OWN ATTENDANTS AND OTHER ADHERENTS.

To find so much as the colour of a reason for this perfidy, was too much for the ingenuity of his attendant panegyrist. In the eyes of the whole body of his attendants, of whom the historian was one, so completely unjustifiable was his design in every point of view,—they joined in a remonstrance to him, beseeching him to give it up.

ACTS 21:12 to 14.

> And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.—Then Paul answered, What mean 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.—And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

At no such loss, however, was Paul himself: for this, and for everything else it was his will to do, he had a reason ready made. It was no less concise and economical than convenient: a word, and no more than a word, was the price paid for it:—*revelation* was that word.[50] So he assures his "foolish" Galatians: and if they were foolish enough to believe

it, these, though first, have not been last, in the career of foolishness.

Allow a man but the use of this one word, so it be in the sense in which Paul here uses it—admit the matter of fact, of which it contains the assertion,—the will of that man is not only sufficient reason, but sufficient law, for everything: in all places, and to all persons, his will is law. The will of this man is the will of that God, by whom this revelation of it has been made to him: the will of God, what man shall be audacious enough to dispute?

The motives, which gave birth to this act of perfidy and hostility, will now be visible enough, to every eye, that dares to open itself to them. At the time in question, they were too manifest to need mentioning: and at the same time too unjustifiable, to bear to be mentioned by his dependent historian, when speaking of the opposition, which, even on the part of his own dependents, it produced. They besought him—with tears they besought him: but, as to the reflections by which these tears were produced, they could not bear the light: it was not for a declared adherent to give them utterance. The sort of colour, put upon the project by Paul, with the help of one of his phrases—this was the only colour that could be found for it. It was for the *name* of the Lord Jesus, Acts 21:13, that he was ready—"ready, not to be bound only, but also to die." For the name? O, yes, for the name at all times; for, in the name of Jesus, he beheld from first to last his necessary support: and of the Lord Jesus, nothing, as we shall find,—nothing from first to last, did he ever employ but the name. But, to be bound at Jerusalem—to die at Jerusalem—to be bound—to die—supposing this to take place,—where—to the religion of Jesus—would be, where

could be, the use of it? There, at Jerusalem, the Apostles—the real Apostles of Jesus:—executing, without either dying or being bound for it, the commission, which to them had been really given by Jesus.

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SECTION 5.

OPPOSITION MADE TO IT BY THE APOSTLES AND THEIR DISCIPLES.

Thus indefensible and deplorable, in the eyes even of his own dependents,—it may be imagined in what light the invasion presented itself at Jerusalem, to those who found themselves so cruelly menaced by it.

At the first place, at which, after a voyage of some length, they landed on their way to Judea,—they found the alarm already spread. This place was Tyre: there they found "disciples," Acts 21:4, "who said to Paul," and "through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem." It was through *their spirit*, that they bade him not to go; but *his revelation*, as we have seen, bade him to go, notwithstanding:—his revelation was too strong for their spirit. If it was from the *Lord Jesus*, as he all along informs us, that his revelation came, while their spirit was the *Holy Spirit*, otherwise called the *Holy Ghost*,—already another schism was produced: a schism, in a council still higher than that of the Apostles.

At Ptolemais, on the road from Tyre to Jerusalem, they stayed but one day: Acts 21:7, not long enough, it should seem, for any fresh marks of opposition to this enterprise to manifest themselves.

Continuing their approach to the metropolis, the next day they came to Cæsarea, Acts 21:4, "The house," then "entered into," was that of Philip, there styled the Evangelist, one of the seven trustees, who, under the name, rendered in the English translation by that of Deacon, at the recommendation of the Apostles, had been chosen by universal suffrage, for the management of the pecuniary affairs of the Church. Here they took up their quarters: and here a fresh scene awaited them.

In the person of a man, whose name was Agabus, the Apostles and their associates had found, as we have seen, an agent of approved talents, and usefulness: to him they had been indebted, for the most important service, of a temporal nature, which the history of the church in those days furnishes:—the supply of money already received, as above mentioned, from the first-born daughter of the church—the church of Antioch, in Syria. At this place, Cæsarea, as a last resource, this same Agabus, or another, was, as it should seem, dispatched to meet—at any rate did meet—the self-appointed Apostle in his way; and, in the character of a *prophet*, for so *this* Agabus is styled, strained every nerve, in the endeavour to divert the invader from the so anxiously apprehended purpose.

Whoever he was, employed on this occasion, but employed in vain, were all the treasures of his eloquence. The Holy Ghost was once more, and by name, set in array against Paul's Lord Jesus. The powers of verbal and oral eloquence were not thought sufficient: action—and not only of that sort which, in the eyes of Demosthenes, was an object of such prime importance, but even pantomime—was employed in aid. Acts 21:11. As to argument—fear in the bosom of the Church, for a life so precious, was

the only one, which the skill of the orator could permit him to employ: as to fear for their own sakes, and resentment for the injury which they were predestinated to suffer,—these were passions, too strongly felt to be avowed. "He took Paul's girdle," Acts 21:11, "and bound his own hands and feet, 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."

Supposing the Agabus mentioned on this occasion, to be the same Agabus as he who was mentioned on the occasion of the apprehended dearth—supposing this to be he—and no reason presents itself in favour of the contrary supposition—well known indeed must he have been to Paul, since it was by his means that Paul was indebted for the opportunity of paying, to Jerusalem, that second visit of his, from which, as we have seen, so little fruit was reaped.

The singular circumstance here is, the manner, in which, on this second occasion, mention is made of this name—Agabus: "a certain prophet named Agabus," Acts 21:10. Whether this was, or was not, the same as the former Agabus,—this mode of designation presents itself as alike extraordinary. If he *was* the same,—in that case, as, by the addition of the adjunct "a certain prophet," a sort of cloud is thrown over his identity,—so, by so simple an expedient as that of the non-insertion of these redundant words, the clouds would have been dispelled. If he was *not* the same,—so expressive being the circumstances, by which identity stands indicated—namely, the quarter *from* whence the same; the quarter *to* which the same; the importance of the mission, and the demand for talents and influence, in both cases so great; on this supposition,

to prevent misconception, no less obvious than urgent was the demand, for some mark of distinction, to be added on this second occasion: in a word, for that sort of mark of distinction, which, on other occasions; may, in this same history, be seen more than once employed: witness *that John*, twice distinguished by the name of *John, whose surname was Mark*. Acts 22:25, *ib.* 25:37.

Hence a suspicion, nor that an unnatural one—that, in this history, the part, in which the name Agabus occurs for the first time, and the part, in which that same name occurs for the second time, were not the work of the same hand.

With or without the assistance of the Holy Ghost, with the like importunity, though in a tone corresponding to the difference of situation, was a dissuasion, to the same effect, added, with one voice, by the adherents, of whom the suite of the self-appointed Apostle was composed, and by all the other Christians then present. "And when we heard these things," says the author of the Acts, "both we, and they of that place, Cæsarea, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem." Acts 21:12.

The Holy Ghost, whom all the rest of the Church had for their advocate, was no equal match for the Holy Ghost whom Paul had for his adviser. "What mean ye," says he, "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." Acts 21:13. To a Holy Ghost so highly seated, submission from a Holy Ghost of inferior rank, was the only course left. "When he could not be persuaded, concludes the historian, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."

Paul die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord

Jesus? He, Paul, this self-constituted Apostle, who, upon his own showing, had never seen Jesus? for the name of Jesus, forsooth, die at Jerusalem? at that Jerusalem, at which the indisputable Apostles had been, and continued to be, living and labouring, in the service of that same holy name, each of them, or they are much misrepresented, not less ready and willing, both to live and upon occasion to die for it, than he could be? Was it then really to die for the name of Jesus? was it not rather to live? to live for his own name, for his own glory, for his own profit, and for the pleasure of depriving of their flock those shepherds of souls, by whom his pretensions had been disallowed, his glory disbelieved, his advances received with that distrust and jealousy, for which the long and bitter experience they had had of him, afforded so amply sufficient a warrant? men, in whose eyes, though in the clothing of a shepherd, he was still a wolf?

What was he to die for? By whose hands was he to die? By no danger, since he had ceased to be their declared persecutor, had any Christians, in their character of Christians, whether disciples or preachers, then, or at any time, been menaced;[51] of no such danger, at any rate, is any, the slightest, intimation ever to be found: if any danger awaited him, it was by himself, by his own restless and insatiable ambition, by his own overbearing and ungovernable temper, that it was created. Had he but kept to his agreement; had the whole of the known world, with the single exception of Judea, been wide enough for him: no danger would have awaited him: —he and Jerusalem might have remained in peace.

What service that *they* could not, could *he* hope to do to the cause? For doctrine, they had nothing to do

but to report the discourses; for proof, the miracles which they had witnessed. To this, what could *he* add? Nothing, but facts, such as we have seen, out of his own head,—or, at best, facts taken at second hand, or through any number of removes from *them*, —and, in an infinity of shapes and degrees, travestied in their passage.

In this account, the curious thing is—that upon the face of it, the Holy Ghost of prophet Agabus is mistaken: nothing happened in the manner mentioned by him: for, in the same chapter comes the account of what did happen, or at any rate is, by this same historian, stated as that which happened:— by no Jews is the owner of the girdle bound: dragged by the people out of the temple,—by that same people he is indeed attempted to be killed, but bound he is not: for, with his being bound, the attempt to kill him is not consistent: binding requires mastery, and a certain length of time, which killing does not: a single blow from a stone may suffice for it.

As to the Jews delivering him unto the hands of the Gentiles,—it is by the Gentiles that he is delivered out of the hands of the Jews: of the Jews, the endeavour was—to deprive him of his life; of the Gentiles, to save it.

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SECTION 6.

PLAN OF THE APOSTLES FOR RIDDING THEMSELVES OF PAUL.

In this important contest, the Holy Ghost of Agabus was predestinated to yield to the irresistible power of Paul's Lord Jesus. He made his entry into Jerusalem,

Acts 21:17, and the very next day commenced the storm, by which, after having been on the point of perishing, he was driven, at last, as far as from Jerusalem to Rome, but the particulars of which belong not to the present purpose.

What *is* to the present purpose, however, is the company, which, upon this occasion, he saw. James, it may be remembered, was one of the three Apostles —out of the whole number, the only three who, on the occasion of the partition treaty, could be prevailed upon to give him the right hand of fellowship. Into the house of this James he entered: and there what he saw was an assembly, met together for the purpose, of giving him the advice, of which more particular mention will be made in its place. It was—to clear himself of the charge,—a charge made against him by the Jewish converts,—of teaching all the Jews, which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, and of inculcating that doctrine by his own example, Acts 21:20-24. Well! at this assembly who were present? Answer—the Elders—all of them: of the Apostles with the single exception of James, at whose house it was held, not one: not even John,—not even Peter:—the two other Apostles, by whom on their part, the treaty had been entered into:—Peter, the chief of the Apostles;—John "the disciple," John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7-20, whom Jesus loved. The nerves of James it appears, from other tokens besides this, were of a stronger texture than those of either of these his two colleagues; he alone stood the brunt. As for Peter, he had been so "withstood to his face" by Paul on the occasion of his first visit, that he had no stomach to be so withstood a second time.

James, it may be remembered, was the Apostle, at

whose motion, against the opinion and speech of Peter, the resolution insisting upon certain Jewish observances, on the part of heathen converts to the Church, was carried.

Here then, in support of the proposition maintained, by James,—here, was an assembly of the rulers of the Church convened: the Elders—the elected coadjutors of the Apostles all of them present: of the Apostles themselves, not one: James excepted, whose presence, it is evident, could not, on this occasion, be dispensed with. Of this assembly, the object, and sole object, was—the insisting upon Paul's taking, for the sake of the peace of the Church, a certain measure. Now, the measure thus insisted upon, what was it? The clearing himself of a certain charge then mentioned. And this charge, what was it? A charge—of which, consistently with truth,—of which without such direct falsehood, as if committed would be notorious,—he could not clear himself. In this case, one of two things would absolutely be the result. Either he would be rash enough to commit the falsehood,—in which case his reputation and power of disturbing the peace of the Church would be at an end; or, shrinking from the summons, he would virtually confess himself guilty: in which case likewise, he would find his situation, in the midst of an universally adverse multitude, no longer tenable.

For this clearance, a ceremony was prescribed to him:—a ceremony, the effect of which was—to declare, in a manner, beyond all comparison, more solemn and deliberate than that of anything which is commonly understood by the word *oath*,—that he had not done anything, of that which he stood charged with having done, and which it could not but be generally known that he had done. Witness

those Epistles of his, which in another place we shall see, Ch. 12:—Epistles in which he will be seen, so frequently, and upon such a variety of occasions, and in such a variety of language, not only proclaiming the needlessness of circumcision—its uselessness to salvation,—but, in a word, on all points making war upon Moses.

No course was so rash, that Paul would shrink from it, no ceremony so awful, or so public that Paul would fear to profane it. Of the asseveration, to which he was called upon to give, in an extraordinary form, the sanction of an oath, the purport was universally notorious: the falsity, no less so: the ceremony, a solemnity on which the powers of sacerdotal ingenuity had been exhausted, in the endeavour to render is efficaciously impressive. Place of performance, the most sacred among the sacred: act of entrance, universally public, purpose universally notorious; operations, whatever they were, inscrutably concealed from vulgar eyes: person of the principal actor occasionally visible, but at an awful elevation: time, requisite for accomplishment, Acts 21:27, not less than seven days: the whole ceremony, effectually secured against frequent profanation, by "charges" too heavy to be borne by the united power of four ordinary purses.[52] With all the ingredients of the most finished perjury in his breast,—perfect consciousness, fixed intentionality, predetermined perseverance, and full view of the sanction about to be violated,—we shall see him entering upon the task, and persevering in it. While the long drama was thus acting in the consecrated theatre, the mind of the multitude was accumulating heat without doors. The seven days necessary, were as yet unaccomplished, when indignation could hold no longer: they burst into the sacred edifice, dragged

him out, and were upon the point of putting him to death, when the interference of a Roman officer saved him, and became the first link in that chain of events, which terminated in his visit to Rome, and belongs not to this place.

Thus much, in order to have the clearer view of the plan of the Apostles, and of the grounds of it, from which will be seen the unexceptionableness of it, it seemed necessary for us here to anticipate. But such rashness, with the result that followed—the Apostles, in their situation, how could they have anticipated it?

Baffled, in their former endeavours to keep the invader from entering the holy city—that holy city, with the peace of which his presence was so incompatible, such was the course which they devised and embraced from driving him out of it. For the carrying of this measure into effect, a general assembly of the governing body of the Church was necessary. At this assembly had no Apostle been present, it could not, in the eyes of the Church at large, have been what it was necessary it should appear to be. Though, of the whole number of the Apostles, no more than one was present,—yet, his being the house at which it was held, and the others, whether summoned or no, being expected of course, by the disciples at large, to be likewise present,—the Elders being likewise "*all*" of them present,—this attendance was deemed sufficient: as to the other Apostles—all of them but the one whose presence was thus indispensable,—abhorrence, towards the man, whose career had in their eyes commenced with murder, continued in imposture, and had recently been stained with perfidy,—rendered the meeting him face to face, a suffering too violent to

be submitted to, when by any means it could be avoided.

On this occasion, the opinion, which, as we have seen, cannot but have been entertained by them, concerning Paul and his pretensions to Revelation, and to a share equal to their own in the confidence of Jesus,—must not, for a moment, be out of mind.

The whole fellowship of the Apostles,—all others, to whom, at the time, anything about the matter was known, believed his story to be, the whole of it, a pure invention. In their eyes it was a fabrication: though we, at this time of day—we, who of ourselves know nothing about it, take for granted, that it was all true.

For proving the truth of it, all we have are his own accounts of it: his own accounts, given, some of them, by himself directly: the rest ultimately, his being the only mouth from which the accounts we have seen in the *Acts* could have been derived. Bearing all this in mind, let us now form our judgment on the matter, and say, whether the light, in which the Apostles viewed his character and conduct, and the course pursued by them as above, was not from first to last, not only conformable to the precepts of their master, but a model of patience, forbearance, and prudence.

FOOTNOTES:

[45] Acts 18:11. "He continued there, at Corinth, a year and six months."—18. "And Paul tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave."

[46] Acts 19:10. "And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

[47] Acts 20:22. "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there."

[48] Acts 20:23. "Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me."

[49] Acts 20:24. "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

Acts 21:13. "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

[50] Gal. ii. 2. "I went up by revelation."

[51] In Acts 12:1, King Herod is indeed spoken of as having "stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church, and he killed," it is said, "James, the brother of John, with the sword." Then comes the story of Peter's imprisonment and liberation. But the cause of these inflictions had nothing to do with religion: the proof is—nor can there be a more conclusive

one—to no such cause are they attributed.

[52] Acts 21:23, 24. "We have four men, say the Apostles and Elders, we have four men which have a vow on them:—Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them."

CHAPTER X.

Paul disbelieved continued.—His Fourth Jerusalem Visit continued. His Arrival and Reception.
Accused by all the Disciples of the Apostles, he commences an exculpatory Oath in the Temple.
Dragged out by them—rescued by a Roman Commander—sent in Custody to Rome.

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SECTION 1.

AT JERUSALEM, PAUL IS RECEIVED BY THE ELDERS AND JAMES, BUT BY NO OTHER APOSTLE.

Spite of the opposing Holy Ghost,—spite of the Apostles, and their prophet,—there he is at Jerusalem. Now comes an incident—or say, rather, a relation—which is altogether curious.

At "Jerusalem," says the history, "the brethren received us gladly," Acts 21:17. The brethren? what brethren? the brethren, by whom Agabus, with his stage-trick, had been sent some sixty or seventy

miles' journey, in the endeavour to keep him at a distance? the thousands of Jews thereupon immediately mentioned? those Jews, who, though believers in Jesus, are not the "less zealous of the law," and enraged at Saul for those breaches of it, with which he is charged?

That, by such of them, if any, by whom—by the appearance he made, with his suite, it had happened to be more or less overawed,—that by these, an appearance of gladness was assumed, seems credible enough: look for those, by whom he could have been received with real gladness—they will not, it should seem, be very easy to be found.

Not, till the next day after his arrival, do Paul and his suite present themselves to any in authority in this spiritual commonwealth. The first person, to whom, on this occasion, he presents himself, is James: that one of the Apostles, who, with the exception of Peter, is the person, and the only person, with whom Paul has, on the occasion of any of his visits, been represented as holding converse. Not with this James —not with any settled inhabitants of Jerusalem—has he had his lodging: only with Mnason,[53] a man of Cyprus, whom, lest lodging should be wholly wanting, they had brought with them from Cæsarea. Of this so extensively apprehended arrival, there had been full time for ample notice: among the rulers, those, who, as well as James, chose to see him, were all present. Who were they? the elders—"all the elders." Of the Apostles, not so much as one, besides James. Let it not be said, that, under the word *elders*, the Apostles were meant to be included: on other occasions, on which elders are mentioned, Acts 15:4; 6:23, the Apostles are mentioned, as forming a body, distinct, as they naturally would be,—distinct from

these same elders.

Salutations performed, he addresses the assembly in that strain, which was so familiar to him: boasting upon boasting, and, above all things, boasting that he does not boast: "declaring," says his historian;—declaring? what? declaring what was his business at Jerusalem? declaring what service, in his eyes the cause stood in need of, at his hands? Not he, indeed: to any such effect, declaration might not have been altogether so easy. What he declared, and that "*particularly*," was—what "things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry." Exactly on this, as on his last preceding visit,—when all, but himself, were speaking to the question before him—Peter on one side; after him, James on the other side—nothing, is either he, or his companion Barnabas, represented as saying, that belongs to the question; nothing, but "declaring what miracles and wonders, God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." Between what is represented, as having been said on the two occasions,—one difference, and no more than one, is visible. On the former occasion, "miracles and wonders"; on this latter occasion, no miracles no wonders:—nothing more than *things*. Supposing any of them particularized—neither miracles nor wonders had, it should seem, been fortunate enough to obtain credence: for that reason, it should seem, that, on this occasion, all mention of them is dropped.

Hearing of these *things*, what did these elders? Being things that "God," as they were informed, "had wrought," they could do no less than glorify "the Lord." Acts 21:19-20. As in Paul's Epistles, so here, in the Acts,—by *the Lord*, it is Jesus, who, as far as it appears, is the person, all along meant to be

designated. Here, *God*, it may be observed, is the person, by whom everything good, that is done, is done: Jesus—the Lord Jesus—the person, who is *glorified* for it.

To make his boasts, was *his* business with *them*: but, to subscribe to those same boasts, was not *their* business with *him*.

Their business was—to inform him, of the storm of unpopularity, which by his audacity he had brought upon himself: to inform him of the storm, and to point out the only course, which, in their view of the matter, presented a chance for his escape from it. "Thou seest,"—say they,—"thou seest how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law. And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses; saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after their customs," Acts 21:20. "What is it, therefore?" add they, "the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come."

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SECTION 2.

LOW TONE ASSUMED BY HIM ON THIS OCCASION.

On more accounts than one, remarkable,—and not a little instructive, is the account we have of this last recorded visit: and, in particular, as to what concerns the reception he experienced from the ruling powers of the Church.

It is, in some particulars, more especially to be depended upon,—inasmuch as, at this important

meeting, the author of the Acts—if he is to be believed—was himself present.

The first remarkable circumstance is—that, on this occasion, Paul, the self-elected Apostle—instead of taking the lead, and introducing his companions—keeps behind, and is introduced *by them*: such was the pliancy, with which—even on this expedition, of invasion and projected conquest,—an expedition,—undertaken, in spite of everything that could be done, both on the part of the intended objects of the conquest, and on the part of his own adherents—such was the pliancy, with which this man, among whose boasts was that of being all things to all men, could bend himself to circumstances.

Acts 21:15-18. "And after those days, we took up our carriages, and went to Jerusalem. There went with us, also, certain of the disciples of Cæsarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge." At Jerusalem, not so much as a house, to harbour them, could they have been assured of, but for this old disciple—fellow countryman, of Paul's old patron, the Son of Consolation, Barnabas. Not even with him could they have been assured of this token of friendship, had he not either been already of their party, or detached himself to meet them, and afford them the assurance: although, at Cæsarea,—from some cause, of which, while the effect is brought to view, no intimation is given,—they were fortunate enough to obtain a hospitable reception, Acts 21:8, at the house of Philip. This, however, be it observed, was not Philip, the Apostle, whether it may have been Philip, styled here the Evangelist:—one of the seven trustees, or directors, Acts 6:5, to whom, with his six colleagues, under the name, so inexpressively rendered, in the

English, by the word *Deacons*,—the management of the common fund had, by the suffrages of the disciples, been committed, must be left to conjecture.

17. "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren," Acts 21:17, "received *us* gladly." What *brethren*? The Apostles, or any one of them? no: The elders? no. Who then?—Who, but such of the members of the Church, as, notwithstanding the general repugnancy,—as testified at Tyre, and afterwards, by prophet Agabus, at Cæsarea,—could, by the influence of the Cypriot Mnason, or otherwise, be prevailed upon to see them.

And, *to* whom was it, that this sort of reception, whatsoever it was, was afforded? Was it to Paul? No: it was to *those*, who, on other occasions, were with *him*; but, with *whom*, on this occasion, his prudence forced his pride to submit to be.

Witness the next verse, Acts 21:18; "And the day following," not till the day following, "Paul went in with us unto James." *With them*—with these his attendants—did Paul, then and there, go in:—not *they with him*.

At the house of James—mark well, now—who were the persons present? Answer—"all the elders." But, forasmuch as these elders were, *all* of them, present, —notice, within the compass of the two fragments of two days,—notice, to and by all of them must have been given and received: for it has just been seen, whether, between any of them, on the one hand,—and Paul, or, so much as any one of his attendants, on the other,—there could have been any such sort of good understanding, as to have produced any the least personal intercourse, but at, and on, the occasion of the general and formal meeting:—a meeting, which—as will be seen presently—had, for

its sole object, the imposing upon him, in the event of his continuance at Jerusalem, an obligation: an obligation—to a man in his circumstances—it has been seen, of how perilous and repulsive a nature.

Such, then, was the notice, as to have brought to the place, all the Elders—All the Elders?—good. But, these *Elders*—Elders among the *disciples in ordinary*, —on an occasion such as this, what were *they* in comparison of the Apostles—the only known chosen servants, and constant companions of Jesus? Well, then, while—at this meeting—this formally convened meeting—those Elders were, every one of them, present—what was the number of *Apostles* present? Answer—Besides James, not one.

And—why James?—manifestly, because it was at *his* house, that the meeting was held.

And—why at *his* house? Because, on the occasion, and for the purpose, of the *partition treaty*,—that treaty, so necessary to the peace of the Church,—on the one hand; and, to the carrying on of Paul's scheme of dominion, on the other hand;—James was one, of the only three, who could ever endure the sight of the self-declared Apostle: Peter and John, as hath been seen, being the two others:—and, because, when, for the purpose of investing the meeting, in the eyes of the disciples at large, with the character of a meeting of the ruling administrative body—the Apostles,—less than that one, if there were any, there could not be. This one, James—under the pressure of the present emergency—prevailed upon himself to be: and, to be so irksome an intercourse—notwithstanding the obviousness of the demand for as great a number, as could be collected, of that primarily influential body—of no other of the Apostles, could the attendance be obtained: not even

of Peter, who, on a former occasion, had brought himself to endure the hateful presence.

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SECTION 3.

POSTERIOR TO ALL HIS SUPPOSED MIRACLES, HIS SILENCE PROVES THEM UNREAL.

Now, then, as to *miracles*. Had Paul, really and truly, ever received from Jesus, any such preeminent and characteristic appendage and mark of Apostleship,—here, of all others, was an occasion, on which it concerned him to make proof of it. Here was an occasion, on which, with the design, and for the purpose—the palpable, and almost universally and so strenuously opposed design and purpose—of constituting himself the superior of the Apostles, he was presenting himself—though in circumstances of such humiliation—in the character of an equal, with whom they had treated on equal terms. Here—in order to impose silence on all gainsayers—here was the occasion, for his bringing to public view, this most important of all items in the list of his credentials. The Apostles, to whom—without any exception, by Jesus, if the Evangelist, Mark 16:15-18, is to be believed—this power had, previously to his ascension, been imparted,—these, if any, were the men—not to say the only men—qualified to form a judgment on the question—whether, by any other individual, and, more especially, by the individual before them, namely, by this their self-declared colleague, any such extraordinary power had, on any, and what, occasion, been exercised or possessed. Of all imaginable occasions, this was the one, on which he had most at stake, in the being able

to make proof of so matchless an endowment:—of an endowment, which in the character of a proof, in support of all his claims, would, in the very nature of it, have been so perfectly irresistible.

Well, then: this proof of his title—did he use every endeavour, or make any offer, to produce it? No: not so much did he venture upon, as, in any the most general terms, to assert, or, so much as insinuate, the existence of it. According to his own statement, what was the general description of the tokens brought forward by him, for the purpose of obtaining acceptance? Were they *signs and wonders*? Oh, no! His historiographer, indeed—in that, or any other such indeterminate, and conveniently ambiguous phrase—his historiographer, at some twenty or seven-and-twenty years' distance, might venture, Acts 14:3, to speak of his exploits—of the effects produced by his exertions: in the like terms, in writing to his Corinthian disciples, he might, even himself, venture, for once, to speak of his own exploits.[54] But, before an assembly, so composed, was this boast, loose, and conveniently ambiguous, as it was,—in his eyes, too much to venture. Acts 21:19—Behold here the passage: "And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly"—what? what—signs and wonders? No: but simply—"what *things* God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry."

Had he hazarded so much as the general expression of signs and wonders—well, and what were these signs and wonders? give us, at any rate, something by way of a sample of them? In any one of them, was there anything supernatural? anything—beyond the success, the extraordinary success—we are to understand, your exertions were attended with?

Questions, to some such effect as this, which, in an assembly, so composed, had he ventured upon any such expressions, he could not but have expected to be annoyed with.

The occurrences which, in the course of it, in the character of *miracles*, he has ventured to present to view, will have been seen in their place and order. Yet,—notwithstanding the mention there respectively and severally made of them—no mention of them does he, in the account given by him of the meeting, venture to put in his leader's mouth. Why? because—forasmuch as, by Paul himself, no such pretence was ventured to be made—the meeting was too important, and too notorious, to render it safe to advance any such matter of fact; the face being false; or, that any such pretensions were really made.

But, hereupon come two questions.

1. Had any such miracles been really wrought—was it in the nature of things, that, on this occasion, Paul should have omitted all mention of them? even so much as the most distant allusion to them?

2. If any such intimation had really been given, by the historian himself, is it in the nature of the case, that, on this occasion,—he having been one of the witnesses, in whose presence they had been performed,—all mention of such intimation should have been omitted?

Well, then—suppose that to both these questions, let it but be a negative answer or the true one, the consequence is plain—no such miracles were wrought. Yet, in his narrative, has this man—exhibiting himself, at the same time, in the character of a *percipient* witness, in relation to them—ventured to assert the existence, one after another, of the

whole list of these particularized miracles, not to speak of the cluster of unparticularized ones.

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SECTION 4.

ACCUSED BY THE DISCIPLES, HE COMMENCES, AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE APOSTLES, AN EXCULPATORY OATH IN THE TEMPLE.

Such being in their eyes the danger; now comes their expedient for the arresting of it. It is an altogether curious one: and among those persons styled *elders*—all the elders—to every sincere and pious Christian it will naturally be matter of no small satisfaction that no one of the whole fellowship of the Apostles is to be found.

According to the description here given of it, the expedient is of such a sort, that—but for the occasion on which it is represented as being proposed,—scarcely would it be possible to divine what is meant; what it was that was proposed to be done; or, whatever it was, what could be the use or effect of it?

"Do therefore this," Acts 21:23, continues the speech attributed to these elders, "do therefore this that we say to thee: we have four men which have a vow on them:—Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly and keepest the law.—As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood and from fornication.—Then

Paul," it is added, "took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them."

In the terms of the historian, the matter of the accusation in question is this: namely, "that thou," speaking to Paul, "teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses": it then divides itself into two branches: one is—that "they ought not to circumcise their children"; the other is—that "they ought not to walk after the customs":—*i. e.*, conform to any part of the habitual observances—acts and forbearances together—prescribed by the Mosaic law.

Such is the accusation: such the act charged upon him, in the character of an offence:—the teaching of the doctrine in question.

In regard to the question—whether the doctrine he is thus said to have taught, had really ever been taught by him,—much will depend upon the difference between simple *permission* and *prohibition*: in English, upon the difference between *need not* and *ought not*. If,—in the doctrine, the teaching of which is thus charged upon him as a crime,—simple *permission* was included—if, in speaking of the converts in question, the saying was—that they *need* not circumcise their children—that they *need* not walk after these customs—this and no more;—in this case, that the charge, such as it is, was true, is altogether out of doubt:—if, on the other hand, the act he was charged with, went so far as to the teaching that they *ought* not to circumcise any of their children, or that they *ought* not to walk after the customs prescribed in the Mosaic law—on this supposition, the truth of the

charge will at any rate not be quite so clear as in the other case.

According to the English translation, that which is charged as an offence, was not committed, unless, in the doctrine taught, a direct *prohibition* was contained: to a doctrine importing nothing more than a simple *permission* to abstain from the acts and forbearances in question, the charge would not have any application. Not thus unambiguous, however, is the Greek original; either by prohibition, or by ample permission, might the doctrine charged as criminal have been taught.

Such is the description of the obnoxious practice, with which Paul is here stated as having been charged: the practice by which the odium is stated as having been incurred.

But this imaginary guilt, in what view do they mention it as imputed to him? In this view evidently, viz., that at their recommendation he may take that course, by which, in their view, he will escape from the wrath of which he had become the object. The effect thus aimed at is,—that the indignation of which he is the object, may be made to cease. How made to cease? in one or other of two ways: for the nature of the case admits not of any other: either by proving that *that* which he had been supposed to have taught, had not in truth ever been taught by him, and thus, that no such offence as he was charged with, had, in fact, ever been committed by him; or that, if any such offence had been committed, the practice recommended might be accepted as an *atonement*: or rather as an assurance, that whatever in his past conduct had given them offence, would not be repeated by him in future.

When the supposed remedial practice has been

explained,—then immediately after comes, we see, a more particular indication of the good effects, for the production of which it is recommended. These are—in the first place, that, whatsoever were the doctrines he was charged with having taught it, it will be generally known that no such doctrines were ever taught by him: in the next place, that it will in like manner be known, that by himself no such habitual offence as that of an habitual violation of the law in question was committed.

Such are the effects, stated as resulting from his performing the ceremony, the performance of which was thus recommended to him.

This ceremony we see: and what we see at the same time is—that it could not be, in the nature of it, productive of any such effects.

Here is a certain doctrine, which he had been charged with having taught. If the case was, that he had taught it; let him have purified himself ever so purely, whatsoever was meant by purification,—let him have purified himself ever so completely, let him have paid ever so much money, let him have shaved his head ever so close,—by any, or all of all these supposed meritorious acts, how could that be caused, not to have happened, which in fact had happened? by what means could they afford proof of his performance of any ceremony, other than those very same purification ceremonies themselves?

As to the purpose of furthering the temporal interest of the individual in question; namely, by removing the load of odium, with which at that time it seems he was burdened,—how far, in relation to this object, the expedient promised to be an effectual cure, is more than at this time we can find any ground for

saying: as to any good purposes of any other kind, that it was not in the nature of it to be productive of any, may be pronounced without much danger of error.

Here at any rate was a ceremony—a ceremony the object of which was—to apply, to the purpose of ensuring obsequiousness, the power of the religious sanction.

The object, to which it was meant to apply that form, comes, it may be seen, under the general denomination of an *oath*. An oath is either assertory or promissory: if it be an oath of the promissory kind, it is called a *vow*. An oath which is not a vow cannot respect anything but what is past: upon that which is past, no human act can any longer exercise any influence. A *vow* has respect to something future —to the future conduct of him by whom the vow is taken: and to this conduct a man, in and by the taking of the vow, engages to give the form therein mentioned.

Whatsoever, therefore, these ceremonies were in themselves,—thus much seems plain enough, respecting the immediate effect they were designed to answer: namely, either the delivery of a certain species of *evidence*, or the entering into an *engagement* to a certain effect: the evidence being a denial of the act charged: the engagement, a promise not to practice any acts of the sort in question in future.

Whatsoever was the effect looked for, and intended, by the ceremony,—thus much we know, if the historian is here to be believed: namely, that, in conformity to the advice, Paul betook himself to the performance of it.

But, in so doing, thus much also we know: namely, that he consented to, and betook himself to one of two things: an act of perjury, if the effect of the ceremony was to convey an assertion, that he had never taught, that a Jew, on being converted to the religion of Jesus, *need* not circumcise his children, or walk after the Mosaic customs: an act of apostasy, if the effect of it was an engagement never to teach this same doctrine in future: an act of apostasy—and for what? only to save himself from the displeasure entertained towards him on unjust grounds by a set of ill-advised and inconsistent disciples.

Under the general head of *Paul's Doctrines*, particular title *Faith and Works*, it will be seen what pains he had taken, on so many occasions, to weed out of men's breasts, Gentiles and Jews together, all regard for the Mosaic law—to cause them, in the words of the charge, *to forsake Moses*. "By the works of the law," says he in his letter to the Galatians, Gal. 2:16, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

In this same letter, and in the same paragraph,—he speaks, of a speech which he had made, of a reproof which, at Antioch, he had given to Peter:—given to him, at a point of time long before the time here in question, namely, that of his last preceding visit—his third visit to Jerusalem,—this being the fourth. Let us see, once more, on what occasion, and for what cause, this reproof: we shall thereby be the better enabled to judge—how far, supposing the ceremony to have the effect of an assertory oath,—how far that oath can have been conformable to the truth.

Speaking of Peter, "Time was," he says, "when he did eat with the Gentiles: but at Antioch, as above, certain persons came from James": Gal. 2:12, 13, and then it was that "he, Peter, withdrew and separated

himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.—And the Jews," continues he, "dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." Of his return to Judaism, or at any rate of the dissimulation which accompanied it, what is the judgment which, if he is to be believed, he pronounced? Answer, That in so doing "they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel." Thereupon it is, that he charged Peter with inconsistency, and reproved him for it: "Because," says he, "he was to be blamed." Gal. 2:14. "When I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

Before me lies a book by Thomas Lewis, M. A., in four 8vo volumes, entitled *Origines Hebraicae*. In this book, under titles *Vow* and *Purification*, my expectation was, to find some explanation of this matter: as also of the other *vow* taken by Paul at Cenchrea, Acts 17:18, in the interval between his third visit to Jerusalem, and this fourth: but no mention is made of either: nor does anything appear, by which any light can be reflected upon either.

On the four men, whom, in pursuance of the recommendation in question, Paul is said to have taken, that he might "purify himself along with them," the intended effect of the ceremony in question is said to be—the making or performance of a *vow*. But, from the circumstance of its being a vow in their case, it follows not absolutely that it may not have been an oath—an assertory oath, in his case.

At Jerusalem, for the taking or performance of a

vow, a man was received into the temple:—a district more extensive by far, it appears, than the district called *Rules of the King's Bench* at London: from the account given by Lewis, as well as by this,—it appears that, on every such occasion, fees were taken by the priests. As to the four men here in question—having already, as it is stated, a vow on them, but nothing as yet done in consequence,—it looks as if it had been by poverty that they had hitherto been kept from the accomplishment of their purpose: on which supposition, Paul being the head of a considerable party, and as such having a command of money,—part of the recommendation seems to have been—that, to acquire the reputation of liberality, he should open his purse to these his proposed companions, and pay their fees.

On the occasion here in question, whatsoever was the purpose and intended effect of the ceremony, what appears from verse 27, Acts 27, is—that seven days were regarded as necessary for the accomplishment of it: no mention of this in Lewis.

On this occasion, by the author of the Acts, once more is mentioned the conciliatory decree of the Apostles and Elders. Still, not a syllable about it is to be found in any Epistle of Saint Paul, or in any other of the Apostolical Epistles that have come down to us.

Humanly speaking,—in what motives, in what circumstances, in what considerations, shall we say, that the causes, final and efficient, of this temperament—this *mezzo termino*—this middle course—are to be found? The answer that presents itself is as follows:

Two stumbling-blocks were to be steered clear of:—

the scruples of the Jewish converts, and the refractoriness of the Gentiles. So far as regarded abstinence from idolatrous feasts, and from meat with the whole blood in it, killed and dressed in a manner other than that in practice among the Jews, —conformity, it was judged, need not be dispensed of, at the hands of the Gentiles: and, so long as they would be content with meat killed and dressed after the Jewish mode,—the Jewish teachers might, without giving offence to their Jewish converts, have the convenience of partaking of the tables of the Gentile converts. As to the rest—the endless train of habitual observances, by which so large a portion of a man's life was occupied and tormented, neither these permanent plagues, nor the initiatory plague of circumcision, though the affair of a minute, and performed once for all, were found endurable: neither upon himself nor upon his children would a man submit to have it practiced.

After all, if the author of the Acts is to be believed,—it was by the Jews of Asia, and not by those of Jerusalem, that, at Jerusalem, the tumult was raised, by which this purification of Paul's was rendered incomplete, and his stay at Jerusalem cut short: he being removed for trial to Rome; at which place the history leaves him and concludes.

Of the behaviour observed by the Jerusalem Christians, on that occasion—Apostles, Elders, Deacons and ordinary brethren all together—nothing is said. Yet, of these there were many thousands on the spot, Acts 21:20: all of them of course informed of the place—the holy place,—in which, at the recommendation of the Elders, Paul had stationed himself. By the Jews of Asia were "all the people on this occasion stirred up," Acts 21:27: yet, among so

many thousands, no protection, nor any endeavour to afford him protection, for aught that appears, did he experience. Yet Asia it was, that had been, to the exclusion of Judaea, the theatre of his labours: from Asia it was, that the train of attendants he brought with him, were come—were come with him to these brethren—"the brethren,"—as if it had been said, *all* the brethren,—by whom, according to the author of the Acts, they were "received so gladly."

At this period ends all that, on the present occasion, it will be necessary to say, of this last recorded visit to Jerusalem. Of the two inconsistent accounts said to have been given by him of his conversion—one to the Jerusalem mob, the other to King Agrippa—full notice has been taken under the head of his conversion: of the miracles ascribed to him at Malta, mention is here made, in the chapter allotted to the history of his supposed miracles. Of any other subsequent acts or sayings of his, no notice will require to be taken in this place. The matter here in question has been—the sort of relation, stated as having had place, between this self-constituted Apostle, and those who beyond controversy were constituted such by, and lived as such with, Jesus himself: and to this have incidentally been added the causes, which have continually been presenting themselves, for suspicion, in respect of the verity and authenticity, or both, of the history, which, under the name of the Acts of the Apostles, has come down to us, connected by the operations of the bookbinder, in the same volume with the several histories of the four Evangelists, and the Epistles—not only of Paul himself but of others among the Apostles; and with the work styled, as if in derision, "*The Revelations*."

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SECTION 5.

THE DESIGN OF THIS RECOMMENDATION JUSTIFIED.

But the Apostles—says somebody—what are we to think of the Apostles? If by Paul a *perjury* was thus committed, were they not—all of them who joined in this recommendation—so many *suborners* of this same perjury?

The answer will, it is hoped, by most readers at least, have been anticipated.—Yes or no, if so it be, that it was their expectation that he would commit it: no, assuredly; if it were their expectation—their assured expectation—that he would *not* commit it: that, even in his person, even after all they had witnessed in him, the union of profligacy and rashness would never soar to so high a pitch. The necessity they were under, of ridding themselves of his presence was extreme:—of ridding *themselves*—and, what was so much more, their *cause*. Stay in the same town, and in the same company with them, he could not,—without being either their known *adversary*, or their known *associate*. Their known *adversary* he could not be, without either continuing himself to be an object of universal horror, or else rendering *them* objects of horror, to the whole body of their disciples. Their *associate* he could not be, without involving *them* in that odium, with which he himself was, by the confession of his own adherent and historiographer, covered. Under these circumstances, not to speak of the cause of mankind, for saving *themselves* and *their* cause from destruction,—what course could they take, so gentle, and at the same time, to all appearance, so surely effectual, as the proposing to him this test?—a test, which no man could rationally expect, that any man in his circumstances would

take.

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SECTION 6.

DRAGGED OUT OF THE TEMPLE BY JEWS OR CHRISTIANS, HE IS SAVED BY A GENTILE, NAMELY, A ROMAN COMMANDER.

With this occurrence concludes so much of Paul's history, as,—for the purpose of perfecting the demonstration given, of the disbelief manifested towards his pretensions to a supernatural intercourse with the Almighty,—it was found necessary here to anticipate.

In the matter of the chapter—the 13th—in which Paul's supposed miracles are brought to view,—his history is, as to all those particulars which seemed necessary to be brought to view for the purpose of the present inquiry,—deduced to very near the time, at which the historian of the Acts, having conducted him to Rome, leaves him there: leaves him there, and with no other notice, than that of his having, at the time, at which the history closes, passed two years at that capital, in a sort of ambiguous state between freedom and confinement: waiting to receive, at the hands of the constituted authorities, the final determination of his fate.

Meantime, lest anything should be wanting, that could have contributed to the elucidation on a point of such supreme importance, follows in the next chapter a concluding and more particular view of the grounds, on which, on the occasion of his visit to the temple, the intention of deliberate perjury was found necessary to be imputed to him.

FOOTNOTES:

[53] Acts 21:16. "There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of Cæsarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge."

[54] 2 Cor. 12:12. "Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." Not that, by the words assigns and wonders, when used by Paul, anything more was meant, than what, but a few years after, was, according to him, doing, or about to be done, by Antichrist. 2 Thess. 2:9. "Even him, whose coming is, after the manner of Satan, with all powers, and signs, and lying wonders." *Lying* is, indeed, the adjunct prefixed, in this instance; but, lying or not lying, if Paul be believed, they failed not to produce the effect intended by them. Signs and wonders being such equivocal thing, no great wonder if—writing at Corinth to nobody knows what disciples of his at Rome, A.D. 58, Rom. 15:18, 19,—he could venture, if this was venturing, to speak of what he had been doing in Jerusalem and Illyricum, in the same terms. "For I will not dare to speak, says he, of any of those things which Christ has not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed.—Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about, unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."

CHAPTER XI.

Paul disbelieved continued.—Paul's fourth Jerusalem Visit continued.—Perjurious was the Purpose of the exculpatory Oath commenced by him in the Temple.

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SECTION 1.

GENERAL PROOF OF THE PERJURY FROM THE ACTS.

We have seen the indignation produced by Paul's invasion of the dominion of the Apostles: we have seen it carried to its height, by his commencement of, and perseverance in, the exculpatory ceremony, for the purpose of which he made his entrance, and took up his lodgment in the temple. We have seen the fruits of that same indignation: we have seen the general result of them. What remains is—to give a clearer and more explicit conception, than can as yet have been given, of the *cause* of it.

This was—neither more nor less, than an universal persuasion—that the assertion,—to which, on his part, this ceremony had for its object the attaching the sanction of an oath,—was, to his full knowledge, false: the oath employed being, in its form, beyond comparison more impressive, than any that has been known to be at any time in use, in this or any other country: and that, accordingly, the confirmation given to the falsehood, in and by means of that most elaborate and conspicuous ceremony, was an act of *perjury*: of perjury, more deliberate and barefaced, than anything, of which, in these days, any example can have place.

That, on this occasion, the conduct of the self-

constituted Apostle was stained with perjury, is a matter, intimation of which has unavoidably come to have been already given, in more parts perhaps of this work than one. But, for a support to a charge, which, if true, will of itself be so completely destructive of Paul's pretensions—of all title to respect, at the hands of every professor of the religion of Jesus—no slight body of evidence could have been sufficient.

For this purpose, let us, in the first place, bring together the several elementary positions, proof or explanation of which, may be regarded as necessary, and at the same time as sufficient, to warrant, in this case, a verdict of *guilty*.

To these charges, is immediately subjoined such part of the evidence, as is furnished, by the account of the matter, as given in the Acts: in another section will be brought to view the evidence, furnished by Paul himself, in his Epistles. The evidence from the Acts is of the *circumstantial kind*: the evidence from the Epistles is *direct*.

1. To Paul was imputed as a misdeed, the having recommended the forsaking of the Mosaic law. Recommended, namely, to such disciples of his as, having been born and bred under it, were found by him settled in some Gentile nation. Proof, Acts 21:21, ... "They," 'the Jews which believe,' ver. 20, "are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

2. To a great extent, the imputation was well grounded: for, to a great extent, it had been his practice, to give the recommendation thus described. Of this position the proof will follow presently.

3. By Paul, the truth of this imputation was utterly denied: denied by the opposite denegatory assertion: and, the imputation being as above well grounded,—in so far as any such denegatory assertion had been made by him, he had knowingly uttered a wilful falsehood.

4. In proof of the sincerity of this denial, it was proposed to Paul, on the part of the Apostles and Elders, to give a confirmation of it, by the performance of a certain appropriate ceremony.

5. The ceremony thus proposed, was one that was universally understood, to have the effect of attaching, to any assertion, connected with it for the purpose, the sanction of an oath.

6. Knowing such to be the effect of the ceremony, he gave his assent to the proposition, and determined, by means of it, to attach the sanction of an oath to such his denial, as above: and thereby, the assertion contained in that denial, being, as above, to his knowledge, false,—to commit, in that extraordinary solemn and deliberate form and manner, an act of perjury.

7. In pursuance of such determination, he accordingly repaired for that purpose to the temple and had his abode therein for several days: the completion of the requisite number being no otherwise prevented, than by the irruption of the indignant multitude, assured as they were of his being occupied in the commission of a perjury.

Proof of charges 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Acts 21:23, 24, 26, 27, 28.

> 23. "*We*, the Apostles and the Elders, or at least the Apostle James, ver. 18, have *four men*, which have a *vow* on them;

> 24. "Them take, and *purify thyself with them*, and be *at charges* with them, that ... *all* may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are *nothing*; but *that* thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.
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> 26. "Then Paul took the men, and *the next day purifying himself with them* entered into the temple, to *signify* the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an *offering* should be offered for every one of them.
>
> 27. "And when the *seven days were almost ended*, the Jews, which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him.
>
> 28. "Crying out, Men of Israel, help; This is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere *against* the people, and *the law*, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple; and hath *polluted* this holy place."

Of the perjuriousness of Paul's intent, a short proof, namely of the circumstantial kind, is thus already visible, in the indignation excited,—its intensity, its immorality, and the bitter fruits of it. Will it be said no? for that the indignation had, for its adequate cause, his being thought to have spoken slightingly of the law in question—it being the law of the land,—and that, to this imputation, the ceremony, it being, as above the performance of a *vow*, had no reference? Assuredly no: no such interpretation will be found tenable. True it is, that, by the persuasion, that he had thus been dealing by the Mosaic law,—by this persuasion, without need of anything else, the indignation may well have been produced: but it

could only have been by the knowledge, that, upon his having been called upon to confess the having so done, or to deny it, he had, in this most extraordinary and universally conspicuous mode, given continuance and confirmation to his denial—it could only have been by *this* knowledge, that the excitement was raised up to so high a pitch. For, What was it that the information had charged him with? It was the forsaking Moses. What was the purpose, for which the recommendation was given to him—the recommendation to perform this ceremony? It was the *purifying* himself, "that all might know" that the information was groundless. "That those things," say the Apostles with the Elders to him, "whereof they," the thousands of Jews which believe, ver. 20, "were informed against thee were *nothing*:"—"to *purify thyself*," says the official translation: more appositely might it have said *to clear thyself*: for in that case, the idea of an *imputation* would clearly enough, though but implicitly, have been conveyed: whereas, to some minds, the idea conveyed by the word *purify* may perhaps be no other than that of some *general* cleansing of the whole character, by means of some physical process, to which, in so many minds, the psychological effect in question has, by the influence of artifice on weakness, been attached.

Such then, namely, the clearing himself of the imputation by so solemn a confirmation of the denial of it,—such was the purpose, for which, in the most unequivocal terms, his performance of the ceremony was recommended: such, therefore, was the purpose for which it was commenced; such, accordingly, was the purpose for which it would have been consummated, but for the interruption which it experienced: experienced not from his hands, but

from hands among which, there seems sufficient reason to believe, were the hands, if not of the very persons by whom it had been recommended, at any rate of those who till that time had been in use to be guided by their influence.

To this interpretation, what objection is there that can be opposed? If any, it can only be that which to some minds may perhaps be suggested by the word *vow*.

But the fact is—this word *vow* is a mistranslation: the proper word should have been *oath*. By an oath everyone understands at first mention an *assertory*, not a *promissory*, declaration: by a *vow*, a *promissory*, not an *assertory* one. But an *assertory* declaration, as every one sees, is the only sort of declaration, that admits of any application to the case in question. By nothing that, in Paul's situation, a man could *promise* to do, in addition to the performance of the ceremony, could any evidence be given, of a man's having, or not having, done so and so, in any time *past*.

That by that which was actually done, that which was essential was considered as having been done,—is proved, by what is put into Paul's mouth in relation to this subject, in his defence against the accusation brought afterwards against him, before the Roman governor *Felix*, by the spokesman of the Jewish constituted authorities, *Tertullus*. There it is, that, beyond all doubt, what he is speaking of, is his CLEARANCE, as above: for there also, the word in the official translation, as well as in the Greek original, is *purified*: in the past tense, purified. This being assumed, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that either in the course of that part, which at the time of the irruption, was already

elapsed of the *seven days'* ceremony, in the temple; or, what seems more probable, antecedently to the commencement of it, a denegatory declaration—a declaration denying the fact charged in the accusation,—had been made: for, that the ceremony itself was never accomplished, is what is expressly stated:—of the term of seven days stated as necessary to the accomplishment of it, no more than a part, it is said, had elapsed, when the final interruption of it took place.

To return to the time of Paul's entrance into the temple.

Thus, as hath been seen, stands the matter, even upon the face of the official English translation. But in verse 26, the word employed in the Greek original, removes all doubt. "Then," says the translation, "Paul took the men, and the next day *purifying himself* with them, entered into the temple." Purifying himself, in the present tense, says the translation: and, even this alone taken into consideration, the purifying process, whatever it was, might be supposed to have been but commenced before the entrance into the temple, and as being thus as yet in pendency, waiting the exit out of the temple for its accomplishment. Thus it is, that, in the translation, the verb is in the present tense, *purifying himself*: but, in the Greek original, it is in the past tense, *having purified* himself: so that, in the original, the purification, whatever it may have been, is in express terms stated as having, even before his entrance into the temple, already accomplished.

Note that, if the historian is to be believed, he had on this occasion, the fullest opportunity, of being, in the most particular manner, acquainted with everything that passed. For, when, as above, the

recommendation was given to Paul, on his appearance before the Apostle James and the Elders, —he, the historian, was actually present, "And the day following," says he, Acts 21:18, "*Paul went in with us unto James*; and all the Elders were present."

Supposing *that* the true interpretation,—of what use and effect then, it may perhaps be asked, was the ceremony, of which the temple was the theatre? The answer has been already given. It cannot have been any other than the attaching, to the declaration that had been made, the sanction, of an oath. Without the ceremony performed in the temple, the declaration was a declaration *not* upon oath, and as such not regarded as sufficient evidence:—evidence, in the shape which, the historian says, had been actually required for the purpose: when the ceremony, of which the temple was the theatre, had been gone through, and the last of the number of days, required for its accomplishment had been terminated;—then, and not before, it was regarded as having been converted into the appropriate and sufficient evidence. Thus it was, that this seven days' ceremony was no more than an elaborate substitute to the English ceremony of kissing the book, after hearing the dozen or so of words pronounced by the official functionary.

On this occasion, the Greek word rendered by the word *vow*, is a word which in its ordinary sense was, among Gentiles as well as Jews, exactly correspondent to our word *prayer*. But, the idea denoted by the word *prayer*, applies in this case with no less propriety to an *assertory oath* than to a *promissory vow*. Directly and completely, it designates neither. In both cases an address is made to some supposed supernatural potentate: in cases such as the

present, beseeching him to apply the sanction of punishment to the *praying* individual, in the event of a want of sincerity on his part: in this case, in the event of his not having done that which, on this occasion, he declares himself to have done, or, what comes to the same thing, his having done that which he declares himself *not* to have done: in the other case, in the event of his not doing that which he has promised to do, or doing that which he has promised *not to do*.[55]

All this while, it is not in a direct way, it may be observed, that this word *vow* is employed, and application made of it to Paul's case: not in speaking of Paul himself in the first instance, but after speaking of the *four other men*, whom it is proposed he should take for his comrades, on his entrance into the temple. "We have four men," James and the Elders are made to say, Acts 21:23, 24, "We have four men which have a vow on them: Them take, and purify thyself with them ... that ... all may know, that those things, whereof they," the multitude, ver. 22, "were informed concerning thee, are nothing": no otherwise, therefore, than by the case these four men were in, is the case designated, in which it is proposed to Paul to put himself.

As to the case these four men were in,—no otherwise than on account of its connection with the case Paul was in,—is it in anywise of importance. As probable a supposition as any seems to be—that of their being in the same case with him: accused, as well as he, of teaching "Jews to forsake Moses:" for, between their case and his, no intimation is given of any difference: and, as the *"purifying himself"* is what is recommended to him, so is it what they are stated, as standing eventually engaged to do on their part. If

then, in *his* instance, purifying himself means—clearing himself of a charge made against *him*,—so in their instance must it naturally, not to say necessarily, have meant—clearing themselves of some charge made against *them*. Moreover, when, as above, he is, in the Greek original, stated as having actually purified himself, before his entrance into the temple, so are they likewise; for it is "*with them*," that his purification is stated as having been performed.

This being assumed, it might not be impossible to find a use for the word *vow*, even in its proper sense—its *promissory* sense: for, what might be supposed is—that before the entrance into the temple, at the same time with the *denegatory declaration*, a *vow* was made—a solemn *promise*—to enter into the temple, and back of the declaration with the sanction of an oath, by going through the ceremony. But, forasmuch, as, in the import of the Greek word, no such idea, as that of a *promise*, is comprised,—the only use of this interpretation would be—to save the translators from the imputation of an impropriety, with which it seems rather more probable that they stand chargeable.

All this while, of Paul's conduct on this occasion, to what part was it that the blame belonged?—Surely, not to the endeavour, to wean men from their attachment to the Mosaic laws: for thus far he copied Jesus; and in copying did not go against, but only beyond, the great original. True it is, that, in so doing, he served his own personal and worldly purposes: not less so, that, in this subserviency, he found the inducement by which his conduct was determined: for, by how much stronger men's attachment would continue to be to the dead lawgiver, by so much, less strong would it be to the

living preacher. But, in so far as a man's conduct is serviceable to mankind at large, it certainly is not rendered the less serviceable, or the less laudable, by his being himself included in the number. The blame lay then—not in teaching men to forsake Moses: for, thus far, instead of being blame-worthy, there was nothing in his conduct, that did not merit positive praise. What there was amiss in his conduct—in what, then, did it consist? Plainly in this, and this alone: namely, that, on being taxed with having so done,—instead of avowing and justifying it, he denied it: and, having denied it, scrupled not to add to the falsehood the aggravation of such extraordinarily deliberate and solemn perjury, as hath been so plainly visible. And, to what purpose commit so flagrant a breach of the law of morality? Plainly, to no other, than the fixing himself in Jerusalem, and persevering in a project of insane and selfish ambition, which, in spite of the most urgent remonstrances that could be made by his most devoted adherents, had brought him thither: for, he had but to depart in peace, and the Apostles of Jesus would have remained unmolested, and the peace of Christendom undisturbed.

An article of evidence, that must not be left unnoticed,—is the part taken, on this occasion, by the historiographer. Nowhere does this eyewitness take upon himself to declare,—nowhere so much as to insinuate—that of the charge, thus made upon his hero, there was anything that was not true: nowhere does he so much as insinuate, that the declaration by which he says Paul had cleared himself of the charge, and, as we have seen, *before* his entrance into the temple for the purpose of enforcing it by the sanction of an oath,—was anything short of a downright falsehood. After this, he makes a defence

for Paul before Felix;[56] he makes a defence for Paul before Festus;[57]
he makes a defence for Paul before Festus and Agrippa;[58] and, on no one of all those occasions, is the defence anything to the purpose. He, indeed, makes Paul declare, that he, Paul, had always been a strict observer of the Mosaic ordinances. This may have been either true or false: but, true or false, it was equally foreign to the purpose. Not improbably, it was, in a considerable degree, true: for if, while he gave to other Jews his assurance, that the operations in question, burthensome as they were, were of no use, he himself continued to bear the burthen notwithstanding,—the persuasiveness of his advice would naturally be augmented by the manifestation thus given of disinterestedness. It may accordingly have been true: but, false or true, it was equally foreign to the purpose: the question was—not what he had done himself; but what he had recommended it to others to do.

Thus—from everything that appears, by all such persons as had the best means of information—the charge made upon him was *believed*,—let it now be seen, whether we should not be warranted in saying, *known*,—to be true.

As to "*The Jews of Asia*,"—and the mention made of this class of men, as the instigators of the tumult—can any support be derived from it, for the inference, that it was by something else in Paul's conduct, and not by any such perjury as that in question, that the vent, thus given to the indignation, was produced? [59] No, assuredly: altogether inconsistent would any such supposition be, with the main part of the narrative. Whoever were the persons with whom the manual violence originated;—whatever were the

reproaches cast upon the invader on other grounds;—the purpose—the sole purpose—for which he entered upon the ceremony, is rendered as plain as words can make it. It was the clearing himself of the charge of teaching Jews to forsake Moses: and, supposing the fact admitted, everything, in the way of justification, being, before such a tribunal, manifestly inadmissible,—of no such charge was it possible for him to clear himself, without denying the truth of it. But, according to the historian, to confirm this denial, by the solemnity, whatever it was,—was the purpose, and the sole purpose, of it: of this, the negative assertion, contained in the denial, being untrue, and, by him who made it, known to be so,—confirming such denial, by the solemnity,—call it *oath*—call it *vow*—call it anything else,—was committing an act of perjury: and, to believe that such his denial was false, and yet not believing him guilty of perjury—at any rate, on the supposition of the accomplishment of the solemnity—was not possible. How numerous so ever may have been the other causes of provocation, given by him—how numerous so ever, the different descriptions of persons to whom they had been given;—no disproof could, by all of them put together, be given, by this solemnity, to the denial in question,—supposing it false.

To the present purpose, the only question is—whether, by Paul, on the occasion in question, an act of perjury was, or was not, committed? not—what was the cause, whether that, or any other, of any indignation of which he was the object. Even therefore, might it be allowed, that a *vow*, in the sense of which it is contradistinguished from an *oath*, was performed by him, or about to be performed,—still it would not be the less undeniable, that it was

for the purpose of converting the simple declaration into a declaration upon oath, that he entered upon the solemnity: and that, therefore, if in the simple declaration there was anything to his knowledge false, the consequence is—that by his converting it into a declaration upon oath, he rendered himself guilty of perjury.

The observation, thus applied, to what is said of the "*Jews of Asia*," will be seen to be applicable, and, with equal propriety, to what is said about his being charged with "bringing *Greeks into the temple*:" and, in particular, about his being supposed to have brought in "*The Ephesian Trophimus*:" and moreover, what may, in this last case, be observable, is—that this about the Greeks is expressly stated as being a *further* charge, distinct from the main one: nor yet is it so much as stated, that, by any such importation, to what degree so ever offensive, any such effect, as that signified by the word *pollution* was produced.

Not altogether destitute of probability seems the supposition, that these two circumstances—about the Jews of Asia, and about Trophimus—may have been thrown in, by this adherent of Paul's, for the purpose of throwing a cloud of confusion and obscurity over the real charge: and if so, the two circumstances, with the addition of the three different defences, put into the hero's mouth, on the three several occasions of the endeavour,—must be acknowledged to have been employed, not altogether without success.

Here then closes that part of the evidence, which, to the purpose of a judgment, to be passed at this distance of time from the facts, may be considered as so much *circumstantial* evidence: in the next section may be seen that part, which comes under the denomination of direct evidence.

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SECTION 2.

PROOF FROM THE EPISTLES.

We come now to the *direct* evidence: that evidence—all of it from Paul's own pen:—all of it from his own Epistles. It consists in those "teachings to forsake Moses," which will be now furnished, in such unequivocal terms and such ample abundance, in and by those fruits of his misty and crafty eloquence:—in the first place, in his letter to the disciples, which he had made, or hoped to make at Rome:—date of it, according to the received chronology, about four years anterior to the time here in question:—in the next place, in two successive letters to the disciples, whom, it appears, he had made at Corinth:—both these addresses, set down, as belonging to the same year as the one to the Romans. Moreover, in his so often mentioned Epistle to the Galatians, matter of the same tendency is to be found. But, this last being, according to that same chronology, of a date posterior by some years to the time, at which the charge of having preached the sort of doctrine in question was, on the present occasion, made,—it belongs not to the present question, and is therefore left unemployed. And, in the same case, is some matter that might be found in his Epistles to the Thessalonians.

1. First then as to the Mosaic "law and customs," taken in the aggregate.

On this subject, see in the first place what the oath-taker had said to his *Romans*.

> Rom 15:14. "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean

of itself; but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."—— 17. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Rom 3:20. "*By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified* in his, God's sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Rom. 3:27, 28, 29, 30, 31. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of the faith.—— Therefore, we conclude, that *a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*.—— Is *he* the God of the Jews only? is *he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:—— Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.—— *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*"

Rom. 10:9. "... if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.[60]—— 12. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.——For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."[61]

Rom 14:2. "... one believeth that he may eat all things: another who is weak, eateth herbs. —— Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him.—— *One man esteemeth one day above*

another: another esteemeth every day alike.[62]"

1 Cor. 6:12. "*All things are lawful unto me*, but all things are not expedient:" or *profitable* margin, "all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. —— *Meats for the belly*, and *the belly for meats*; but God shall destroy both it and them."

1 Cor. 8:8. "But *meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse.*—— Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

1 Cor. 9:19-23. 19. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.—— *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews*; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law:—— *To them that are without law, as without law*, being not without law to God but under the law to Christ, *that I might gain them that are without law*.—— To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.—— And this I do for the Gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

2 Cor. 3:12 to 17. "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech. —— And not as *Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is*

abolished.—— But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which vail is done away in Christ.—— But even unto this day, *when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.*—— Nevertheless *when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away*.—— Now the Lord is that spirit; and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Now as to *circumcision* in particular.

Rom. 2:25, 26, 27, 28, 29. "For *circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.—— Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?*—— And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?——For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh:—— But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Rom. 3:1, 2. "What advantages then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? —— Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

Rom. 4:9, 10, 11, 12. "*Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?* for we say that faith was

> reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.—— How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision. Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.—— And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:—— And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being *yet* uncircumcised."

> Rom. 15:8. "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the premises made unto the fathers."

> 1 Cor. 7:18. "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. *Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.—— Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.*"

From any one individual, who, in either of these distant cities, had seen any one of these same Epistles,—let it now be seen whether information of their contents, supposing it credited, would not have sufficed to produce those effects, the existence of which is so unquestionable. Not but that the same rashness, which suffered him to furnish such abundant evidence against himself in those distant regions, could scarce fail to have given birth to

credence in abundance, of various sorts, and of a character, which, on that occasion, would be much more impressive.

FOOTNOTES:

[55] On this occasion, supposing the purpose of this ceremony to be, as here contended, no other than that of applying, to a declaration concerning a matter of fact, the supernatural penal sanction, by which it was converted into an oath,—a natural enough subject of inquiry is—to what cause is to be attributed the extraordinary length thus given to it?—seven days at the least; to which, upon examination, would be found virtually added, as much greater a length of time, as the holy person, to whose custody the oath-taker consigned himself, might be pleased to prescribe. Answer, without difficulty,—the affording time and pretence for the exaction of his *surplice fees*:—namely, those established by law,—with the addition of others, to as large an amount, as the need which the oath-taker had of the accommodation thus to be afforded to him, could engage him to submit to. As to the length of time,—in the passage in question, the translation exhibits some obscurity: nor is it altogether cleared up by the original. A determinate number of days, to wit, seven, is indeed mentioned, ver. 27, but immediately before this, ver. 26, comes a passage, from whence it seems unquestionable, that, whatever were the time a man had been thus detained, he was not to be let out, until, over and above what good things it had been made necessary he should bring in with him, a further payment, and as it should seem, in a

pecuniary shape, had been made: "to signify," says ver. 26, "the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them." "And when *the seven* days were *almost* ended," continues ver. 27: immediately after which comes the account of the tumult, by which they were prevented from being *quite* ended.

As to the phrase—"*to signify the accomplishment of the days*," what seems to be meant by it is—to make known when the number requisite for the completion of the train of operations had been *accomplished*. But, to make known when that number had been *accomplished*, it was previously requisite to make known when it had *commenced*: and, for making *this* known, the act, probably a public one, of making entrance into the temple, was employed.

As to the origin, as well as particular nature, of the ceremony,—though no such word as *Nazarite* is here employed, on turning to the Book of *Numbers*, chapter the sixth, it will be manifest, that the ceremony here in question is the same as that, by which, according to the receipt there given, any man whatever, whether, and any woman also, must be left to conjecture, might be converted into a *Nazarite*. *Nazarite* is from a Hebrew word, which meant originally neither more nor less than a person *separated*. A person consigned himself to the custody of "*the priest of the congregation*:" or, as we should now say, the *parson of the parish*. The ceremony accomplished, the patient was thereby put into a state of appropriate sanctity: and, from this metamorphosis, as the priest and the Nazarite could agree, any inference might be drawn, and any purpose at pleasure accomplished. Neither to the *extent* of the inference, nor therefore to the *purpose*

designed, were any limits visible. Everything depended upon the priest: for, though of certain particular operations made requisite, a most particular list is given, all of them of the most insignificant character in themselves, yet so thickly and so plainly sown are the seeds of *nullity*, that, when all the appointed fees, of which there is also an enormous list[IV.], had been paid, it would still lie at the option of the priest, to pronounce the whole procedure null and void, unless, and until any such final compliment as he chose to expect, were paid to him. Among the most obviously, as well as extensively convenient purposes, to which it was capable of being applied, is this of which the present case affords an example: namely, the manufacturing of evidence: could he but find means to satisfy the priest, a man might, to all legal purposes, and even to the satisfaction of all appropriately disposed minds, prove, and with conclusive effect, any thing to be false, which everybody knew to be true. By fabrication, falsification, or suppression of evidence, what is the right that may not be usurped? what is the wrong that may not, with success and impunity, be committed?

In the Mosaic law, immediately before *this* institution Numbers, chap. 5., comes another, by means of which every man, who was tired of his wife, might, in another way, with the assistance of a priest—and, for aught that appears, any priest—clear himself of that incumbrance. All the man had to do was—to *say* he was "*jealous*" of her: the priest thereupon took charge of her. If priest and husband were agreed, "*the water of jealousy*" did its office: if not, the woman remained imprisoned. Against the superhuman evidence, afforded by the purifying process here in

question, no quantity of human evidence was to be available. In like manner, to warrant this poisoning process, not any the smallest particle of human evidence was necessary: the case in which it is to be performed, is "*if there be no witness against her, neither she be taken*," says the text, *Numbers* 5. 13. Verily, verily, not without sufficient cause, did Jesus, from first to last, take every occasion, to weaken the attachment of the people, to a system of law, of which those institutions afford two, among so many samples. Yet, while in the very act of depreciating it, is he represented as declaring his purpose to be the *fulfilling it*: Matt. 5. 17. for, such was the verbal veil, which the prejudices he had to encounter, rendered it necessary to him at the moment, to throw over the tendency of his endeavors. Fulfill the very law he was preaching against? Yes: but in one sense only: namely, by fulfilling—not the real purpose of it,—the establishment of the corrupt despotism of the priesthood,—but the professed purpose of it, the good of the community: in regard to the law, fulfilling, in a word, whatever there was that was good in it, whatever there was that deserved to be fulfilled. Jesus, in whose opinion death was too severe a punishment, for a wife, in the case of a breach, on *her* part, of a contract, the breach of which was by the *other* contending party practised with impunity—Jesus, who accordingly, in saving the offender, exposed to merited disgrace the sanguinary law—was doubtless still further from approving, that parish priests, in unlimited numbers, should poison innocent women for the accommodation of their husbands, or sell licenses to commit every imaginable wrong by perjury.

Vow is *oath*: this is not the only occasion, in

which the self-constituted Apostle, if his historiographer is to be believed, took the benefit, whatever it was, of this ceremony. In Acts 18:16, he "*shaved his head*," it is said, at Cenchrea:—why?—"for he had a vow upon him." What the vow was, we are not told; this, however, we know, as well from Acts 21:26, as from Numbers 6, he could not have got anything by it, had the parson of the parish of Cenchrea been otherwise than satisfied with the "*offering*" that was made.

[IV.] In the bargain between vow-maker and vow-sanctifier, the following list of fees, provided for sanctifier, by *Excellent Church* of that country, in those days whatever they were,—may serve to show the use of it to one of the contracting parties. To complete our conception of the nature and effects of the arrangement, nothing is wanting, but that which so unhappily must for ever remain wanting—a history of the *purposes*, to which from the commencement of the government to the dissolution of it, the solemnity had been applied on the vow-maker's side. Of these purposes, we must content ourselves as well as we can with the sample, for which we are here indebted to the author of the Acts. The table of fees is as follows:

It is extracted from the Book of Numbers, chapter 6:1 to 21.

Fees to be paid in all cases: fees liquidated in quantity, and thence in value.

I. }
1. He lamb of the first year, one.
2. Ewe-lamb of the first year, one.
3. Ram without blemish, one.

Fees, not liquidated in quantity, and thus left

to be liquidated in quantity, and thence in value, by the will of the priest.

II. 4. Basket of unleavened bread, one.
5. Parcel of cakes of fine flour mingled with oil.
6. Parcel of wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, one.
7. Meat-offering, one.
8. Drink-offerings—numbers and respective quantities not liquidated.

Fees payable, on a contingency: a contingency not describable without more time and labour, than would be paid for by the result.

III. 9. Turtle-doves or pigeons, two.
10. Lamb of the first year, one.

IV. Mysterious addition, the liquidation of which must be left to the Hebrew scholar. Ver. 21. "Besides *that* that his hand shall get:" (whose hand? priest's or vow-maker's?) "according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation:"—probable meaning, according to the purpose, for which he performed the ceremony—the advantage which he looked for from it.

Moreover, by any one whose curiosity will carry him through the inquiry, causes of *nullity* may be seen as sedulously and copiously provided, as if by the *astutia* of an English judge, or pair of judges, to whose profit the fees were to be received: effect of the nullity, of course, repetition; necessity of repeating the process, as in case of *new trial* or *arrest of judgment*, with the fees.

Religion was thus no less aptly served at Jerusalem, under Mosaic institutions,—than Justice is to this day, under matchless constitution and English institutions, at Westminster.

[56] Paul at the suit of Tertullus, A.D. 60. Acts 24:1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 18.

"And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.—And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him,—Saying, We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:—Who also hath *gone about to profane the temple*; whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.—And the Jews also assented, saying, that these things were so.—Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered,—Thou mayest understand, that they are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.—Whereupon certain Jews from Asia *found me purified in the temple*, neither with multitude nor with tumult."

[57] Paul before Festus alone, A.D. 60. Acts 25:7, 8.

"And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove:—While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended anything at all."

[58] Paul before Festus and Agrippa, A.D. 62. Acts 26:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 20, 21.

"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:—I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews;—Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews; wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. —My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;—Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straightest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee.—And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:—Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.—20. But showed first unto them of Damascus and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.—For these causes, the Jews *caught me in the temple*, and went about to kill me."

[59] "And when the seven days were almost ended," says Acts 21:27, "*the Jews which were of Asia*, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him."

[60] A cheap enough rate this, at which salvation is thus put up. Of what use then morality? Of what use is abstinence from mischievous acts, in what degree so ever mischievous? "Oh! but," says somebody, "though Paul said this, he meant no such thing:" and then comes something—anything—

which it may suit the defender's purpose to make Paul say.

[61] Another receipt for making salvation still cheaper than as above. Not so Jesus. Matt. 7:21: "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

[62] Behold here the degree of importance attached by Paul to *sabbaths*.

CHAPTER XII.

More Falsehoods.—Resurrection Witnesses multiplied.—World's End predicted.—To save credit, Antichrist invented.

SECTION 1.

RESURRECTION-WITNESSES MULTIPLIED.

After what has been seen of the seven days' course of perjury, proofs of simple falsehood will be apt to appear superfluous. To make certainty more sure, two preeminent ones shall, however, be brought to view. They may have their use, were it only as examples of the palpableness, of those falsehoods, which, for so many hundreds of years, and through so many generations of commentators, are, under favourable circumstances, capable of remaining undetected. The extravagance of the addition, made

by the audacious stranger, to the number of the Resurrection-witnesses, as given by themselves:—the predicted end of the world in the prophet's own lifetime,—and the creation of Antichrist for the purpose of putting off that catastrophe,—may even be not altogether unamusing, by the picture they will give, of that mixture of rashness and craftiness, which constitutes not the least remarkable, of the ingredients in the composition of this extraordinary character. Moreover, Antichrist being in the number of the bug-bears, by the images of which many an enfeebled mind has not yet ceased to be tormented; —putting an extinguisher upon this hobgoblin may have the serious good effect, of calming a mass of disquietude, which how completely soever groundless, is not the less afflicting, to the minds into which it has found entrance.

First, as to the resurrection-witnesses. In relation to a fact of such cardinal importance, the accounts which have reached us from the four biographers of Jesus are not, it must be confessed, altogether so clear as could have been wished. But, on so ample a subject, howsoever tempting the occasion, anything that could here be offered, with any promise of usefulness, would occupy far too much space, and be by much too wide a digression from the design of the present work.[63]

Sufficient to the present purpose will be the observation, that nothing can be more palpably or irreconcileably inconsistent with every one of them, than the amply and round number, thus added by the effrontery of this uninformed stranger, to the most ample that can be deduced from any of the accounts, thus stated as given by the only description of persons, whose situation would give to their

testimony the character of the best evidence.

Behold now the account of the number and of the persons in Paul's own words. It is in the fifteenth chapter of the first of his two letters to his Corinthians. "Moreover, brethren," ver. 1, "I declare unto you the Gospel, the good news, which I *preached* unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.—— By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you unless ye have believed in vain.——For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures: —— And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures:—— And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:—— After that, he was seen of *above five hundred brethren at once*; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.—— After that he was seen of James, then of all the Apostles.—— And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.——For I am the least of the Apostles, which am not meet to be called as Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."[64]

As to the five hundred brethren at once, with the additions *in petto*, the more closely the Gospel accounts are looked into, the more entire will be a Man's conviction of the extravagance of this account. In addition to the eleven Apostles that remained after the death of the traitor Judas, it may be matter of question, whether so much as a single individual can be found, who, in any one of the Gospels, is stated as having, after the death of Jesus, received from the testimony of sense, the demonstration of his presence. Of the percipient witnesses in question, not to waste space and time in needless discussions,

taking a round number, and including both sexes taken together, no number approaching to twenty can be made out from any one of the four Gospel accounts, nor from all of them taken together. To what end then substitute, to less than twenty, more than five hundred? To what, but to supply by falsehood the deficiency left by truth. The thing to be done was the coming up to the expectations, whatever they might be, of his Corinthians. Number twenty,—said he to himself,—may perhaps fall short: well then, strike out the twenty, and set down five hundred. Thus did the self-constituted Apostle take a leaf out of the book of the unjust steward. Luke 16:1-20.

Now then as to mutually contradictory numbers—that given by the four Evangelists, and that given by this one stranger,—to which shall we give credence? As to the Evangelists,—whether, in the situation in which they were, and writing for the purposes for which they wrote,—these most intimate of the associates of the departed Jesus, and percipient witnesses of the several facts in question,—all of them spoken of in the same narration, all of them so fully apprised of the whole real number—could have been disposed, any one of them, to get down a number *short* of the truth,—may be left to anyone to imagine.

But, according to Paul's calculation, the truth would not come up to his purpose:—to his particular purpose: a number, such as could not fail of doing so, was therefore to be substituted.

Five hundred was as easily written as *twenty*. Had Jerusalem, or any place in its neighbourhood, been the place, to which this letter of his was to be addressed, some caution might have been necessary.

But Corinth—a place so remote from the scene of action—being the abode of the disciples, to whom this letter of his was addressed,—and the letters themselves, not destined to be seen by any other than devoted eyes,—Invention found herself at ease.

Meantime, while Jesus was thus magnified, Paul was not to be forgotten. Insufficient still would be the cloud of witnesses, unless himself were added to it. "Last of all," says he, 1 Cor. 15:8, "he," Jesus, "was seen of me also." Seen by him Paul? at what place? at what time? At the time of his conversion, when hearing a voice and seeing light, but nothing else? But the whole constellation of his visions will here be crowding to the reader's view, and any more particular reference to them would be useless: suffice it to observe, that on no other occasion, either does Paul himself, or his historiographer for him, take upon himself to say, that he had ever seen Jesus any otherwise than in a *vision*, whatsoever may have been meant by this so convenient term. On no occasion is it so much as pretended, either by him or for him, that *in the flesh* Jesus was ever seen by him. By no fingers of his murder-abetting hand, had ever been so much as pretended to have been probed, the wounds of Jesus. Yet, what are the terms employed, by him, in speaking of the *sight*, he pretended to have had of Jesus? exactly the same, as those employed by him, when speaking of the evidence, vouchsafed to the Apostles.

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SECTION 2.

FALSE PROPHECY,—THAT THE WORLD WOULD END IN THE LIFETIME OF PERSONS THEN LIVING.

The unsatiableness of Paul's ambition meets the eye at every page: the fertility of his invention is no less conspicuous. So long as, between this and the other world, the grave stood interposed,—the strongest impression capable of being made by pictures of futurity, even when drawn by so bold a hand, was not yet sufficient for stocking it with the power it grasped at. This barrier, at whatever hazard, he accordingly determined to remove. The future world being thus brought at both ends into immediate contact with the present,—the obedient, for whom the joys of heaven were provided, would behold the troubles of *the middle passage* saved to them, while the disobedient would see the jaws of hell opened for their reception, without any such halting-place, as might otherwise seem to be offered by the grave. In particular, by a nearer as well as smoother road than that rugged one, he would make his way to heaven: nor would they, whose obedience gave them a just claim to so high a favour, be left behind.

His Thessalonians were the disciples, chosen by him for the trial of this experiment. Addressed to them we have two of his Epistles. In these curious and instructive documents, the general purport—not only of what had been said to the persons in question on a former occasion, but likewise of the observation of which on *their* part it had been productive,—is rendered sufficiently manifest, by what we shall find him saying in the first of them. "Good," said they, "as to *some* of us, whoever they may be: but, how is it to be with *the rest*? in particular, with those who have actually died already: not to speak of those others who will have been dying off in the meantime: for you do not go so far as to promise, that we shall, all of us, be so sure of escaping death as you yourself are." "Make yourselves easy," we shall find him

saying to them: "sooner or later, take my word for it, we shall, all of us, mount up together in a body: those who are dead, those who are to die, and those who are not to die—all of us at once, and by the same conveyance: up, in the air, and through the clouds, we shall go. The Lord will come down and meet us, and show us the way:—music, vocal and instrumental, will come with him, and a rare noise altogether there will be! Those who died first will have risen first; what little differences there may be are not worth thinking about. Comfort yourselves," concludes he, "with these words." Assuredly not easily could more comfortable ones have been found: —always supposing them followed by belief, as it appears they were. But it is time we should see more particularly what they were.

1 Thess. 4:10 to 18.—"And indeed ye do it," viz. love one another, ver. 9, "toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;—And that ye study to be *quiet*, and to do *your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you*;—That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.—But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are *asleep*, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.—For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so *them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*.—For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that *we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep*.—For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and *the dead in Christ shall rise first.—Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with*

them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.—Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Hereupon, without any intervening matter, follows that of the next chapter. The division into chapters,—though, for the purpose of reference, not merely a useful, but an altogether necessary one,—is universally acknowledged to have been a comparatively modern one.

1 Thess. 5:1-11. "But *of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you*.—For yourselves know perfectly, that *the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*.—For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then *sudden destruction cometh upon them*, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.—*But ye, brethren, are not in darkness*, that that day should overtake you as a thief.—Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.—Therefore *let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober*.—For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.—But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of *faith* and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.—For *God hath not appointed us to wrath*, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.—Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.—Wherefore *comfort yourselves* together, and edify one another, even as also ye do."

An ingenious game was the one thus played by Paul, if ever there was one. Of this prophecy,[65] what when once mentioned, is plainly enough visible, is—this is of the number of those predictions, by which profit is put in for, and no loss risked: for such is the

shape given to it. So long as the predictor lived, it would remain good and undisfulfilled: at the end of a certain time—namely, at the end of the life of the longest liver of the aggregate number of individuals in existence at that time,—the disfulfillment would indeed take place. But if, by that time, the predictor had made his exit,—as, in this case, being already of a certain age, it is tolerably certain he would,—the reproach of false prophecy would not have reached him: and, even, supposing it to have reached him, as it would do if he survived the last of them, still the speculation would not be a very bad one. His *prophecy*, his *purposes* would have been fulfilled.

Not altogether without claim to observation, is the manner, in which, by the adroitness of the soothsayer, the anxiety of questioners is evaded. That he himself does not know, nor ever expects to know, —that is what his prudence forbids his telling them. "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night:" this is what, in answer to former importunities, he had at *that* time told them. "For you yourselves," says he, "know this perfectly;" that is, in so far as they could know from *his telling*: this being, in this instance, the only source,—of that *delusion*, to which he gave the name of *knowledge*. This he had told them *then*: and more, he takes care not to tell them *now*. "Of the times and seasons, brethren," says he, "ye have no need that I write unto you." Meantime, their hopes and fears, and therewith their dependence upon his good pleasure, are kept still alive: in the first place, the hope—that, knowing already more than he as yet desires to disclose, he may by ulterior obsequiousness be prevailed upon to disclose it: in the next place, the hope—that, though not as yet possessed of the information, he may at

some future period be able to obtain it, and in that case give them the benefit of it.

To a speculation of this sort,—in how particular a degree favourable the mode of communication by letter was, is sufficiently visible. Writing, was an operation not quite so prompt, in those days as in these. Between Thessalonica and Athens,—from whence, as they tell us, these Epistles were written, —there was not, it may be affirmed without much danger of error, any established letter-post: and, even if there was,—to this or that question, which a man sees in a letter, he makes or does not make answer, as he finds convenient. Not exactly so, when the questioner is at his elbow.

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SECTION 3.

DISORDER AND MISCHIEF PRODUCED BY THIS PREDICTION.

We have seen the prophecy: let us now see the effects of it. They were such as might have been expected. They were such as had been expected: expected, as may have been observed, at a very early period. But there was rather *more* in them than had been expected.

Of the confusion, which, by an expectation of this sort, in a state of society, so much inferior, in the scale of moral conduct, to any, of which in this our age and country we have experience, was capable of being produced,—it can scarcely, at this time of day, be in any man's power, to frame to himself anything approaching to an adequate conception. So far as regards peaceable idleness, of the general nature of

it, some faint conception may under modern manners be formed, from the accounts of the effects produced by a similar prediction, delivered first in France, then in England, about the time of Queen Anne:—so far as regards a mixture of idleness and positive mischief in a time of terror, under ancient manners,—from the accounts, given by Thucydides, of the effects produced at Athens, by the near approach of death, on the occasion of the plague;—and, from that given by Josephus, of the effects produced by the like cause, on the occasion of the siege, which, under his eye, terminated in the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

According to each man's cast of mind, and the colour of the expectations that had been imbibed by it,—terror and self-mortification, or confidence and mischievous self-indulgence, would be the natural result: terror and self-mortification, if apprehensions grounded on the retrospect of past misconduct predominated—mischievous indulgence, if, by the alleged or supposed all-sufficiency of faith,—of faith, of which the preacher was the object—the importance of morality had, even in the imagination of the disciple, been thrown into the back-ground: confabulation without end, in the case of terror; cessation from work, in both cases.

Had he been somewhat less positive on the head of *time*,—the purposes of those announcements of his might have been completely, and without any deduction, fulfilled. The terror he infused could not be unfavourable to those purposes, so long as it made no deduction, from the value of the produce of their industry! It was his interest, that they should "*walk honestly*," lest they should be punished for walking otherwise:—punished, capitally or not

capitally—and, in either case, bring his teaching into disgrace. It was his interest, that they should *work*, in such sort, as to earn each of them the expense of his maintenance; lest, by abstaining from work, they should, any one of them, impose a burthen upon the charity of the others, or be seen to walk dishonestly, to the prejudice of the common cause, as above. It was his interest, that they should, each of them, gain as much as could be gained without reproach or danger; because, the greater the surplus produced by each disciple, the greater the tribute, that could be paid to the spiritual master, under whose command they had put themselves. Thus far his interest and theirs were in agreement. But, it was his interest, that, while working to these ends, their minds, at the expense of whatever torment to themselves, should be kept in a state of constant ferment, between the passions of hope and fear; because, the stronger the influence of the two allied passions in their breasts, the more abundant would be the contributions, of which, to the extent of each man's ability, they might reasonably be expected to be productive. Here it was, that his interest acted in a direction opposite to theirs: and it was by too ardent a pursuit of this his separate interest, that so much injury, as we shall see, was done to all those other interests.

Of the disease which we shall see described, the description, such as it is, is presented, by the matter furnished by the practitioner himself, by whose prescription the disease was produced. This matter we must be content to take, in that state of disorder, which constitutes one of the most striking features of the issue of his brain. In speaking of the symptoms,—addressed as his discourse is to nobody but the patients themselves by whom these symptoms had been experienced,—only in the way of allusion, and

thence in very general terms, could they naturally have been, as they will actually be seen to be, presented to view. As to details,—from them to him, not from him to them, was, it will readily be acknowledged, the only natural course.

In the same Epistle,—namely in the second, which is the last, but, in a passage which does not come till after the announcement, which, as will be seen under the next head, was to operate as a remedy,—stands the principal part of the matter from whence we have been enabled to collect the nature of the disease. The chapter is the third and concluding one: —the words that add nothing to the information, are here and there omitted.

1. "Finally, brethren, pray for us ...—that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for all men have not faith.—And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we *command* you.—And the Lord direct your hearts ... into the *patient waiting for Christ*.—Now we *command* you, brethren ... that ye *withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*, and not after the tradition which he received of us.—For yourselves know how ye ought to follow *us*: for we *behaved not ourselves disorderly among you:—Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought*: but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.—*Not because we have not power*, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us.—for *even when we were with you*, this we *commanded* you, that *if any would not work, neither should he eat*.—For we hear that *there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies*.—Now them that are such, *we command* and exhort by our Lord Jesus

Christ, *that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread*.—But ye brethren, *be not weary in well-doing*.—And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."

By anything we have as yet seen, the symptoms of the disease, it may be thought, are not painted in any very strong colours. But, of the virulence of it there is no want of evidence. It may be seen, in the drastic nature of the remedy:—a remedy, for the invention of which, we shall, in the next section, see the ingenuity of the practitioner put to so extraordinary a stretch.

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SECTION 4.

PAUL'S REMEDY FOR THE DISORDER, AND SALVO FOR HIMSELF.—ANTICHRIST MUST FIRST COME.

We have seen the disorder: we had before that seen the causes of it. We now come to the remedy—the remedy provided by the practitioner for a disease of his own creating. Of the shape given to this remedy, the ingenuity will be seen to be truly worthy of the author of the disease. It consists in the announcement made, of an intermediate state of things, of the commencement of which, any more than of the termination, nothing is said: except that it was to take place, antecedently to that originally announced state of things, by the expectation of which the disorder had been produced. Of the *time* of its commencement, no: except as above, on that point no information is given. But of its *duration*, though no determinate information, yet such a

description is given, as suffices for giving his disciples to understand, that in the nature of things, it could not be a short one: and that thus, before the *principal* state of things took place, there would be a proportionate quantity of time for *preparation*. Satisfied of this, they would see the necessity of conforming themselves to those reiterated "*commands*," with which his prediction had from the first been accomplished; and to which he had so erroneously trusted, when he regarded them as composing a sufficient antidote to the poison he had infused. That the warning thus provided for them would be a very short one, he left them, it will be seen, no great reason to apprehend. A sort of spiritual monster,—a sort of an ape of *Satan*, a rival to the Almighty,—and *that* by no means a contemptible one—was to enter upon the stage.

What with force and what with fraud, such would be his power,—that the fate of the Almighty would have appeared too precarious, had not the spirits of his partisans been kept up, by the assurance, that when all was over, the Almighty would remain master of the field.

The time, originally fixed, by him for the aerial voyage, was too *near*. By the hourly expectation of it, had been produced all those disastrous effects which had ensued. After what had been said, an *adjournment* presented the only possible remedy. But this adjournment, after what had been said, by what imaginable means could it be produced? One only means was left by the nature of the case.

> 2 Thess. 2:1-12. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,—That ye *be not* soon shaken in mind, or

be *troubled*, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor *by letter as from us,*[66] *as that the day of Christ is at hand*.—Let no man deceive you by any means; for *that day shall not come, except*[67] there come a falling away first, and *that man of sin be revealed*, the son of perdition;—*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*[68]—Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you *these things*[69]—And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.—For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.—And *then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord* shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and *shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*.[70]—Even *him, whose coming is after the working of Satan,*[71] *with all power and signs and lying wonders*[72]—And with all *deceivableness of unrighteousness* in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.—And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:[73]—That they all might be *damned, who believed not the truth*,[74] but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

To this rival of his God—God and rival—both of them of his own creation, the creator has not, we see, given any name. By this omission, he has, perhaps, as perhaps he thought to do, rendered the

bugbear but the more terrible. The deficiency, such as it is, the Church of England translators of the English official translation of the Bible, have filled up: they have taken it in hand—this bantling of Paul's—and christened it *Antichrist*. "He," Paul, "showeth," say they, "a discovery of *Antichrist*, before the day of the Lord come." Such is the discovery, communicated in the *heading*, prefixed to the second chapter of the second of the two Epistles: and, of the readers of this so abundantly and gratuitously distributed Bible, how few are there, by whom any such distinction as that between the headings and the text is borne in mind! The right reverend divines in question,—were they the first authors of this discovery, or was it ready-made to their hands?—made by that church, from the errors of which their own has been so felicitously purified? To this question, let those look out for, and find, the answer, —in whose eyes the profit is worth the trouble.

Not a few are the divines, who have discovered Antichrist sitting in St. Peter's chair, with a triple crown on his head. In the chair of Luther, or in that of Calvin, would the triple monarch be disposed to discover the hobgoblin, if he thought it worth while to look for him. Has he ever, or has he not, made this discovery already?

"Oh, but," says somebody, "*we* does not here mean *we* only who are alive at this present writing; it means, *we* Christians of all ages:—any number of ages *after* this, as well as this, included. In the designation thus given, neither the individuals he was addressing, nor he himself, were necessarily comprehended." This accordingly, if anything, must be said, or the title of the self-constituted Apostle, to the appellation of *false prophet*, must be admitted. Oh, yes! this may be

said, and must be said: but what will it avail him? In no such comprehensive sense did *he* use it; for, in that sense, it would not have answered his purposes: not even his spiritual and declared purposes, much less his temporal, selfish, and concealed purposes. Why was it that these disciples of his, as well as he, were to be so incessantly upon the watch! I Thess. 5:6, 7, 8. Why, but because "you yourselves," says he, ver. 2, "know perfectly, that the day of the Lord cometh like a thief in the night." Who, on that occasion, could be meant by *we*, but himself and them? In no such comprehensive sense was it understood by *them*: if it had been, no such consequences as we have seen following, could have followed. After the experience he and they had had, of the mischief produced by the narrow sense put upon the all-important pronoun, would he have continued thus to use it in that same narrow sense, if it had not been his wish that in that same sense it should continue to be understood? Would he have been at all this pains in creating the spiritual monster, for the declared purpose of putting off their expectation of the great day, if, but for this put-off, it would not have come on?[75] In what part of all his preachings can any distinct ground be seen for any such supposition, as that any portion of the field of *time*, beyond that by which his own life was bounded, was ever present to his view? In the field of *place*, yes: in that field his views were of no small amplitude: for in that field it was by his ambition that they were marked out: but in the field of *time*, no symptoms of any the smallest degree of enlargement will anywhere be found. But, on this occasion, suppose other ages, and those others to any extent, included in his views: from their including such future ages, would it follow that they had no

application to the age then present?—But, supposing them understood to apply to that age, thereupon in comes the mischief in full force.

Any man that has been reading these Epistles,—let him suppose, in his own breast, any the most anxious desire to raise an expectation, such as that in question: and then let him ask himself, whether it be in the power of that desire to suggest language, that would afford any considerably better promise of giving effect to it.

Of the *nature* of the *disorder*, as well as of the cause of it,—the persons, to whom the world is indebted for the preservation of these remains of the self-constituted Apostle,—have given us, as above, some conception. Of the *effect* of the *remedy*, it would have been amusing to be informed: unfortunately, this portion of his history is not comprised in the labours of his historiographer.[76]

FOOTNOTES:

[63] The account given by Luke of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus is contained in the last chapter, chap. 24:53. According to this account, by no men was Jesus seen in the interval between those two events, besides the eleven Apostles and a few others, all together not more than enough, to sit down together at meat, in one of the houses of a village. Luke 25:9, 28, 29, 30. Number of the occasions on which Jesus was seen by the Apostles, two: the company the same without addition, and both occasions having place within twenty-four hours. Between these two occasions it is that Paul sticks in the one of his

own invention, in which Jesus was seen by above five hundred brethren at once.

Point-blank on this head is the contradiction given to this story of Paul's, by his own attendant and historiographer: namely, in the account put into the mouth of Peter, speaking to Centurion Cornelius, Acts 10:39 to 42. Expressly is it there said, ver. 40, "Him" (Jesus) "God raised up the third day, and showed him openly;—Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." When in the year 62, or some posterior year, the author of the Acts was writing his history, nothing, it will be inferred, did he know of the contradictory account given by his hero, in writing in a letter written in the year 57.

[64] Follows a sample of Paul's logic wrapped up as usual in a cloud of tautologies and paralogisms, the substance of which amounts to this:—Jesus resurrects; therefore all men will do the same. Admitting the legitimacy of this induction, what will be the thing proved? That every man, a few days after his death, will come to life again, and eat, drink, and walk in company with his friends.

[65] By the word *prophecy* the idea meant to be conveyed in Jewish language seems to be very generally misconceived. It is regarded as exactly synonymous to *prediction*. Nothing can be more erroneous. In New Testament language in particular, it is no less applicable to past events than to future. Witness, "Prophecy who is it that smote thee." Luke 17:64. In the Greek, the word is occasion, it meant evidently neither more nor less than *speak out*. Hence it came to signify speaking in public: hence again, speaking as a statesman:

hence again, writing as a statesman, as well as speaking. Not that a statesman could ever or can ever be a statesman, and in the above sense, *a prophet*, without being a *predictor* likewise: as often as any proposed measure is on the carpet, such he must be, or what he says must be nothing to the purpose. Merely by uttering a prediction concerning future events, Paul would not have included, in his prophecy, any such pretension, as that of a supernatural communication received from the Almighty: but, the one here in question was one which, supposing it true, could not have come from any other source.

[66] Here we have a sort of retractation. This shows how he was frightened.

[67] Here he gives the intermediate warning; thence the respite.

[68] Here we see the rival of Paul's god: and we see how dangerous an one.

[69] Like enough; but in the same unintelligible style, in which he tells all men all things.

[70] All's well that ends well: the friends of the Almighty may now dismiss their fears.

[71] Here we see the rival of the Almighty sunk into the ape of Satan. What if he and Satan had made an alliance? Happily they could not agree, or time was wanting for settling the conditions.

[72] All power, with *lying* to boot. But for the above-mentioned assurance, who would not have trembled for Paul's God?

[73] This was fighting the ape of Satan with his own weapons. But—this God of Paul's creation—in what, except an ultimate superiority of power, is he distinguishable

from Satan and his ape? Those, who have been so quicksighted of late in the discovery of blasphemy, and so bent on punishing it,—have they ever found so clear a case as this which is before us? Would not they have begun at the more proper end, had they begun with the editors of these Epistles?

[74] For this damnation,—on the present as on so many other occasions, those who are so eager to believe, that all who differ from them on a question of evidence, will be consigned to everlasting torments, are indebted to the right reverend translators: the original says *condemned*. This may be understood to mean—*damned* in the ordinary sense of the word *damned*, or whatever less unpleasant result may be more agreeable.

[75] Of this child of the self-appointed Apostle's brain, it seems not altogether improbable, that, in case of need, some further use was in contemplation to be made: with the skin of this bugbear, might, upon occasion, be invested, any person, to whom, either in the character of a declared *adversary*, or in that of a *rival*, it might happen, to have become in a certain degree troublesome: a *declared adversary*,—that is, either a Gentile or an unbelieving Jew: *a rival*,—that is, one who, believing in the religion of Jesus, adhered to that edition of it, which had the Apostles of Jesus for its publishers, or followed any other edition which was not *his*: one of those, for example, upon whom we have seen him making such bitter war in his Epistle to his Galatians. Of the two, the believing rival would of course be much more troublesome, than the non-believing adversary, from whom, if let alone, he would not experience an annoyance. Of this rival class were they whose

"*unrighteousness*," 2 Thess. 2:10, had recourse to "*deceivableness*:" for as to non-believers, no need could they have of *deceivableness*; to foil him, they had but to turn aside from him, and stand as they were. Those men, whose unrighteousness had recourse to deceivableness, who could they be, but the men of the same description in this respect as those, whom in chapter third of his Epistle to his Galatians, he complains of as having "bewitched" them; and *that* in such sort, as to have made him so far lose his temper as to call them "*foolish*:" and that *they* were rivals, is a matter altogether out of doubt. In a word, rivals were the only troublesome sort of men, who, at the writing of this Epistle, could, with the nameless monster since named *Antichrist*, be yet to come.

[76] As for that "*helmet of faith*," which, in the passage first quoted, he has been seen commanding his disciples to put on—of that faith, which is the everlasting object of his so indefatigably repeated "*command*," and which is always faith in *Paul*,—for of Jesus scarcely is so much as a word, except the name, to be found in any of his Epistles,—as to this helmet, it is the sort of cap, which a man learned how to put on, when he had made himself perfect, in what may be called the *self-deceptive exercise*, or in a word *the exercise of faith*. It is composed of two very simple operations: at the word of command, the recruit turns its face *to* the arguments on one side; at the word of command, it turns its back to those on the other side. The test of perfection is—its being able to hold in its embrace, for any length of time, both parts together of a self-contradictory proposition; such as, that three *man's-persons*,—to use the German word, or if any *other sorts of persons* there are three others,

—are but one. When the helmet sits close enough on his head to enable him to do this, there is no fear of its falling off. Holding fast to improbabilities, how absurd and extravagant soever, is thenceforward but child's play to him:—for example, belief in the future existence of Paul's Antichrist: including, the coming on of those scenes, in which that *raw-head and bloody bones* is to be the principal performer.

To this, as to anything else, the mind of man is capable of being brought, by assurances of infinite enjoyment, in case of his having made himself perfect in this exercise, or of infinite torment in case of his neglecting it: of course, still more effectually, by both assurances put together; and, considering the facility of both operations, easier terms could not very easily be imagined. A capital convenience is—that, for producing faith in this way, not a particle of anything in the shape of evidence is necessary: the place of evidence is supplied by assurance:—by the intensity, real or apparent, of the persuasion, to which expression has been given, by what the preacher has said or done. The more intense the apparent assurance on the one part, the greater the apparent *safety*, obtained by yielding to it, on the other: and thus it is, that no absurdity can be so flagrant, that the side on which it is found may not be embraced, under the notion of its being the *safe* side. When Paul, with his accustomed vehemence, was preaching the world's end, so many of his Thessalonians as believed in it, believed, that believing in it was being on the safe side. On the part of the preacher, the more vehement and impudent the assurance, the greater on the part of the disciple, the apparent *danger* on the disbelieving, the apparent *safety* on the believing side.

By this means are produced the signs and wonders we read of in the Epistles of our modern missionaries; for, how conclusive soever the evidence may be, which the assertions they employ might call in for their support,—conclusive to every reasonable mind by which it was received,—assuredly it is not by the evidence, but by the unsupported assertion, that, on the occasion of those exploits of theirs,—whatever credence has place, is produced.

CHAPTER XIII.

Paul's supposable Miracles explained.

SECTION 1.

OBJECTIONS, APPLYING TO THEM IN THE AGGREGATE.

But, it may be said, Paul's alleged commission from God was certainly genuine; for it is proved by his miracles. Look at the Acts, no fewer than twelve miracles of his you will find. If then taken by themselves, for want of that accurate conception of the probative form of evidence, to which maturer ages have given birth, the account of the miracle by which his conversion was wrought fails of being completely satisfactory,—look at his miracles, the deficiency will be filled up. The man, to whom God had imparted such extraordinary powers—powers so completely matchless in these our times,—can such a man have been a liar—an impostor? a liar for the

purpose of deceit—of giving support to a system of deception—and that a lucrative one? An imposition so persevering as to have been carried on, from youth to death, through, perhaps, the greatest part of his life?

The observation is plausible:—the answer will not be the less satisfactory.

The answer has two branches: one, *general*, applying to all the alleged miracles in question, taken in the lump: the other *particular*, applying to the several miracles separately considered.

Observations applying to the whole together are, the following:

1. Not by Paul himself, in any one of his own Epistles, is any such general assertion made, as that he had received from God or from Jesus,—or, in a word, that he was in possession of, any such power, as the power of working miracles.

2. Nowhere in the account given of his transactions by the author of the Acts, is he in any of his speeches represented as making reference to any one act of his in the character of a miracle.

3. Nowhere in that same account, is he represented as stating himself to be in possession of any such powers.

4. Not by the author of the Acts, is he spoken of as being in possession of any such power.

5. Nowhere by the author of the Acts, is he in any general terms spoken of, as producing any effects, such as, in respect of the power necessary to the production of them, approach to those spoken of as having been produced by Simon Magus; by that declared impostor, in whose instance, no such

commission from God is represented as having been received.

6. Neither on the occasion of his conversion, nor on any other occasion, is Paul stated to have received from Jesus any such power as that of working miracles:—any such power as the real Apostles are—in Mark 16:15, 16, 17, 18—stated to have received from Jesus.

Was it that, in his own conception, for gaining credence to his pretension of a commission from Jesus—from Jesus, styled by him the Lord Jesus—any need of miracles, or of a persuasion, on the part of those with whom he had to deal, of *his* having power to work miracles? By no means. Of the negative, the story told by him of the manner of his conversion is abundant proof. Of the efficient cause of this change in his mind, the account given, is plainly given in the character of the account of a miracle. But of this miracle, the proof given consists solely in his own evidence: his own statement, unsupported by that of any other person, or by reference to that of any other person: his account, of the discourse, which on the occasion of the vision, in which nothing was seen but a flood of light, he heard from the Lord Jesus: his own account, of the vision, which he says was seen by Ananias: his own account, of that other vision, which, according to Ananias, he, Paul, had had, but of which Paul himself says nothing.

In the work of his adherent and sole biographer, the author of *the Acts*,—we have five speeches, made by him, in vindication of his conduct, in the character of a preacher of the religion of Jesus; and, from his own hand, Epistles out of number: yet nowhere is any reference made, to so much as a single miracle

wrought by his own hand, unless the trance which he falls into when he is alone, and the vision which he sees, when nobody else sees anything, are to be placed to the account of miracles. Miracles? *On* him, yes; *by* him, no. True it is, that, on one occasion, he speaks in general terms of "signs and wonders," as having been wrought by him. But vague, in the highest degree, is the import, as well as wide the extent, of those general terms: nor is it by any means clear, that, even by himself, any such claim was meant to be brought forward, as that of having exhibited any such manifestations of supernatural power, as are commonly regarded as designated by the word *miracles*. In the multitude of the persons, whom, in places so widely distant from one another, he succeeded in numbering in the list of his followers —in the depth of the impression, supposed to have been made on the heart of this or that one of them— in all or any one of these circumstances, it was natural he should himself behold, and, whether he did or no, use his endeavours to cause others to behold, not only so many sources of wonder, but so many circumstances; all conspiring to increase the quantity of that confidence, which, with so much industry, and, as far as appears, with such brilliant success, he was labouring to plant in every breast: circumstances, serving, in the minds of his adherents in general, in the character of a sign or proof, of the legitimacy of his pretension, as above.

But, of any such supernatural power as that which is here in question, could any such loose and vague expressions be reasonably regarded as affording any sort of proof? No:—unless whatsoever, in the affairs of men, can justly be regarded as *wonderful*, ought also to be regarded as a miracle.

In one passage, and one alone, either in the Acts or in his own Epistles, is he found laying any claim, how distant and vague soever, to any such power, as having ever been exercised by him. And, in this instance, no one individual incident being in any way brought to view or referred to, what is said will be seen to amount absolutely to nothing, being nothing more than, without incurring any such interpretation as that of imposture, is at the present time continually averred by Christians of different sects.

He who makes so much of his *sufferings*, had he wrought any miracles, would he have made nothing of his *miracles*?

In the next place, although it must be admitted, that, on several occasions, by his sole biographer and professed adherent, viz., the author of the Acts, a sort of colour of the marvellous seems endeavoured to be laid on; laid on over the incident itself, and over the part, which on that occasion was taken by him; yet on no one of these occasions, unless perhaps it be the last—of which presently,—does the account, given by him of what passed, wear any such complexion as shall render it matter of necessity, either to regard it as miraculous, or to regard the biographer, as having on that occasion asserted a complete and downright untruth.

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SECTION 2.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE I.—ELYMAS THE SORCERER BLINDED.—*Acts* 13:6 to 12.

1. Of these supposable miracles, the first that occurs

is that which had for its subject Elymas the sorcerer.

At Paphos, in the island of Cyprus,[77] Paul and his associate Barnabas are sent for, by "the deputy of the country," Sergius Paulus, who desires to hear the word of God. But at that same place is a certain Jew, of the name of Barjesus, alias Elymas,—a sorcerer by profession, who "withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith." To this man, it is not said, either where or when, Paul is thereupon represented as making a short speech, at the end of which, after calling him a child of the devil, and so forth; he says to him, "*Thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season*. Thereupon," continues the story, "immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy," it concludes, "when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."

Supposing this story to have had any foundation in fact,—of the appearance of blindness thus exhibited, where shall we look for the cause? In a suspension of the laws of nature, performed by the author of nature, to no other assignable end, than the conversion of this Roman governor? At no greater expense, than that of a speech from this same Paul, the conversion of a king,—King Agrippa—if the author of the Acts is to be believed, was nearly effected. "Almost," says Agrippa, "thou hast persuaded me to become a Christian." So often as God is represented, as operating in a direct—however secret and mysterious—manner, upon the heart, *i.e.*, the mind, of this and that man,—while the accounts given of the suspension of the laws of nature are comparatively so few—to speak in that sort of human language, in which alone the nature of

the case admits of our speaking, if the expense of a miracle were not grudged,—might not, in the way above mentioned, by a much less lavish use of supernatural power, the same effect have been produced? viz., by a slight influence, exercised on the heart of governor Paulus?

Whatsoever may have been the real state of the case, —thus much seems pretty clear, viz., that at this time of day, to a person whose judgment on the subject should have, for its ground, the nature of the human mind as manifested by experience,—another mode of accounting for the appearance in question will be apt to present itself as much more probable. That is— that, by an understanding between Paul and Elymas —between the ex-persecutor and the sorcerer—the sorcerer, in the view of all persons, in whose instance it was material that credence should be given to the supposed miracle,—for and during "*the season*" that was thought requisite, kept his eyes shut.

The sorcerer was a Jew:—Paul was also a Jew. Between them here was already one indissoluble bond of connection and channel of intercourse. Elymas, by trade a sorcerer, *i.e.*, an impostor—a person of the same trade with Simon Magus, by whom so conspicuous a figure is cut in the chapter of this history—was a sort of person, who, on the supposition of an adequate motive, could not naturally feel any greater repugnance, at the idea of practicing imposition, at so easy a rate as that of keeping his eyes shut, than at the idea of practicing it, in any of the shapes to which he had been accustomed:—shapes, requiring more dexterity, and some, by which he would be more or less exposed, to that detection, from which, in the mode here in question, it would be altogether secure.

But Paul—was he in a condition to render it worth the sorcerer's while to give this shape to his imposture? Who can say that he was not? Yes: if to a certain degree he had it in his power, either to benefit him or to make him suffer? And who can say but that these two means of operating, were one or other, or both of them, in his power? As to the sorcerer's betraying him, this is what he could not have done, without betraying himself.

True it is, that, by acting this under part,—this self-humiliating part,—so long as Paul stayed, so long was the sorcerer, not the first, but only the second wonder-worker of the town. But no sooner did Paul's departure take place, than Elymas, from being the second, became again the first.

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SECTION 3.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE II.—AT LYSTRA, CRIPPLE CURED.—*Acts* 14:8 to 11.

Second of these supposed miracles,—cure of the cripple at Lystra.

This miracle makes a bad match with the before-mentioned one.

Seeing a man at Lystra, neither man's name, nor place's, except in that general way, nor time, in any way mentioned,—seeing a man in the guise of a cripple, "*Stand upright on thy feet*," says Paul to him with a loud voice. "And," continues the story, "he leaped and walked, steadfastly beholding and perceiving that he had faith to be healed." Chorus of the people thereupon, "The Gods are come down to us in the likeness of men."

To the production of an appearance of this sort, what was necessary? a real miracle? No, surely: so long as a vagrant was to be found, who, without any risk, could act a part of this sort for a few pence, in an age so fertile in imposture.

True it is, that this same man, whoever he was, is represented as being "impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked." But these words, how much more than any other words, of the same length, in the same number, did the writing of them cost the author of this story? As to the correctness of his narratives,—of the self-contradictory accounts given by him of Paul's conversion, a sample has been already given. As to detection, supposing this circumstance false,—detection is what the account thus given of it renders impossible. For—this same cripple, what was his name? from birth to this time, where had he been living? Of this nothing is said. That, at Lystra, or anywhere else, the account was ever made public, is neither affirmed, nor so much as insinuated: not but that it might have been published, and, at the same time, though as to everything but the scene that exhibited itself to outward appearance, false,—might not have found any person, at the same time able and willing to contradict the falsity, and thus naturalize the miracle.

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SECTION 4.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE III.—DIVINERESS SILENCED.—*Acts* 16:16-18.

While Paul and his suite,—of whom, according to the author of the Acts, he himself was one,—were at

Philippi,—a Roman colony, and capital of a part of Macedonia,—among their hearers, is Lydia—a purple-seller of the City of Thyatira. Being converted, she receives the whole party into her house.

From this house, on their way to prayers,—probably in a Jewish synagogue,—they are met by a certain damsel, as nameless as the lame-born cripple, who, being possessed of a spirit of divination, or of Python, brings to her masters, for masters it seems she had more than one, much gain by soothsaying. Here then is a female, who, by being possessed by or with a spirit,—a real spirit, whether devil or a spirit of any other sort,—is converted into a prophetess, and, doubtless, in the main a false prophetess.

In the present instance, however, she is a true prophetess: for, following Paul and his suite, she runs after them, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days."

If, instead of a demon, it had been an angel, that took her vocal organs for the instrument of his communications, it is difficult to say, in what manner he could have deserved better at the hands of these "servants," real or pretended, "of the Most High God."

Yet, from some cause or other that does not appear, so it was it seems,—there was something about her with which Paul was not well pleased. "Being grieved, he turns and says,"—not to the damsel herself, but to the spirit, which *possessed her*, or rather, since for the benefit of her masters, it brought her so much gain, which *she possessed*,—"I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her."

Amongst the superstitions of that and other ages, one was—the notion of a property, possessed by such and such words—possessed, by these mere evanescent sounds—by the air of the atmosphere, when made to vibrate in a certain manner:—a property, of working effects in endless abundance and variety, and those, too, supernatural ones. In some instances, the wonders would be wrought by the words themselves, whatsoever were the mouths by which they were uttered. In other instances, they required, for the production of the effects, a person, who being possessed of a particular and appropriate power, should, for the purpose of giving exercise to such his power, give them passage through his lips. Of this latter kind was the present case. The command issued as above, "he," for it was a he-spirit, "came out of her," the damsel, "the same hour."

When the devil that Josephus saw expelled, came out of the man, the channel at which he made his exit, being manifest, it was accordingly specified: it was the man's *nose*. This was something to know: especially, in relation to an occurrence, the time of which was at so great a distance from our own. At the same time, however, other particulars present themselves, by which curiosity is excited, and for want of which, the information thus bestowed must be confessed to be rather imperfect. What the shape of the devil was? what the substance? whence he last came? to what place, to what occupation, after being thus dislodged, he betook himself, and so forth: not to speak of many others, which howsoever instructive and satisfactory it would have been to be acquainted with, yet now that all acquaintance with them is hopeless, it would be tedious to enumerate.

In the present instance, not only as to all these

particulars, has the historian,—eyewitness as it should seem he was of everything that passed,—left us in the dark; but, neither has he vouchsafed to afford us that single article of information, scanty as it was, for which, as above, in the case mentioned by Josephus, we are indebted to Josephus: to Josephus —that most respectable and instructive of the uninspired historians of his age.

In relation to this story, as well as to those others, the same question still presents itself:—if told of the present time,—if spoken of in some newspaper, as having happened in the present year,—exists here any person, even among the most ignorant populace, with whom it would obtain any permanent credence?

But, a reported state of things—which, if reported as having had place in the present century, would, by its disconformity to the manifest state of things, and the whole course of nature, be regarded as too absurd and flagrantly incredible to deserve to be entitled to a moment's notice,—what is there that should render it more credible, when reported as having happened in this same world of ours, at any anterior point of time?

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SECTION 5.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE IV.—AT PHILIPPI, AN EARTHQUAKE: PAUL AND SILAS FREED FROM PRISON, A.D. 53.

The passage, in which these events are related, is in Acts 16:19-40, inclusive.

On this occasion three principal events are narrated;

—the incarceration of Paul, an earthquake, and the liberation of Paul. Between the earthquake and the liberation of this prisoner, what was in reality the connection? In the answer there is not much difficulty: The same as that between the earthquake and any other event that took place after it. But, by an answer thus simple, the purpose of the narrator would not have been answered: the purpose was—to induce, on the part of his readers, the belief—that it was for the purpose of bringing about the liberation of the self-constituted Apostle of Jesus, that the earth was made to shake. As to the liberation, by means altogether natural was that event produced: so he himself has the candour to inform us. Of this quasi-miracle, or of the last-mentioned one, Philippi, capital of Macedonia, was the theatre. By order of the magistrates of that town, Paul and his attendant had been beaten one evening, and thrown into prison: next morning, came to the jailor an order of these same magistrates, and in obedience to it the prisoners were discharged. That, in the minds of these magistrates, there was any connection, between the earthquake and the treatment they had given to these adventurers, is not so much as insinuated. The purpose, which it had in view, was answered: it was the ridding the town of a pair of visitors, whose visit to it had produced disturbance to existing institutions. Acts 16:20-40.

Be it as it may with regard to the historiographer,—that it was an object with his hero to produce a notion of a connection between the stripes and the imprisonment he had undergone on one hand, and the earthquake on the other, is manifest enough. The person, in whose mind the prisoner had endeavoured to produce the idea of such a connection, was the jailor: and, for its having in this instance been

successful, there seems little difficulty in giving credit to the historiographer. Everything that appears to have been said, either of Paul or by Paul, tends to show the wonderful strength of his mind, and the facility and promptitude, with which it enabled him to gain the ascendency over other minds. In the language of the place and time, he had bid the fortune-telling damsel cease her imposture, and the imposture ceased. Acts 16:18. Committed to prison he formed a project for making a proselyte of the keeper: and, in this too, and in so small a compass of time as a few hours, there seems reason to believe he was successful. In his presumption, in daring to execute the sentence of the law upon so holy a person, the keeper saw the cause of the earthquake; and, whether by Paul any very strenuous endeavours were used to correct so convenient an error in geology, may be left to be imagined. Paul, when introduced into the prison, found no want of comrades: how then happened it, that it was to Paul's imprisonment that the earthquake, when it happened, was attributed, and not to any of his fellow-prisoners? Answer: It happened thus.

Of the trade, which, with such brilliant success, Paul, —with this journeyman of his,—was carrying on, a set of songs with the name of God for the burthen of them, constituted a part of the capital, and, as it should seem, not the least valuable. When midnight came, Paul—the trader in godliness—treated the company in the prison with a duet: the other prisoners, though they shared in the benefit of it, did not join in it. While this duet was performing, came on the earthquake; and Paul was not such a novice as to let pass unimproved the opportunity it put into his hand.

The historiographer, if he is to be believed, was at this time in Paul's train, as well as Silas; for so, by the word *we*, in the tenth verse of this same chapter, he, as it were, silently informs us. The beating and the imprisonment were confined to the two principals; by his comparative insignificance, as it should seem, the historiographer was saved from it. From the relation, given to him by Paul or Silas, and in particular by Paul,—must this conception, formed by the historiographer of what passed on the occasion, have of course been derived. It was coloured of course in Paul's manner: and in his colouring, there was of course no want of the marvellous. By the earthquake, not only were "foundations shaken" and "doors opened," but "bands loosened." The "feet" of the two holy men had been "made ... fast in the stocks," ver. 24: from these same stocks, the earthquake was ingenious enough to let them out, and, as far as appears, without hurt: the unholy part of the prisoners had each of them bands of some sort, by which they were confined; for, ver. 26, "everyone's bands were loosed:" in every instance if they were locked, the earthquake performed the office of a picklock. Earthquakes in these latter days, we have but too many, in breaking open doors they find no great difficulty; but they have no such nicety of touch as the earthquake, which produced to the self-constituted Apostle a family of proselytes: they are no more able to let feet out of the stocks, or hands out of hand-cuffs, than to make watches.

These elucidations being furnished, the reader is desired to turn to the text, and lay before him: to reprint it would require more paper than he might choose to see thus employed.

As to the name of God and the name of Jesus, the

two names, it should appear, were not—on the occasions in question—used at random. When the fortune-telling damsel was the subject of Paul's holy labours, she having been in some way or other already gained, ver. 17, the case was already of a sort, in which the name of Jesus Christ, the name under which the self-constituted Apostle enlisted all his followers,—might be employed with advantage.

When Paul and Silas were committed to prison, no such name as that of "Jesus Christ" would as yet have served. Of "Jesus Christ" neither had the keeper as yet heard anything, nor had the other prisoners. But, of God, in some shape or other, they could not but have heard all of them: *God* accordingly was the name, by which at this time the sensibilities of the persons in question were to be worked upon. When the earth trembled, the jailor trembled likewise: he "came trembling and fell down," ver. 29, before Paul and Silas. And brought them out, ver. 30, and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Now then was the time come for the enlistment—for the enlistment in the spiritual warfare against the devil and his angels: in the as yet new name of "the Lord Jesus Christ" were these recruits accordingly enlisted, as now, for the purpose of carnal warfare, in the name of King George. "And they said," continues the narration, ver. 31, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

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SECTION 6.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE V.—AT CORINTH, PAUL COMFORTED BY THE LORD IN AN UNSEEN VISION, A.D. 54.—*Acts* 18:7-11.

A vision, being a species of miracle, could, no more than a pantomime, have place without some expense. In the present case, as in any other, a natural question is—What was the object to be accomplished, upon which the expense—whatever it was—was bestowed? The answer is—The keeping his attendants, whoever they were, in the necessary state of obsequiousness: for no other is perceptible. To the dependants in Paul's train, it was no very uncommon sentiment to be not quite so well satisfied with the course he took, as he himself was. Corinth was at this time the theatre of his labours: of the men, whoever they were, who had staked their fortunes upon *his*, some,—the historiographer, as it should seem, of the number,—there were, whose wish it was to change the scene. In that Gentile city,—the chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue, Crispus by name—this man, besides another man, of the name of Justus, "whose house joined hard to" that same synagogue, had become his converts: "and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized." Eyes, however, there were, in which the success, whatsoever it was, was not yet enough to afford a sufficient warrant for his stay. A vision was necessary, and a vision accordingly, or at least a something, which was called by that name, made its appearance. "Thus spake the Lord," says the historiographer, ver. 9, "Thus spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace.—— For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." Nor was the vision without its effect; for, as the next verse informs us, ver. 11, "He continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them."

That which, on this occasion, may be believed

without much difficulty is, that the word thus taught by Paul was Paul's word: and, that which may be believed with as little, by those, whoever they may be, who believe in his original conversion-vision, is—that it was God's word likewise. From Paul himself must the account of this vision have been delivered to the historiographer: for, unless at the expense of a sort of miracle, in the shape of an additional vision at least, if not in some more expensive shape, no information of any such thing could have reached him. In these latter days, no ghost is ever seen but in a *tete-a-tete*: in those days, no vision, as far as appears, was ever seen but in the same degree of privacy. A vision is the word in these pages, because such is the word in the authoritative translation made of the historiographer's. That which Paul is related to have heard, is—what we have just seen as above: but that, upon this occasion he saw anything —that he saw so much as a flash of light, this is what we are not told: any more than by what other means he became so well assured, that the voice which he heard, supposing him to have heard a voice, was the Lord's voice. In these latter days,—inquiries, of some such sort as these, would as surely be put, by a counsel who were against the vision,—as, in the case of the Cock-lane Ghost, which gave so much exercise to the faith of the archlexicographer, were put by the counsel who were against the ghost; but, by a sort of general understanding,—than which nothing can be more convenient,—inquiries, such as these,—how strictly soever in season when applied to the 19th century of the vulgar ear, are altogether out of season, as often as they are applied to the commencement of it.

As to the speaking by a vision, the only intelligible way, in which any such thing can really have place,

is that, which under the pressure of necessity has been realized by the ingenuity of dramatists in these latter days. Such is the mode employed, when the actors, having been struck dumb by the tyranny of foolish laws, and consequently having no auditors, convey to the spectators what information seems necessary, by an appropriate assortment of gold letters on a silk ground: whether the Lord who, on this occasion, according to Paul, spoke to the eyes of Paul, came provided with any such implement, he has not informed us. Without much danger of error, we may venture to assert the negative: for, if such was the mode of converse, there was nothing but what might happen without sign or wonder: and, on this supposition, no addition was made by it, to those signs and wonders, which, as has been seen, it was his way to make reference to, in the character of evidence.

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SECTION 7.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE VI.—AT EPHESUS, DISEASES AND DEVILS EXPELLED BY FOUL HANDKERCHIEFS.—*Acts* 19:1-12.

At Ephesus, Paul makes a stay of between two and three years; for "two years" together, disputing "daily in the school of one Tyrannus," "so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

"And God," continues the history, "wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."

These "*special* miracles," what were they? Of the whole number, is there so much as a single one particularized? No; not one. *Special* as they are, the

following is the account, and the only account given of them. "So that," continues the history, "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."

No circumstances whatever particularized, name of the person, name of the place, description of the time —nothing, by means of which, in case of falsity *in toto*, or incorrectness in circumstance, the misstatement might have been exposed,—to what degree of credence, or so much as consideration with a view to credence, vague generalities such as these, can they present so much as the slightest claim? If allusions such as these are to pass proof, where is the imposture, to which proofs—proofs sufficient in number and value—can ever be wanting?

Opposed as Paul was, wherever he went,—by gainsayers or persecutors, or both—sometimes successful, sometimes altogether unsuccessful,—sometimes in a slight degree successful—in so much as any one occasion, either in this history, or in any one of his own numerous Epistles, do we find so much as a single one of these "*special miracles*," any more than of any other miracles, brought to view by him, or so much as alluded to by him, in the character of proofs of the commission to which he pretended? Answer: No, not one.

Diseases cured, evil spirits driven out, by handkerchiefs and aprons!—by handkerchiefs and aprons brought from a man's body! Diseases cured and devils seared away by foul linen! By Jesus—by any one of his Apostles—were any such implements, any such eye-traps ever employed? No; never. As to diseases, if by such means a disease had been *propagated*, the case would have been intelligible

enough. But what was wanted was a miracle: and this would have been no miracle. The price, received by the holy wearer for any of these cast-off habiliments—the price, of the precious effluvia thus conveyed—by any such little circumstance, had it been mentioned, some light might have been cast on what was done.

One thing, indeed, may be stated with some assurance: and this is—that, after a man, well or not well, had received one of these same dirty handkerchiefs, or of these same dirty aprons, no evil spirit in him was visible.

One other thing may also be stated with no less confidence:—this is that, infection out of the question, and supposing Paul free from all contagious disease, if, without handkerchief or apron, the disease would have had its exit,—by no such handkerchief or any such apron was the exit of it prevented.

Note, that all this time, according to this man, the author of the Acts, he himself was in Paul's suite. Yet, taking credit for all these miracles—taking credit thus for miracles out of number, not so much as one of them all does he take upon himself to particularize.[78]

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SECTION 8.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE VII.—AT EPHESUS, EXORCISTS SCEVAS BEDEVILED.—*Acts* 19:13-20.

Thus it is that, as under the last head has been observed, of all these alleged successful exhibitions,

not so much as a single one is particularized.

In lieu, however, of these successes of Paul's, something of a story to a certain degree particularized we have. But this is—what? a successful performance of Paul's? No: but an unsuccessful attempt of certain persons,—here termed exorcists,—who took upon themselves to act against him in the character of competitors.

Well, then: when the time came for demonstrating supernatural powers by experiment, these exorcists—these impostors, no doubt it was intended they should be deemed—made a very indifferent hand of it. Good: but the true man, Did he go beyond these same impostors? Not he, indeed: he did not so much as attempt it. But, let us hear his historiographer, who all this while was at his elbow. Acts 19:13-20. "Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth.

"And there were," continues the narrative, ver. 14, "seven sons of Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so." Thus far the narrative.

The sons of the chief of the priests? Such men styled not only *exorcists* but *vagabonds*? If they are not here, in express terms, themselves styled *vagabonds*, at any rate, what is here imputed to them is the doing those same things, the doers of which have just been styled, not only *exorcists*, but at the same time *vagabonds*. But let us continue, "And the evil spirit," ver. 15, "answered and said, Jesus, I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?—And the man, in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded." Thus far the

narrative.

To whatsoever order of beings the hero of this tale may have belonged;—whatsoever may have been his proper appellative,—a man with two natures, one human, the other diabolical,—a man with a devil in him, a madman,—or a man in his sound senses counterfeiting a diabolized man or a madman,—the tale itself is surely an eminently curious one. Of these human or superhuman antagonists of his—of these pretended masters over evil spirits—the number is not less than seven: yet, in comparison of him, so feeble and helpless are they all together, that he not only masters them all seven, but gets them down, all seven together, and while they are lying on the ground in a state of disablement, pulls the clothes off their backs: but whether one after another, or all at the same time, is not mentioned. Be this as it may, hereupon comes a question or two. While he was stripping any one of them, what were the others about all that time? The beating they received, was it such as to render them senseless and motionless? No: this can scarcely have been the case; for, when the devil had done his worst, and their sufferings were at the height, out of the house did they flee, wounded as they were.

"Jesus I know, and Paul I know," says the mysterious hero, in the fifteenth verse. Hereupon an observation or two calls for utterance. Supposing him a man, who, knowing what he was about, counterfeited the sort of being, who was half man, half devil,—one-half of this speech of his, namely, *Paul I know*, may without much difficulty be believed. But, upon this supposition, forasmuch as he acted with so much effect against these rivals of Paul's,—a supposition not less natural, to say the least of it, is—that to Paul

he was not unknown, any more than Paul to him: in a word, that on this occasion, between the evil spirit and the self-constituted Apostle, a sort of understanding had place. Be this as it may, how extraordinary a person must he not have been, to undertake the complete mastery of seven men at once! Seven men, all of them young enough to have a father, not only living, but officiating as a priest: and at the same time, all of them old enough, if not to exercise, mastery over evil spirits, at any rate to undertake it!

In Paul's suite, all this time, as far as appears, was the author of this narrative. The scene thus exhibited —was he then, or was he not, himself an eyewitness of it? On a point so material and so natural, no light has he afforded us.

Another circumstance, not less curious, is—that it is immediately after the story of the unnamed multitudes, so wonderfully cured by foul clothes,—that this story of the devil-masters discomfited by a rebellious servant of theirs, makes its appearance. Turn now to the supposed true devil-master—on this score, what was it that he did? Just nothing. The devil,—and a most mischievous one he was,—*he* was doing all this mischief:—the man, who had all such devils so completely in his power, that they quit possession, and decamp at the mere sight or smell of a dirty handkerchief or apron of his;—he, though seeing all this mischief done,—done by this preeminently mischievous as well as powerful devil, —still suffers him to go on;—and not any the least restraint in any shape, does he impose upon him; but leaves him in complete possession of that receptacle, which, according to the narrative, he wanted neither the power nor the will to convert into an instrument

of so much mischief. Was it from Paul himself, that, on this special occasion, for this special purpose, namely, the putting down these presumptuous competitors, this mysterious being received so extraordinary a gift? This is not said, but not improbably, as it should seem, this was the miracle, which it was intended by the historian should be believed.

Occasions there are—and this we are desired to believe was one of them—in which the impossibility of a thing is no bar to the knowledge of it.

"And this was known," continues the narrative, ver. 17, "And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus: and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified."

Now, supposing this thing known, the fear stated as the result of it may without difficulty be believed:—fear of being treated as those sons of the chief of the Jewish priests had been: fear of the devil, by whom those, his unequal antagonists, had been thus dealt with: fear of the more skilful devil-master, under whose eye these bunglers had been thus dealt with.

But the name here said to be *magnified*—the name of the Lord Jesus—how *that* came to be *magnified*: in this lies all the while the difficulty, and it seems no small one.

The *name*, on this occasion, and thus said to be employed, whose was it? It was, indeed, the Lord Jesus's. But was it successful? Quite the contrary. It made bad worse. In the whole of this business, what was there from which the name of Jesus could in any shape receive magnification? Yes: if after the so eminently unsuccessful use, thus made of it by those exorcists, a successful use had, on the same occasion,

been made of it by Paul. But, no: no such enterprise did he venture upon. Madman, devil, counterfeit madman, counterfeit devil,—by proxy, any of these he was ready to encounter, taking for his proxy one of his foul handkerchiefs or aprons: any of this sort of work, if his historiographer is to be believed, he was ready enough to do by proxy. But, in person? No; he knew better things.

"And many that believed," concludes this part of the narrative, ver. 18, "came and confessed, and showed their deeds." Yes; supposing there were any, by whom all this or any part of it was believed,—that they spoke and acted in consequence, may be believed without much difficulty: and, with this observation may the story, and the sort of elucidation endeavouring to be given of it, be left to close.

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SECTION 9.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE VIII.—MAGICAL BOOKS BURNT BY THE OWNERS.—*Acts* 19:19, 20.

Such as it was, the supposable miracle last mentioned was not without its supposed fruit: destruction of property, such as it was—destruction of property, and to an amount sufficiently wonderful for the satisfaction of any ordinary appetite for wonders. But let us see the text. It follows in the verse 19, next after that, in which mention is made, as in the last preceding section, of what was done by the "many who believed."

"Many of them also," ver. 19, "which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them

before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver." "So mightily," ver 20, "grew the word of God, and prevailed." And there ends the story of the books of curious arts.

As to the sum total, nothing can be more precise: as to the items, could the list of them be but produced, this would be indeed a treasure. As to the denomination *magical*, given in the title of this section to those books, styled books "*of curious arts*,"—in the text, short is the only apology that need be made for it. Of the number of those *curious arts* could not, most assuredly, have been any of the arts included at present under the name of *fine arts*; of the character of the *arts* here designated by the appellation of *curious*, a sufficient indication is afforded by the story, by which the mention of them is, as above, immediately preceded. They were the arts, by which effects were undertaken to be produced, such as the self-constituted Apostle undertook to produce by so much more simple means. How vast soever were the collection, what would be the value of it,—the whole taken together, —when so much more than could be done by everything which it professed to teach, could be done by about a score or a dozen words, on the single condition, that the lips by which they were uttered were properly commissioned lips, not to speak of the still more simple operation of the touch of a used handkerchief?

Of the state of art and science in the wake of the great temple of Diana, the representation here given is of itself no small curiosity. Books of curious arts—all of them arts of imposture—books, employed, all of them, in teaching the most secret of all secrets—

books of this description, so well known to all men, as to bear a market-price! a market-price, so well known to all men, as if it were the price of bread and butcher's meat: and, in the single town of Ephesus, these books so numerous,—such the multitude or the value,—or rather the multitude as well as value, of them taken in the aggregate, that the price, that had been given for such of them as were thus given up, and which are only part, and, as it should seem by the word *many*, not the larger part, of the whole number, of those, which, at that same place, were at that same time in existence,—was, upon summing up, found actually to amount, so we are required to believe, to that vast sum.

Of the aggregate, of the prices that had been paid, we are told, for this smaller part of the aggregate number of the books, then and there existing on this single subject,—inadequate, indeed, would our conception be of it were we to regard it as not exceeding the value of the whole library collected by King George the Third, and given by his successor to the English part of his subjects. *Data*, though not for numeration, yet sufficient for conception, are by no means wanting. To consult Arbuthnot, or any successor of his, would be mere illusion; in so far as the value of money is unknown, prices in money serve but to deceive. History—and *that* the most appropriate history—has furnished us with much surer grounds. Thirty pieces of silver, Matt. 28:3-10, was the purchase-money of the field, called *the potters' field*, bought for a burying-ground, with the money received and returned by the traitor, Judas, as the reward for his treachery. Suppose it no more than half an acre. What, in English money of the present day, would be the value of half an acre of land in or close by a closely built metropolis? A

hundred pounds would, assuredly, be a very moderate allowance. Multiply the hundred pounds by fifty thousand, you have five millions; divide the five millions by thirty, you have, on the above supposition, 166,666*l.* and odd for the value of these books. Look to the English translation, look to the Greek original, the pieces of silver are the same.

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SECTION 10.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE IX.—AT TROAS, EUTYCHUS FOUND NOT TO BE DEAD.—*Acts* 20:7-12.

In this story may be seen another example, of the facility with which, when men are upon the hunt for miracles, something may be made out of nothing: the most ordinary occurrence, by the addition of a loose word or two, metamorphosed into a miracle.

Paul, one evening, was treating his disciples with a sermon: he was at the same time treating them, or they him, with a supper. The architecture of the house was such, that, under favourable circumstances, a fall might be got from the top of it, or thereabouts, to the bottom, without much difficulty. If any difficulty there was, on the occasion in question it was overcome. According to circumstances, sermons produce on different minds different effects: from some, they drive sleep; in others, they produce it. On the occasion in question, the latter was the effect experienced by a certain youth. His station is represented as being an elevated one:—so elevated that, after the fall he got from it, it may be believed without difficulty, he lay for some time motionless. Paul "went down" to him, we are

told, and embraced him. The youth received the embrace; Paul, the praise of tender-heartedness:—this is what may be asserted with a safe conscience, though it be without any special evidence. Trifling, however, is the boon he received from that congregation, in comparison of what he has been receiving from so many succeeding ones—the reputation of having made so brilliant an addition to the catalogue of his miracles. By the accident, whatever may have been the interruption, given by it to the festivity, no end was put to it. Sermon and supper ended, the rest of the congregation went their way: and with them went the youth, to whom had anything serious happened, the historian would scarcely have left us uninformed of it.

On this occasion, between the hero and his historian, there is somewhat of a difference. The historian will have it, that when Paul reached the body he found it dead. Paul's own account of the matter is the direct contrary: so the historian himself informs us. Here then the historian and his hero are at issue. But, the historian, having the first word, makes, if we may venture to say so, a rather unfair advantage of it, and by this same first word gives a contradiction to what he makes his hero say in the next. "He was taken up dead," says the historian, who was or was not there: "His life is in him," says the preacher, who was there beyond dispute.

But let us see the text.

ACTS 20:7-12.

> 7. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech till midnight.—And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.—And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.—And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him.—When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.—And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

At this time of day, any such contrariety might produce some embarrassment; but, when it is considered how long ago the thing happened, no such uneasy sensation is experienced. A supposition, by which all embarrassment is excluded, is so immediately obvious, as to be scarce worth mentioning. When Paul reached the body, the soul was already in the other world; but, with the kisses goes a whisper, and the soul comes back again. Whether from indolence or from archness, there is something amusing in the course the historian takes for enlivening his narration with these flowers: he sketches out the outline, but leaves it to our imaginations to fill it up.

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SECTION 11.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE X.—ON SHIPBOARD, PAUL COMFORTED BY AN ANGEL.

ACTS 27:20-25.

> And when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be preserved was thenceforth taken away.—But after long abstinence Paul stood in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened to me, and not have loosed from Crete, but have prevented this harm and damage.—And now I exhort you to be of good courage: for there shall be no loss of life among you, but of the ship, *there shall be loss*.—For there stood by me this night an angel of that God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying,—Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Caesar; and lo, God hath graciously given to thee all who sail with thee.—Wherefore, Sirs, be of good courage: for I believe God, that it will be as it hath been told me.

The sea being stormy, the crew are alarmed. The storm, however, is not so violent, but that Paul is able to make a speech, and they to hear it. To keep up their spirits, and, at the same time, let them see the sort of terms he is upon with the Almighty, he tells them a story about an angel. The angel had been sent to him upon a visit, and was but just gone. The business of the angel was to quiet the mind of the Apostle. The matter had been settled. The precious life was in no danger: and, not only so, but, out of

compliment to him, God had been pleased to grant to him the lives of all who were happy enough to be in his company.

In the situation, in which so many lives are represented as being placed,—no very severe condemnation can easily be passed upon any little fraud, by which they might be saved. But, is it really to be believed, that this angel, whom, in a deckless vessel, for the vessels of *those* times were not like the vessels of present times, no person but Paul either saw or heard, was really sent express from the sky by God Almighty, on such an errand? If not, then have we this additional proof,—if any additional proof can be needed,—to help to satisfy us,—that, where a purpose was to be answered, falsehood, or as he would have called it *lying*, was not among the obstacles, by which Paul would be stopped, in his endeavours to accomplish it.

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SECTION 12.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE XI.—AT MALTA, A REPTILE SHAKEN OFF BY PAUL WITHOUT HURT.—*Acts* 28:1-6.

A fire of sticks being kindled, a reptile, here called a viper, is represented as "coming out of the heat," and fastening on Paul's hand. On beholding this incident,—"the barbarous people," as the inhabitants are called, whose hospitality kindled the fire for the relief of the shipwrecked company, concluded that Paul was a murderer: and were, accordingly, in expectation of seeing him "swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly." Nothing of this sort happened, their next conclusion was, *that he was a God*. As such, did these barbarians, as did the civilized inhabitants of

Lystra, sacrifice to him, or in any other way worship him? No: these conceptions of theirs reported, there the story ends.

Of this story, what is to be made? At this time of day, among Christians in general, what we should expect to find is, that it passed for a miracle. But, if by miracle is meant, not merely an accident, somewhat singular and extraordinary,—but, by a special act of Almighty power, an effect produced, by means disconformable to the uniform course of nature,—it might be too much to say, that even by the reporter himself, it is for the decided purpose of its being taken for miracle, that it is brought to view.

If, however, the design was not here, that the incident should be taken for a miracle,—the story amounted to nothing, and was not worth the telling. But, if it *is* to be made into a miracle, where is the matter in it, out of which a miracle can be made?

The reptile—was it really a viper? Neither the barbarians of Malta, nor the reporter of this story, nor in a word, at that time of day, any other persons whatever, were either very complete or very correct, in their conception of matters belonging to the field of natural history. At present, reptiles are crawling creatures. At this time of day, when *leeches* are excepted, to fasten upon the part they have bitten is not the practice with any reptiles that we know of. If, instead of *viper*, the Greek word had been one that could have been translated *leech*,—the story would have been probable enough, but, were it only for that very reason, no miracle could have been made out of it. Shaken down into the fire, that is, into the burning fuel,—a small reptile, such as a leech, how brisk soever in the water, would be very apt to be overpowered by the heat, before it could make its

escape: with a reptile of the ordinary size of a viper, this would hardly be the case.

Be this as it may, "he felt,"—so says the story,—"he felt no harm." How came it that he felt no harm? Because the Almighty performed a miracle to preserve him from harm? So long as eyes are open, causes out of number—causes that have nothing wonderful in them—present themselves to view before this. "The beast," as it is translated, "was not a viper":—if really a viper, it happened, at that moment, not to be provided with a competent stock of venom: it had already expended it upon some other object:—by some accident or other, it had lost the appropriate tooth. Not to look out for others,—any mind that was not bent upon having a miracle at any price, would lay hold of some such cause as one of these, sooner than give itself any such trouble as that of torturing the incident into a miracle.

To bring under calculation the quantity of supernatural power necessary to the production of a given effect is no very easy task. At any rate,—without more or less of expense in a certain shape, nothing in that way could ever be done. In the case here in question, what could have been the object of any such expense? Was it the saving the self-constituted Apostle the pain of a bite? The expense then, would it not have been less—the operation, so to speak, more economical—had a slight turn been given to Paul's hand, or to the course of the reptile? But, in either case, neither would the name of the Lord, nor—what was rather more material—that of his Apostle, have received that glorification which was so needful to it.

Any such design, as that of giving an unequivocal manifestation of Almighty power, such as should

stand the test of scrutiny, testifying the verity of Paul's commission to the end of time,—any such design could the incident have had for its final cause? A more equivocal,—a less conclusive,—proof of the manifestation of supernatural power, seems not very easy to imagine.

Here then comes once more the so often repeated conclusion:—the narrative began to be in want of a miracle, and the miracle was made.

In those days, among that people, miracles were so much in course, that without a reasonable number of them, a history would hardly have obtained credence: at any rate it would not have obtained readers, and without readers no history can ever obtain much credence.

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SECTION 13.

SUPPOSABLE MIRACLE XII.—AT MALTA, DEPUTY PUBLIUS'S FATHER CURED.—*Acts* 28:7-10.

"In the same quarters," says the story—it follows immediately upon that of the viper. "In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was *Publius*, who received us and lodged us three days courteously.—And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody flux, to whom Paul entered in and prayed, and laid his hands on him and healed him.—So when this was done, others also which had diseases in the island, came and were healed.—Who also honoured us with many honours, and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary."

Of the fevers, which, within the compass of any given spot, and any given space of time, have place, it almost always happens, that a certain number go off of themselves. Of, perhaps, all sorts of fever,—at least of almost all sorts at present known, thus much is agreed upon by all physicians:—they have at least two regular courses, one of which terminates in death, the other or others in recovery. Supposing the person in question to have had a fever,—what is pretty clear is—that, if *of itself*, it would have taken a favourable termination, there was nothing, in the forms employed by Paul, viz., utterance of prayers and imposition of hands, that could have any natural tendency to *cause* it to take an unfavourable one.

But—the course afterwards taken by the fever, was there anything in it to distinguish it from the ordinary favourable course? If not, in that case, so far from miraculous, there is nothing that is so much as wonderful in the case.

Note here two things—the narrator one of the party; the narrative so loose and uncircumstantial. But *to see* is one thing; *to narrate*, another.

Three days, it seems, and no more, did Paul and his suite stay at the house of this Publius. Was it during that time, or not till afterwards, that Paul performed on him those ceremonies, of which healing is represented as having been the consequence? Was it within that same space of time, or not till afterwards, that the healing is supposed to have taken place? As to the English word *healing*, it cannot be accused of being indecisive. But in some languages they have words, by which a very convenient veil is thrown over the result. In the languages in question, for the endeavour to heal, whether successful or unsuccessful, the word employed is the same. The

Latin affords one of these convenient words, *curo*. The Greek has another, *iasato*, and in the Greek original of this history, this is the word employed.

In a case where a ceremony and nothing else is trusted to, it being supposed that the patient really has the disease, the safe and prudent course is, so to order times and seasons, that between the time of performing the ceremony, and the time at which restoration to health is expected to take place, the time shall have come for the practitioner to have shifted quarters; for, in this case, this is an interval more or less considerable during which it being taken for granted that the desired result will take place of course, reward, in the shapes of profit and honour, will pour in upon the scientific head.

Here, as elsewhere, not only no *symptoms* are particularized, but no *place* is mentioned: no *time* is particularized, no *persons* are mentioned as *percipient witnesses*: even the individual who was the subject of the cure is not mentioned by name.

As to the givers of the supposed honours and presents—persons are indeed mentioned:—mentioned, but no otherwise than by the name of *others*. One individual alone is particularized: particularized as having received the benefit of these ceremonies. This is the father of Publius. This man, to use the phraseology of the passage, was *also healed*. But—this man who was he? He was no less a person than the father of the chief man in the island. Well then, what are the honours, what the allotment of "*such things as were necessary*?" What were the proofs of gratitude, afforded by this man, who was so much better able to afford such presents, than any of those other persons cured? By such proofs of remuneration, some evidence—some circumstantial

evidence,—supposing them exhibited at a proper time, would have been afforded, in proof of the reality of the service. But, neither by the person thus spoken of as healed, nor by his son—the chief man in the island,—is it said that any such proofs were afforded. For such a silence when the case of an individual was brought to view, coupled with the express declaration made, of gifts presented by persons unnamed,—three cases cannot but present themselves, as being any one of them more probable, than that, on this occasion, a real miracle was performed. One is—that there was no disease, perhaps no such person: another is, that though there was a disease, it went off of itself: the third is, that it never went off at all.

One thing may be asserted without much fear of contradiction: and that is, that in this country, if in terms such as these, accounts were inserted in the public prints;—accounts of diseases cured without medicine;—diseases cured by nothing but words and gesticulations;—though the accounts given were ever so numerous, not the smallest notice would they be thought worthy of,—not the smallest attention would they receive from anyone, unless it were for the joke's sake.

What is more,—numerous are the publications, in which, encompassed with circumstantiality in all manner of shapes, not only the names of the fortunate patients are mentioned, but under the signatures of those patients declarations made, assuring the public of the reality of the cure,—and yet, when at the same time, by competent persons, due inquiry has been made, it turns out after all that no such cure has been performed.

Accounts, which would not be believed were they to

come out at a time of so widely diffused knowledge, are they to be believed, merely because the time they belonged to,—facts and accounts together,—was, as to all such matters, a time of universal ignorance? The less a man understands the subject, the more firmly is he to be believed, as to everything he says of it? Or is it that, between then and now, *men* and *things* have undergone a total change? and, if so, when did it take place?

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SECTION 14.

CONCLUSION: THE SUPPOSABLE MIRACLES CLASSED AND SUMMED UP.

Inferences,—conveying more or less of instruction,—may, perhaps, be found deducible,—at any rate our conception of the whole series taken together, will be rendered so much the clearer, by bringing the same supposed marvels again under review, arranged in the order of time.

For this purpose, the time may be considered as divided into three periods.

In the first are included—those, which are represented as having had place during the time when at the outset of his missionary expedition, Paul had Barnabas for his associate. Of these there are two, viz. 1. At Paphos, A.D. 45, Sorcerer Elymas blinded. 2. At Lystra, A.D. 46, cripple cured. Of this part of the expedition, the commencement, as in the current account, placed in the year 45.

In the second period are included—those, which are represented as having had place, during the time when Paul, after his separation from Barnabas, had

Silas for his associate, and the unnamed author of the Acts for an attendant. This ends with his arrival at Jerusalem, on the occasion of his fourth visit—the Invasion Visit.

In the current accounts, this event is placed in the year 60. Within this period, we have the seven following supposed marvels: 1. At Philippi, A.D. 53, divineress silenced. 2. At Philippi, A.D. 53, earthquake: Paul and Silas freed **from prison**. 3. At Corinth, A.D. 54, Paul comforted by the Lord in an unseen vision. 4. At Ephesus, A.D. 56, diseases and devils expelled by Paul's foul handkerchiefs. 5. At Ephesus, A.D. 55, Exorcist Scevas bedeviled. 6. At Ephesus, A.D. 56, magic books burned by the owners. 7. At Troas, A.D. 59, Eutychus found not to be dead.

In the third period are included—those which are represented as having had place, in the interval between his forced departure from Jerusalem for Rome, and his arrival at Rome.

In the current accounts, this event is placed in the year 62. Within this concluding period, we have the following supposed marvels: 1. On shipboard, A.D. 62, Paul comforted by an angel. 2. At Malta, A.D. 62, a reptile shaken off by Paul without his being hurt. 3. At Malta, A.D. 62, Deputy Publius's father cured by Paul of some disorder. Year of all these three last marvels, the same as that of Paul's arrival at Rome. Total number of supposed marvels, twelve.

To the first of these three periods belong two supposed marvels, which, supposing them to have any foundation in truth, present themselves as being, in a greater degree than most of the others, exposed to the suspicion of contrivance. A moderate sum, greater or less according to the state more or less

flourishing of his practice, might suffice to engage a sorcerer, for a few minutes or hours, to declare himself struck blind: a still more moderate sum might suffice to engage an itinerant beggar, to exhibit himself with one leg tied up, and after hearing what was proper to be heard, or seeing what was proper to be seen, to declare himself cured.

This was the period, during which Paul had Barnabas, or Barnabas Paul, for an associate. In these cases, if fraud in any shape had place,—it is not without reluctance, that any such supposition could be entertained, as that Barnabas—the generous, the conciliating, the beneficent, the persevering Barnabas—was privy to it. But, times and temptation considered, even might this supposition be assented to, on rather more substantial grounds, than that which stands in competition with it: namely, that for the production of two effects,—comparatively so inconsiderable, and not represented as having been followed by any determinate effects of greater moment,—the ordinary course of nature was, by a special interposition of Almighty power, broken through and disturbed.

Is it or is it not a matter worth remarking—that, of all these twelve supposed occurrences, such as they are,—in not more than four is the hero represented, —even by his own attendant, historian, and panegyrist,—as decidedly taking any active part in the production of the effect? These are—the blinding of the sorcerer, the cure of the cripple, the silencing of the divineress, the curing of Deputy Publius's father: the three first, at the commencement of this supposed wonder-working part of his career; the last, —with an interval of fifteen years between that and the first,—at the very close of it. In the eight

intermediate instances, either the effect itself amounted to nothing, or the hero is scarcely represented as being instrumental in the production of it. These are—the being let out of prison after an earthquake had happened—being comforted, whether by God or man, in a vision or without one—having handkerchiefs, by which, when he had done with them, diseases and devils were expelled—being present when a gang of exorcists were beaten and stripped by a devil, whom they had undertaken to drive out of a man—being in a place, in which some nonsensical books were burned by their owners—being in a house, in which a youth said to be dead, was found not to be so—being comforted by an angel, who had the kindness to come on board ship uninvited—shaking off a reptile, without being hurt by it.

Whatever store may be set at this time of day upon all these marvels, less cannot easily be set upon them by anybody than was by Paul himself. For proof, take the whole tenor of his own Epistles, as well as the whole tenor of his visions, as delivered by his attendant. Numberless as were the scrapes he got himself into,—numberless as were the hosts of enemies he everywhere made himself,—open as all ears were to everything that presented itself as marvellous,—unable as men were to distinguish what could be done from what could not be done,—pressing as was at all times the need he had of evidence, that could arrest the hands of enemies,—on no occasion do we find him calling into his aid, so much as a single one of all these supposed irrefragable evidences.

FOOTNOTES:

[77] *And they had also John to their minister*, 13:5. What *John* was this? Answer, see chap. 15:37 to 40. This appears to have been that John, whose surname was Mark, who was the cause of the angry separation of Paul from Barnabas.

[78] Another branch of his trade, already mentioned in this same chapter, as having been carried on by him in this same place, namely, Ephesus,—and which, where circumstances created a demand for the article, appears to have been more profitable than that of expelling devils or diseases,—is *that*, of which the Holy Ghost was the subject. This power of conferring—that is to say, of being thought to confer—the Holy Ghost,—such, and of such sort was the value of it, that Simon Magus, as there may be occasion to mention in another chapter, had, not less than one-and-twenty years before this, offered the Apostles money for it. Acts 8:18-24, A.D. 34. This power, two preceding verses of the same 19th chapter, namely the 5th and 6th, represent Paul as exercising: and, whatsoever was the benefit derived, twelve is the number of the persons here spoken of as having received it.

Acts 19:5-7. After "they," the above twelve, v. 7, disciples, v. 9, "were baptized, v. 5, in the name of the Lord Jesus;" when Paul, v. 6, "had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." Here then, if, by thus laying on of hands, it is by *Paul* that any operation is performed, it is the conferring of "the Holy Ghost." But this power, whence had Paul received it? Not from Jesus, had the self-constituted Apostle received this gift, whatever it was, any more than he had baptism, by

which ceremony, as appears from Acts 8:16, it was regularly preceded: as in the case of the magician it actually had been. Not from Jesus: no such thing is anywhere so much as pretended. Not from the Apostles, or any of them; from two, for example, by commission from the rest—as in the case of Peter and John, Acts 8:14-19:—no such thing is anywhere so much as pretended. In no such persons could this—would this—their self-declared superior, have vouchsafed to acknowledge the existence, of a power in which he had no share. On this occasion, as on every other, independently of the Apostles did he act, and in spite of the Apostles.

As to the "*speaking with tongues and prophesying*," these are pretensions, which may be acknowledged without much difficulty. *Tongues* are the organs most men speak with. As to *prophesying*, it was an operation that might as well be performed after the fact as before the fact: witness in Luke 22:64, "Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?" Read the Bible over from beginning to end, a *prophet*, whatever else be meant, if there be anything else meant, you will find to have been *a politician: to prophesy* was to talk *politics*. Make a new translation, or, what would be shorter, a list of *corrigenda*, and instead of *prophet* put *politician*,—a world of labour, now employed in explanations, will be saved.

CHAPTER XIV.

Acts, part false, part true: Author not Saint

Luke.

SECTION 1.

BY THE FALSE PARTS, THE GOSPEL NOT AFFECTED: MOST PARTS TRUE.

In regard to the Acts, a notion, generally, not to say universally, received, is—that it had Saint Luke for its author: and that, accordingly, it may with propriety be regarded as a continuation of the Gospel of that Evangelist, written by the same hand. Were this conception a correct one, whatsoever shock were given to the credit of the Acts, would unavoidably extend itself to the Gospel history: at any rate, to that part of it which bears the name of Luke.

Before this chapter is at an end,—the reader, if the author is not much mistaken, will not only be convinced that that opinion is untenable, but see no small ground for wondering, how by any person, by whom any survey had been taken of the two objects in that point of view, any such notion should ever have come to be entertained.

Another memento, of which, if made before, even the repetition may in this place, perhaps, be not without its use, is—that, from nothing that is here said, is any such conception meant to be conveyed, as that the history called *The Acts*, is from beginning to end, like that of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of Britain*, a mere falsity. In a great part, perhaps even by much the greatest, it is here looked upon as true: in great part true, although in no inconsiderable part incorrect, to say no worse: and, in particular, on every point, on which the colour of the marvellous is

visible. As to the sort and degree of evidence due to it, one general assumption there is, by which the whole of this inquiry has, from first to last, been guided. This is—that, in relation to one and the same work, whatsoever be the subject of it, credence may, without inconsistency or impropriety, by one and the same person, be given and withholden: given, on this or that occasion; withholden, on this or that other occasion: given, in so far as the truth of the contents seems probable; withholden, as far as it seems improbable.

For the support of this assumption,—all that, on the present occasion, can be offered, is—an appeal to universal experience. As to the general foundations of the law of evidence,—for any excursion into so wide an expanse, neither this chapter nor any other part of this work would, it has been thought, be generally regarded as a proper place. What had been written on that subject has accordingly been discarded.

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SECTION 2.

TIME BETWEEN RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION—ACTS CONTRADICTS LUKE.

In the first place then, Saint Luke cannot have been the author of the Acts.

The reason is very simple. In respect of the time between Jesus's resurrection and his ascension,—the one of these narratives gives one account, the other, another account: and, so wide is the difference between the two, that by one and the same person they could not have both been given. According to

Saint Luke, the time during which, after his resurrection, and before his ascension, Jesus was seen by his disciples, extended not beyond *one* day: according to the Acts, it extended as far as *forty* days. By Saint Luke, that the time was not more than a day, is not indeed said in so many words; but upon examination of the text, it will be found, that, consistently with the particulars given, no longer duration can be assigned to it. In the Acts, that the time, during which he continued showing himself after his *passion*, Acts 1:3,[79] to the Apostles, was "*forty days*," is affirmed in those very words.

The point here in question, be it observed, is not *truth*, but *consistency*: not the truth of either of the two accounts; but their consistency, the one with the other: and, instead of consistency, so palpable is the inconsistency, that the conclusion is,—by no one man, who did not, on one or other of the two occasions, intend thereby to deceive, can both of them, morally speaking, have been penned.

Now for the proof. First, let us hear Saint Luke: it is all of it in his last chapter—the 24th. In verse 10, mention is made of certain women, three named, others not named. In verses 2 and 3, "they entered into," it is said, "the sepulchre," ver. 2, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." In ver. 9, "they returned," it is said, "from the sepulchre, and told all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest." Thereupon it is, that, of all them, "two" ver. 13, of whom Cleopas, ver. 18, was one, "went *that same day* to Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about sixty furlongs: and while they communed together," it was that "Jesus," ver. 15, "drew near, and went with them," whereupon between him and them a conversation therein reported, ensued. The

conversation,—the same conversation, as reported in verses from 16 to 27,—continues till their arrival at the village, ver. 28, namely, Emmaus, as per ver. 13. According to the next verse, ver. 29, "the day," namely, that same day, "being far spent," at that same place, "he went in to tarry with them," they having "constrained him." Then also it is that, ver. 30, "he sat at meat with them:" and, ver. 31, "they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight." Moreover, "at that same hour" it is, ver. 33, that "they returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying," ver. 34, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." Then it is also, that, ver. 36, they reporting what had passed, "as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Thereupon follows a conversation, reported in verses from 37 to 49, in the course of which he, ver. 43, "did eat before them." Then it is, that, immediately after the last words, which, in ver. 49, he is stated to have uttered, come these words, ver. 50, "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass," says the next verse, ver. 51, "while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him," continues the next verse, ver. 52, "and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." And, with the next verse, which says, "they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God,"—the chapter, and with it the Gospel, ends.

So much for Saint Luke. Now for the author of the Acts, chapter 1, ver. 3, "To whom," says he, namely the Apostles, ver. 2, "he," namely Jesus, ver. 1, "showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them *forty* days...."

Thus while, according to the author of the Acts the time—during which Jesus was seen by the persons in question was not less than *forty* days,—according to Saint Luke, the whole time, during which this same Jesus was seen by those same persons, was not more than *one* day. And who was this historian, who, on the supposition of the identity, speaking of this all-important scene, on one occasion says, that it lasted no more than *one* day; and, on another occasion, professing, Acts 1:1, to be giving continuance to such his former discourse, declares, in so many words, that it lasted "forty days"? It is Saint Luke, one of the Apostles of Jesus;—one, of the eleven, before whose eyes, everything of that which has just been read, is stated as having passed.

With all this before him, does the editor of the edition of the Bible, called Scholey's Bible, in a note to the commencement of the Acts, very composedly assure us, that "from its style, and other internal marks, it is evidently the production of Luke": quoting for his authority, Bishop of Lincoln's *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. 4. Who this same Bishop of Lincoln was, by whose Elements of Christian Theology, instruction such as this is administered, let those inquire, in whose eyes the profit of the inquiry promises payment for the trouble. From any such particular inquiry, the profit will perhaps appear the less, the greater appears the probability, that, in the minds of all Bishops,—from the first that ever committed his instructions in theology to the press, down to those by whom the Christian world is illuminated at this present writing,—the same sort of discernment, or the same sort of sincerity, has all along had place.

When 20,000*l*, a year—or though it were but 20*l*,

once told—or, though it were but salvation from everlasting torment—is to be gained; gained, by the perception, that two men, the one of whom writes in point-blank contradiction to the other, are one and the same man,—the task is not, naturally speaking, of the number of those, by the performance of which much wonder need be excited.

The sort of improvement, made by the author of the later history, upon the account given in the earlier, has now been seen. Would anyone wish to see the inducement? He will not have far to look for it. For making the impression, which it was his desire to make,—the *one* day, allotted to the occurrence by one of the company, was not, in the estimation of the anonymous writer, sufficient. To render it sufficient, he calls in the powers of arithmetic: he multiplies the *one* by forty; and thus, to the unquestionable satisfaction of a host of mathematicians,—Barrow, Newton, and so many other mathematical divines, not to speak of Locke, of the number—thus is done what is required to be done: thus, by so simple an operation, is the probative force of the occurrence multiplied forty-fold.[80]

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SECTION 3.

AS TO ASCENSION, ACTS IS INCONSISTENT WITH LUKE.

Thus far, the embellishments, made by our anonymous artist, have had for their ground the work of the original hand: meaning always Saint Luke, with whom the common error has identified him. Here comes an instance, in which the whole is altogether of his own workmanship. This is the story

of the "two men in white apparel," by whom, what, in his eyes, were the deficiencies in the instruction offered by Jesus to the witnesses of his ascension, may be seen supplied.

Still the same delicacy as before: by his own hand no miracle made: only a quantity of matter, fit for this purpose, put into the hands of readers; and to their imagination is left a task so natural and so, agreeable.

Scarcely, after finishing his instructions to his Apostles, has Jesus ceased to be visible to them, when, if Acts is to be believed, "two men in white apparel"—two men, *to* whom none of them were known, and *by* whom none of them were known, make their appearance, and from nobody knows where. But these same two men in white, who are they? "Oh!" says *Imagination*, for the hints we have already seen given to her are quite sufficient, "Oh!" says Imagination, "they were angels. Think for a moment, and say what else they can have been. Had they been men, could they have been thus unknowing and unknown? could their appearance have been thus sudden? not less sudden than the vanishing of a spirit? not to speak of the beautiful white clothes you see they had,—and would they have been thus dressed? To believe them men, would be to believe in direct contradiction to Saint Luke; for, in his account of the matter, as you may see, from first to last, not two men were there in the whole party, that were not in the most intimate manner known to each other. But though, by Saint Luke's account, so decided a negative is put upon all men-strangers, yet nothing is said about angels. Angels, therefore, they may have been,—you may venture to say they *were*: and the report made by all

persons present, remains nevertheless uncontradicted."

"Another proof, that they cannot have been men, and that therefore they were angels. Of these beings, who were then unknown to all the company, what was the errand? It was no less than the giving to the whole company of the companions of Jesus,—of that Jesus, by whom, after giving to them such instructions as he thought fit to give to them, they had but that moment been left,—the giving to them some *other* instructions, which he had not thought fit, or else had forgot, to give to them. But, as by no men-strangers could any such conceit have been entertained, as that, by the party in question, any such instructions would be listened to,—so, by no men-strangers can it be that any such instructions were given:—an additional proof that they cannot have been anything but angels." Thus readily does the imagination of the reader, answer with her logic, the call given to her by the imagination of the author.

Angels if they were, they appear not to have been very knowing ones. Sent, for the purpose of giving information,—and such information, nothing of that which was known to all those, to whom they came to give it,—nothing, if they themselves are to be believed, was known to them. Addressing themselves to the company—the company whom Jesus had but that moment left,—"Whom saw ye going up," say they, ver. 11, "into heaven"? Then comes the information, which Jesus, on his departure, Jesus, we are expected to believe, has not thought fit, or else had forgot, to give. "This same Jesus," say they, ver. 11, "which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into

heaven." Here we have the information and—they to whom it was given,—what can they have been the better for it?—"Shall so come." Yes: but when and where, and to what end, and what to do? points these, as to all which, the information is altogether mute.

One other proof is yet behind. What has been seen as yet is in the first chapter. The tenth of his eight and twenty chapters is not finished, where, speaking in agreement with Saint Luke, he now disagrees with himself. On this occasion, it is by the mouth of Peter that he speaks. "God," he makes Peter say, Acts 10:41, "God showed him," Jesus, "openly."—Showed him, let anybody ask, and to whom? "Not," says he, "to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." Thus again it is, that for any men-strangers, not a particle of room is left. But, for angels, considering the materials they are made of, no quantity of room can be insufficient: therefore, once more, nothing can these men have been but angels.

FOOTNOTES:

[79] As to the word *passion*, that by this word could not have been meant the same event as that denoted by the word *resurrection*, cannot but be acknowledged. But, with regard to the alleged inconsistency, this distinction will not be found to make any difference: for, as will be seen, it is not till after his resurrection, that, by Saint Luke, Jesus is represented as having begun to show himself.

[80] In chapter XII. of this work, section 1, notice has already been taken, of a similar

operation as having been performed by Paul himself: of the improvement made in *that* case, the subject was the number of the witnesses: according to the real Apostle, who was one of the company, the number, as we have seen, was eleven, and a few more: this number, whatever it was, the self-constituted Apostle, who knew nothing about the matter, took in hand, and multiplied till he had raised it to five hundred. Thus, with or without concert, with like effect,—and it is almost needless to say, with the same object, and from the same inducement,—may be seen the master and the journeyman, working on different occasions, but with well-matched industry, at the manufacturing of evidence. Add now together the results of the two operations, and note the aggregate. Number of witnesses, according to Luke, say,—for the sake of round numbers,—twenty; though there seems little reason to suppose it so great: addition made to it by Paul, 480. Number of days,—during which, as above, they continued seeing and hearing what they saw and heard,—according to Saint Luke, but one: according to Paul's attendant, 40. Multiply together the two improvements, that is to say, the 480 by the 40, you have 19,200 for the sum total of probative force, added by the arguments of the author of the Acts to the amount of the original quantity, as reported by Saint Luke.

CHAPTER XV.

Law Report.—Jews versus Paul: Trials five, with Observations.

SECTION 1.

INTRODUCTION.

On the occasion of what passed at the Temple, the report of a great law-case,—to speak in modern and English language,—the case of *The Jews against Paul*, was begun. The judicatory before which he underwent that trial,—partly before the Jewish multitude, partly before the Roman chief by whom he was rescued,—was a sort of mixed and extempore judicatory, something betwixt a legal and an illegal one: for, as has been seen in the case of Saint Stephen, and as may be seen in the case of the woman taken in adultery, and moreover, in the body of the law itself, a sort of mob-law might, not altogether without ground, be stated as forming part and parcel of the law of Moses. To this sort of irregular trial, succeeded, before the definite judgment was pronounced, no fewer than four others, each of them before a tribunal, as regular as any the most zealous supporter of what is called legitimacy could desire. In execution of this definitive judgment it was, that Paul was sent, on that half-forced, half-voluntary expedition of his, to Rome: at which place, on his arrival at that capital, the Acts history closes. Of the reports of these several trials, as given in the Acts,—follows a summary view, accompanied with a few remarks for elucidation.

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SECTION 2.

TRIAL I. PLACE, JERUSALEM TEMPLE.—JUDICATORY, THE MIXED MULTITUDE.—*Acts* 22:1 to 21.

Scene, the Temple. Judges, prosecutors, and—stated as intended executioners, a Jerusalem multitude. Sole class, by whom any declared or special cause of irritation had been received, the Christianized Jews, provoked by Paul's preachings against the law of the land, to which they as yet maintained their adherence; by his intrusion upon their society, by which, were it only for his former persecution, he could not but be abhorred; and by the notorious perjury he was at that moment committing, having chosen to commit it, rather than cease to obtrude upon them the object of their abhorrence.

Of the particulars of the accusation nothing is said: but, the above circumstances, and the subsequent charges made upon him the next day by the constituted authorities,—who immediately took up the matter, and carried on a regular prosecution against him,—sufficiently show, what, if expressed, would have been the purport of them. By the preparations made for execution, we shall see broken off the defence, before it had come, if ever it was designed to come, to the substance of the alleged offence.

Points touched upon in it are these:—

1. Defendant's birthplace, Tarsus; parentage, Jewish; religious persuasion, Pharasaical; education, under Gamaliel, verse 3.

2. Part, borne by him, in the persecution of the Christians, when Stephen was stoned: his commission for that purpose stated, and the High Priest and Elders called to witness, verses 4 and 5.

> N.B. Time of *that* same commission, according to the received chronology, not less than 26 years before this.

3. Story, of that first vision, of which so much has been seen: namely, that from whence his conversion was dated: occasion, his journey to Damascus, for the execution of that same commission, verses 6 to 16.

4. Story of his trance: for this see Chapter IV. §. 7. In this state, "the Lord" seen by him.—*Lord to Defendant.* "Get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." *Defendant, to Lord.* Informing or reminding said Lord of the details of the part borne by said defendant in the persecution of Saint Stephen.—*Lord to Defendant.* "Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." Note, Defendant cut short: Lord's patience no match for defendant's eloquence.

Judges and executioners.—At the word *Gentiles*, exclamation:—"Away with him ... he is not fit to live":—clothes cast off, as in Stephen's case, as if to prepare for stoning him.[81] "Dust thrown into the air." Present, chief captain Claudius Lysias, who commands him to be "brought into the castle," and "examined by scourging." While, for this purpose, they are binding him, on Defendant crying out, "*I am a Roman citizen*," the binding ceases, no scourging commences: the next day he is released, and the "chief priests and all their council" are "sent for," and Defendant is "set before them."

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SECTION 3.

TRIAL II. JUDICATORY, JERUSALEM COUNCIL-BOARD.—*Acts* 23:1 to 10.

Judges, chief priests in council assembled: present, the high priests. Prosecutors, the said judge: other

prosecutors, as far as appears, none. In modern Rome-bred law, this mode of procedure, in which the parts of judge and prosecutor are performed by the same person, is styled the *inquisitorial*: in contradistinction to this, that in which the part of prosecutor is borne by a different person, is stiled the *accusatorial*.

Charges or questions put, not stated.

Defendant. "I am a Pharisee ... the son of a Pharisee. Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

Thereupon, ver. 9, "great cry" ...—"Great dissention." "Chief captain, fearing lest," Defendant, "Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them," inuendo the said judges, "commands soldiers," who take him back into the castle.

"Cry? dissention?"—whence all this? Acts has not here been explicit enough to inform us. As to Defendant's plea, that it was for believing in the resurrection that he was prosecuted,—what could not but be perfectly known to him was,—that it neither was true, nor by possibility could be so. Among said Judges, parties two—Pharisees and Sadducees: Pharisees the predominant. "The Sadducees," on this occasion, says ver. 8, "say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both." Prosecuting a Pharisee for preaching the resurrection, meaning always the general resurrection, would have been as if a Church-of-Englandist Priest were indicted in the King's Bench, for reading the Athanasian creed. Accordingly —it was a stratagem of the Defendant's—this same misstatement: such it is expressly stated to be:— when defendant "*perceived*," ver. 6, "that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees,"—then it

was that he came out with it: and, already it has been seen, how effectually it answered its purpose.

Enter once more the history of the *trance*. Note here the sudden termination of Defendant's first Jerusalem visit, alias his *Reconciliation Visit*, and turn back to Chapter IV. §. 7, Cause of it,—historian speaking in his own person—"Grecians," Acts 9:29, "went about to slay him," for disputing with them:—historian, speaking, to wit, here, in defendant's person, Christianized Jews' disbelief of his conversion, and of that vision story of his, that he produced in evidence of it. It is on the occasion of the just-mentioned Temple trial, that Defendant is made to come out with it. On that occasion, as hath been seen, it was of no use: but, in this second trial, it will be seen to be of prime use. That it was told over again at this trial is not indeed expressly said: but, that it was so is sufficiently manifest. This and no other is the handle which his supporters in the council lay hold of: and this they could not have done, had he not, as will be seen presently, put it into their hands. "The Scribes," says ver. 9, "that were of the Pharisees' part, arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God." Well then—this spirit, or this angel, who was he? Who but that spirit, whom defendant had so manifestly told them of, and who was no other than that "*Lord*" of his, whom he had seen in the trance: in the trance, which, while the multitude were beating him, invention had furnished him with for the purpose.

Mark now, how apposite a weapon the Pharisees found, in this same trance, in their war against the Sadducees. As to Jesus,—though from first to last, so far from being recognized by their sect, he had been

the object of that enmity of theirs under which he sunk,—yet, so far as, in general terms, he preached the *general* resurrection,—his doctrine not only agreed with theirs, but was of no small use to them: it was of use to them, against those political rivals, whose opposition to their sect was the sole cause of everything that was troublesome to it. As to Paul,—had he confined himself, to the speaking of Jesus's *particular* resurrection,—this indeed was what no Pharisee could be disposed to admit: but if, by Paul or anyone else, Jesus, or any other person, was at any time seen in an incorporeal state,—here was a piece of evidence on their side. With relation to any interview of the *Apostles* with Jesus after his resurrection, nothing that Paul had to say—to say with truth or colour of truth—was anything more than *hearsay* evidence: but, as to that, which on this occasion, he had been relating about the Lord, whom he had seen in his trance,—this, how false soever, was not only *direct*, but *immediate* evidence: evidence, in the delivery of which, the *relating* witness stated himself to have been, with relation to the alleged fact in question, a *percipient* witness.

That, on this occasion, Paul dwelt, with any particularity, on the appearance of Jesus in the flesh after his resurrection, is not said: and, as it would not have contributed anything to the purpose, the less particular the safer and the better. *Lord* or not *Lord*, that which appeared was at any rate a *spirit*: and for the war against the Sadducees, a spirit was all that was wanted: no matter of what sort.

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SECTION 4.

TRIAL III. PLACE, CÆSAREA.—*Acts* 24:1-23.

Scene, "Governor" Felix's judicatory. Judge, said Governor. Prosecutor, Orator Tertullus: Present, his clients,—the "High Priest" and "the Elders." Procedure, accusatorial. Time, "twelve days," ver. 11, "after Trial 1; eleven, after Trial 2."

I. Counsel's Speech—Points touched upon in it, these: —verses 1-4.

1. Opening compliment to Governor Judge.—His "providence" and "clemency."

II. 1. Vituperative surplusage, of course, as if in B. R.: though not paid for, in fees and taxes, by the sheet. —Defendant, "a pestilent fellow."

Charges three. To make the matter more intelligible, had the proceeding been by writing in the first instance, they might have been styled counts.

2. Charge 1. Defendant "a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world."

3. Charge 2. Said Defendant "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes."

4. Charge 3. Defendant "gone about to profane the temple."

5. Statement made of Trial 2, and the termination given to it by Roman chief captain Lysias, taking said Defendant out of their hands, and commanding accusers' appearance in this court: verses 7, 8.

6. *Viva voce* evidence accordant: witnesses, neither quality nor number stated. "And *the Jews* also assented, saying that these things were so." ver. 9.

III. Defendant's defence: verses 10-21.

Points touched upon in it, these:—

1. Defendant's confidence in this his judge.

2. At Jerusalem "to worship" was his errand. The ostensible one, yes: of the real one,—supplanting the Apostles,—of course nothing said.

3. In the temple, defendant was not "found by *them*," by whom? "disputing with any man." Disputing? No. It was to take the oath—the seven-days-long false oath,—that he went there:—this, and nothing else. The priests, in whose keeping he was, and on whose acceptance the validity and efficacy of the ceremony depended, were not men to be disputed with.

4. Defendant not found by them "raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city." ver. 12. No: neither was any such raising charged upon him: nor would it have suited his purpose. Seditious *acts* are one thing; seditious *discourses*, another. From seditious acts he had nothing to gain; from seditious discourses everything: to wit, in so far as the effect of it was to weaken men's attachment to the law of the land, and engage them to transfer it to the schism he had raised in the religion of Jesus.

5. General denial: but not amounting to *Not Guilty*. "Neither *can they prove* the things whereof they now accuse me." ver. 13.

6. In verses 14, 15, 16, matter nothing to the purpose. Orthodox his belief: among the objects of it, the resurrection: void of offence towards God and man, his conscience.

7. False pretence—object of this his visit to Jerusalem—of this his *Invasion Visit*—falsely stated. "Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings." ver. 17.

8. When Defendant was "found purified in the temple," it was "neither with multitude, nor with tumult." True: but nothing to the purpose: the priests, in whose boarding-house he was, while the *purifying*, that is to say, the eating and paying, process was carrying on, were not a *multitude*: nor would *tumult* have been either profitable or practicable.

9. The men, who so found Defendant there, were "certain Jews from Asia," and, if they were accusers or witnesses, ought to have appeared in that character on the present occasion. "Who ought," says ver. 19, "to have been here before thee, and object, if they had aught against me." Ought? why ought they? Defendant called no witnesses: by non-appearance of witnesses, if against him, so far from being injured, he was benefited. The proceeding, too, was *inquisitorial*, not *accusatorial*: it required no accusers. Jews of Asia indeed? as if there were any Jews of Asia, to whom any more natural or legitimate cause of indignation could have been given by his misdeeds, than had been given by them to all the Jews in Jerusalem, not to speak of the rest of the world, or the Christianized Jews.

10. By Defendant's saying to the judges in Trial 2, that it was for preaching the resurrection that he stood accused by and before them—by this, without anything else, the indignation thereupon expressed by them against him had been excited. "Or else," say verses 20, 21, "let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, 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 you this day."

Follows the judge's decision, "When Felix," says ver. 22, "heard these things, having more perfect

knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter." Such is stated to have been the decision of the judge: and, so far as regarded what passed on Defendant's trial before Jerusalem council, it was clearly the only proper one: a more impartial, as well as, in every point of view, suitable witness, the case could hardly have afforded: and, as to the main question, nothing could be more natural, than that what it had fallen in Lysias's way on that occasion to observe, might afford instructive light.

Interlocutory order. Defendant recommitted: but access to him free for everybody. "And he commanded a centurion," says ver. 23, "to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister, or come unto him."

In this state continues Paul for "two years": at which time, says ver. 27, "Porcius Festus came into Felix's room: and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."

In verses 24, 25, 26, this interval of delay is filled up with an account, such as it is, of certain intrigues, of which the Defendant was the subject. The Roman has a Jewess for his wife. The prisoner is sent for, and wife shares with husband the benefit of his eloquence. Self-constituted Apostle preaches: heathen trembles: trembling, however, prevents not his "hoping" to get money out of the prisoner, if this part of the history is to be believed. "And after certain days," says ver. 24, "when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning," what is here called, "the faith in Christ." Faith *in Christ* indeed? After the word

faith, the word *Christ* costs no more to write than the word *Paul*: but in whatever was said about faith by Paul, which would be the most prominent figure,—Christ or Paul—may by this time be imagined. As for any faith which it was in the nature of the case, that the Roman heathen should derive from the Greek Jew's eloquence, it must have been faith in Paul, and Paul only. Paul he had seen and heard, Christ he had neither seen nor heard; nor, for aught that appears, anything concerning him, till that very time.

"And as he reasoned," says ver. 25, "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped," continues ver. 26, "that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him."

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SECTION 5.

TRIAL IV. PLACE AGAIN, CÆSAREA.—*Acts* 25:1-12.

Scene, Cæsarea judicatory.—Judge, new Roman governor, Festus. Accusers, "Jews," not named, sent by the high priest and his colleagues from Jerusalem to Cæsarea for the purpose. Defendant still in the prison at Cæsarea: Roman judge, at Jerusalem. Prosecutors, the council there—petition to have Defendant brought thither. Judge chooses rather to go to him at Cæsarea, than thus send for him to Jerusalem.

According to the *historian*, it was for the purpose of causing Defendant to be murdered, in the way to the

judicatory, that the prosecutors were so earnest as they were to obtain the *habeas corpus*: according to *probability*, it was for any purpose, rather than that of committing any such outrage upon the authority of their constituted superior, with an army at his command. Be this as it may, instead of sending for Defendant to Jerusalem, the judge returned himself to Cæsarea.

"Now," says ver. 1, "when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæsarea to Jerusalem.—Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him.—And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.—But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cæsarea, and that he himself would depart shortly thither.—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.—And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment-seat commanded Paul to be brought."

Charges, not particularized: said of them, not so much as that they were the same as before. "Many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove": ver. 7—such is the only account given of them.

Defence—points contained in it. As before, no offence, says ver. 8, against the law—no offence against "the temple." One point added, "Nor yet against Caesar." Good. But how comes this here? Here we have a defence, against what, it is plain, was never charged.

Festus—judge, to Defendant, ver. 9: "Wilt thou go up

to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things *before me*?"

Defendant to judge, ver. 10: "I stand at Caesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged": meaning, as appears from the direct words of appeal in the next verse,—by a Roman, not by a Jewish judicatory, ought I to be tried. Against the being judged at Cæsarea, instead of Jerusalem, he could not naturally have meant to object: at least, if the historian speaks true, in what he says about the plot for murdering the prisoner on the road.

2. "To the Jews," says ver. 10, "have I done no wrong." Thus far nothing more is said than *Not Guilty*. But now follows another trait of that effrontery, which was so leading a feature in Paul's eloquence, "as," continues he, "thou very well knowest." Now what anybody may see is,—that Festus neither did know, nor could know, any such thing. Witness the historiographer himself, who, but eight verses after, (18, 19, 20,) makes Festus himself, in discourse with King Agrippa, declare as much. But the more audacious, the more in Defendant's character; and the greater the probability, that, in the conflict between the Law-Report and the narrative, truth is on the side of the Report.

3. Conclusion: ver. 11, defendant gives judge to understand, that if he, the Defendant, has done any of the things he has been charged with, he has no objection to be put to death: but in the same breath ends with saying, "I appeal to Caesar!" submitting thus to Festus's judgment, whatever it may be, and at the same time appealing from it.

Festus judge: ver. 12, "when he had conferred with *the council*," whoever they were,—"Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar thou shalt go."

Here ends Trial IV.

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SECTION 6.

TRIAL V. AND LAST.—PLACE, STILL CÆSAREA.

This requires some previous explanation.

A few days after the last preceding trial, came to Cæsarea, says verse 13, *Agrippa and Bernice*: Festus being still there: Agrippa, sub-king of the Jews under the Romans: Bernice, it may be presumed, his queen: saluting this their superior, their only business mentioned. Follows thereupon a conversation, of which Defendant is the subject, and which continues the length of fourteen verses. Defendant having appealed to Caesar, judge has determined to send him to Caesar accordingly. But, considering that, by the emperor, on the arrival of a man sent to him in the character of a prisoner, some assigned cause, for his having been put into that condition, will naturally be looked for; and, as the only offences, the Jew stands charged with, are of a sort, which, while to the heathen emperor they would not be intelligible, would to a Jew sub-king, if to any one, be sufficiently so;—thereupon it is, that he desires his sub-majesty to join with him in the hearing of the cause, and by that means put him in a way to report upon it.

Speaking of the accusers, "they brought," says Festus to Agrippa in verse 18, "none accusation of such things as I supposed.—But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.—And because I doubted of such manner of

questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.—But Paul...had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus...." Such, as above noticed, is the declaration which the historian puts into the mouth of Festus: and this, after having so recently made Paul tell Festus, that his, Paul's, having done no wrong to the Jews, was to him, Festus, matter of such perfect knowledge.[82]

Now then comes the trial, Acts 26:1. Scene, at Cæsarea, the Emperor's Bench. Lord chief justice, Roman governor Festus; Puisne judge, Jew sub-king Agrippa. Present, "Bernice...chief captains and principal men of the city." Special accusers, none. Sole speaker, whose speech is reported, the Defendant.

Points in Defendant's speech, these:

1. Verses 2 and 3. Patient hearing requested, acknowledgment of Agrippa's special confidence.

2. Verses 4 and 5. Protestation of Phariseeism.

3. Verses 6, 7, 8. Same false insinuation as before,—Phariseeism the sole crime imputed to him.

4. Verses 9, 10, 11. Confession or avowal, whichever it is to be called, of his proceedings six-and-twenty years before, against the Christianized Jews, shutting them up in prison, in pursuance of authority from "the chief priests," down to the time of his conversion-vision. See Table I. Conversion Table.

5. Verses 12 to 20. Account of this same vision. See that same Table.

6. Declaration. "For *these* causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me."—For these

causes? For what causes? If for being a Pharisee, or preaching the general resurrection, or even the particular one,—assuredly no. But, if for the breach of trust, in joining with the state offenders, the Christianized Jews, whom he was commissioned to apprehend;—joining with those state offenders, and then bringing out the vision-story for an excuse;—if telling everybody that would hear him, that the law of the land was a dead letter;—and, if the denying he had ever done so; and, for giving himself the benefit of such mendacious denial, rendering the temple an instrument of notorious perjury;—if it was for all this, that they "went about" indeed "to kill him,"—but to kill him no otherwise than in the manner prescribed by that same law,—Jewishly speaking, they were not to blame in what they did,—humanly speaking, nothing can be seen that is not altogether natural in it.

7. Conclusion: namely, if not of what he would have said,—at any rate, of what, according to the reporter, he was permitted to say:—it is formed by a passage, in which, in continuance of his plan for keeping up his interest with the Pharisee part of the council, his ingenuity employs itself in strengthening the connection between the particular resurrection of Jesus, and the general resurrection maintained by the Pharisees.

"Having therefore," says verse 22, "obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, *witnessing* both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: —That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."—Lord Chief Justice Festus, "with a loud voice, as he,"

the Defendant, "thus spake for himself—Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad." In the mouth of a Roman, and that Roman so high in rank, the notion thus expressed had nothing in it but what was natural enough. As to the *general* resurrection, *that* was one of the above-mentioned "questions about their own superstition," which he therefore left to the Jewish judges: as to the *particular* resurrection, of this he had heard no better evidence than the defendant's: and what, in discriminating eyes, *that* was likely to be worth, the reader has by this time judged.

8. Defendant in reply, ver. 25: Not mad, but sober:—for confirmation, appeal to the Jewish sub-monarch, then and there present. "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak for the words of truth and soberness.—For the King knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded, that none of these things are hidden from him; for this was not done in a corner." Here would have been a place for the five hundred, by whom, after his resurrection, Jesus was seen at once—see above chapter—but, upon the present occasion, the general expression, here employed, was deemed preferable. "King Agrippa," continues verse 27, "believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest."

King Agrippa to Paul, ver. 28. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Paul to Agrippa: "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as I am, *except these bonds*." No bad trait of polite oratory this exception.

Assembly breaks up.—"And when he had thus spoken, the King rose up, and the governor and Bernice, and they that sat with them. And when they

were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar." Observation. In this observation, something of the obscure seems to present itself. For, Paul himself being the appellant, and *that* for no other purpose than the saving himself from death or bonds, he had but to withdraw the appeal, and, supposing a judgment pronounced to the effect thus mentioned, this was everything he could have wished from it. But, Paul having already, to judge from his Epistle to the Romans, laid the foundation of a spiritual kingdom in the metropolis of the civilized world,—it looks as if he had no objection to figure there, as we shall find him figuring accordingly, in the character of a state-prisoner, for the purpose of displaying, and in the eye of the Caesar of that day, a sample of his eloquence, in a cause so much greater than any in which that of the first Caesar could ever have displayed itself. Reason is not wanting for the supposition, that it was by what passed at the council, that the idea was first suggested to him: for "the night following, the Lord," says 23:11, "stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." The Lord has commanded me so and so, is the sort of language in which he would naturally make communication of this idea to his attendants.

The circumstantiated and dramatic style of this part of the narrative, seems to add to the probability, that, on this occasion, the historian himself was present. On this supposition, though in the Greek as well as in the English, they are represented as if they had quitted the justice-room,—any conversation, that

took place among them immediately after, in the street, might not unnaturally have been overheard by him. In chapter 24, ver. 23, stands Felix's order of admittance, as above, for Paul's acquaintance, to minister or come to him. One other attendant has appeared, in the character of his sister's son, Acts 23:16; by whom information was given to Felix, that the men there spoken of were lying in wait for him to kill him. On the occasion of this invasion of his, it would have been interesting enough to have had a complete list of his staff.

Here ends trial fifth and last: and in the next verse it is, that, together with other prisoners, and the historian at least for his free attendant, he is dispatched on his voyage. Acts 27:1. "And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.—And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, *we* launched...."

FOOTNOTES:

[81] If in any former part of this work, in speaking of this scene, the persons in question have been spoken of as having actually proceeded to acts of manual violence, it was an oversight.

As to the examination by scourging,—singular enough will naturally appear this mode of collecting evidence: declared purpose of it, "that he," the captain, "might know wherefore *they*," the Jews, "cried out against him," meaning the defendant. A simpler way would have been to have asked *them*; and, as to the scourge, what use it could have been of is not altogether obvious. To begin with torturing a

man, and proceed by questioning him, was, however, among the Romans a well-known mode of obtaining evidence. But, then and there, as now and everywhere, unless the United States form an exception, "whatever is —is right," provided always that it is by power that it is done.

[82] Acts 25:12-27.

"Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.—And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus.—And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix:—About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.—To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.—Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth:—Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed:—But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.—And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.—But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send

him to Caesar.—Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.—And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth. —And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are present with us, ye see this man about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer.—But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.—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 have somewhat to write.—For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him."

CHAPTER XVI.

Paul's Doctrines Anti-apostolic.—Was he not Anti-Christ?

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SECTION 1.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE WAS AT VARIANCE WITH THAT OF THE APOSTLES.

If Paul's pretensions to a supernatural intercourse with the Almighty were no better than a pretence;—his visit to Jerusalem, from first to last, an object of abhorrence to the Apostles and all their disciples; in a word, to all, who in the birthplace of Christianity, bore the name of Christian, and were regarded as belonging to the religion of Jesus;—if, not only to *their* knowledge, but to that of the whole population of Jerusalem, he was a depraved character, marked by the stain,—not merely of habitual insincerity, but of perjury in its most aggravated form;—if it was no otherwise than by his having declared himself a Roman citizen, that he escaped from the punishment —apparently a capital one—attached by the law of the land to the crimes of which he had been guilty; if, in a word, it was only in places, in which Jesus—his doctrines, and his Apostles—were alike unknown, that this self-declared Apostle of Jesus was received as such;—if all, or though it were but some, of these points may be regarded as established,—any further proof, in support of the position, that no doctrine of his, which is not contained in some one or other of the four Gospels, has any pretension to be regarded as part and parcel of the religion of Jesus, might well, in any ordinary case, be regarded as superfluous: and, of the several charges here brought to view, whether there be any one, of the truth of which the demonstration is not complete, the reader has all along been invited to consider with himself, and judge. If thereupon the judgment be condemnatory, the result is—that whatever is in Paul, and is not to be found in any one of the four Gospels, is not Christianity, but Paulism.

In any case of ordinary complexion, sufficient then, it is presumed, to every judicious eye, would be what the reader has seen already: but the present case is

no ordinary case. An error, if such it be, which notwithstanding all the sources of correction, which in the course of the work have at length been laid open and brought to view, has now, for upwards of seventeen centuries past, maintained its ground throughout the Christian world, cannot, without the utmost reluctance, be parted with: for dissolving the association so unhappily formed, scarcely, therefore, can any argument which reason offers be deemed superfluous.

For this purpose, one such argument, though on a preceding occasion already touched upon, remains to be brought to view. It consists of his own confession. Confession? say rather avowal: for—such is the temper of the man—in the way of boasting it is, not in the way of concession and self-humiliation that he comes out with it. Be this as it may—when, speaking of the undoubted Apostles, he himself declares, that he has received nothing from them, and that he has doctrines which are not theirs, shall he not obtain credence? Yes: for this once, it should seem, he may, without much danger of error, be taken at his word.

To see this—if he can endure the sight—will not cost the reader much trouble, Table II. *Paul disbelieved Table*, lies before him. Under the head of *Independence declared*, in Paul's Epistle to his Galatians, chapter 1, verses 11, 12, he will find these words. "But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was *preached of me is not after man*: for *I neither received it of man*, neither was *I taught, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*." Thus far Paul. If then it was not received by him by the revelation of Jesus Christ—this Gospel of his; nor yet, as he assures us, "*of man*,"—the consequence is a necessary one—it was made by him, out of his own head.

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SECTION 2.

OF CONFORMITY, USE MADE OF THE NAME OF JESUS NO PROOF.

Of the name of Jesus, whatever use he may have made—made (as it was seen) without authority—can any use, made in contradiction to this his own confession, afford any the slightest ground for regarding *his* Gospel, whatever it be,—his Gospel, or any part of it,—as belonging to the religion of Jesus? If so, then are all impostors the persons they falsely pretend to be—all counterfeit productions of any kind, genuine ones.

While preaching to Gentiles at a distance from Jerusalem, from any use he could have the assurance to make of so revered a name, it is almost superfluous to observe, how much he had to gain, and how little to lose. In a case of this sort, how much soever there may be that is offensive in the demeanour of the pretended agent eulogizing, no part of it is ascribed to the pretended principal eulogized: and, in such his eulogy, the pretended agent is not hampered by any of those considerations, by which he would stand precluded from all prospect of advantage, had he the effrontery to lay it in equally strong colours on himself. Thus, in the case of Paul, from putting in the foreground where he did, the name of Jesus, there was this great advantage to gain: and, the pretended principal being never present to disavow him, the consequence was—that, so long as no accredited and credited agents, of that same principal, were at hand to contradict his pretensions,—the mere name of this principal would be no obstacle, to the preaching of doctrines, ever so decidedly at variance with his.

If, on the other hand,—in a company, in which he was preaching doctrines of his own, which were not Jesus's,—men should happen to be present, to whom, by reason of their personal acquaintance with Jesus, or with any immediate disciples of Jesus, these same doctrines of Paul's should be perceived and declared not to be Jesus's, here would be an inconvenience: and, on this account,—wherever, without using the name of Jesus, or any other name than his own, he could be sufficiently assured, of obtaining a degree of confidence sufficient for his purpose,—this course, supposing it successful, would, on several accounts, be more advantageous.

Here then, on each occasion, or at any rate on some occasions, would be an option for him to make: namely, either to preach in the name of Jesus, or else to set up for himself:—to set up for himself, and, on the strength of a pretended revelation from the Almighty, without the intervention of Jesus, preach in no other human name than his own.

From a passage, in the first of his two Epistles to his Corinthian disciples, it looks as if an experiment of this kind—an experiment for adding nominal independence to real—had actually been tried: but that, the success of it was not such as to be followed by continuance. For this suspicion—for it is but a suspicion,—any reader who thinks it worth his while may see the grounds in the subjoined note.[83]

—

SECTION 3.

PAUL, WAS HE NOT ANTICHRIST?

A child, of Paul's ready and fruitful brain—a

bugbear, which the officious hands of the English official translators of his Epistles, have in their way christened, so to speak, by the name of *Antichrist*,—has been already brought to view. See Chap. XII. §. 4. If there be any persons, to whose religion,—in addition to a devil, with or without horns and tail,—with or without other spirits, in no less carnal howsoever unrepulsive forms,—an Antichrist is necessary for the completion of the polytheistical official establishment; and if, in place of an ideal, they can put up with a real Antichrist,—an Antichrist of flesh and blood,—they need not go far to look for one. Of Saul, alias Paul, the existence is not fabulous. If, in his time, a being there was, in whom, with the exception of some two or three attendants of his own, every person, that bore the name of Christian, beheld, and felt an opponent, and that opponent an indefatigable adversary, it was this same Paul: Yes, such he was, if, in this particular, one may venture to give credence, to what has been seen so continually testified,—testified, not by any enemy of his, but by his own dependent,—his own historiographer,—his own panegyrist,—his own steady friend. Here then, for anybody that wants an Antichrist, here is an Antichrist, and he an undeniable one.

Antichrist, as everybody sees, Antichrist means neither more nor less than that which is opposed to Christ. To Christ himself, the bugbear, christened by the English bishops *Antichrist*, was not, by its creator, spoken of as opposing itself. To Christ himself, Paul himself could not, at that time, be an opponent: the Jesus, whom he called Christ, was no longer in the flesh. But of all that, in the customary figurative sense—of all that, in any intelligible sense, could on this occasion be called *Christ*—namely, the real Apostles of Jesus, and their disciples and followers,—

Paul, if he himself is to be believed, was an opponent, if ever there was one.

Paul preached the resurrection of the dead. Agreed. But did not all Pharisees do so, too? And was not Paul a Pharisee? And Jesus—had he not in all Pharisees so many opponents? And the real Christians, had they anywhere in his lifetime, any other opponent so acrid or so persevering as this same Paul?

Paul preached the resurrection of the dead. Agreed. But *that* resurrection of the dead which he preached, was it not a resurrection, that was to take place in the lifetime of himself and other persons then living? And—any such resurrection, did it accordingly take place?[84]

FOOTNOTES:

[83] "Were ye baptized," says he, speaking to his Corinthians, 2 Cor. ii. 13. "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?—I thank God," continues he, "that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius,—Lest any man should say that I had baptized in mine own name.—And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other." For an experiment of this kind, it should seem from that Epistle, that motives were by no means wanting. For, among these same disciples, in the preaching of his doctrines, he had found himself annoyed by divers names more or less formidable: there was the name, though probably never the person—of *Cephas*, the real Hebrew name, of which, in the four Gospels, written as they are in Greek, *Peter* is the translation: there was the

name, and not improbably the person—of *Apollos*, whom, about three years before, Acts 18:18-26, two female disciples of Paul's, Aquila and Priscilla, had at Ephesus enlisted under his banners: there was, according to him, *the name of Christ*, though assuredly, never the person of *Jesus*.

"For it hath been declared unto me of you, brethren," says he, 1 Cor. i. 11, "that there are contentions among you,—Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." Thereupon follows immediately a short flourish of Paulian eloquence:—"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" and so forth, as above.

"Division," says he, "among you:" in this phrase may be seen the style of modern royalty. Towards a will so intimately connected with the divine as the royal, no such temper of mind, so intolerable as opposition, is ever to be supposed: were it on all occasions equally known—known to all, and alike interpreted by all, no division could have place: but, some put one interpretation upon it, some another: in some eyes, this course is regarded as best adapted to the giving effect to it; in others, that: hence that division, to which, on every occasion, it is the duty of all to put the speediest end. Now then as to Paul. This same assumed fatherly affection, under the name of elder-brotherly—this desire of seeing concord among brethren—what was it in plain truth? Answer, love of power. Would you have proof? Take in hand this same Epistle of his to his Corinthians, or, if at verse the tenth, it will be to this purpose early enough, and read on, till you come to chapter iv. verses 15, 16. "Now I

beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.—For it hath been declared unto me," and so forth, as above. Read on, and at length you will come to the essence of all this good advice, 1 Cor. 4:15. "For, though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ," says he, "yet have ye not many fathers; for, in Christ Jesus, *I have begotten you*, through the Gospel.—Wherefore, I beseech you, *be ye followers of me*."

At this time, it should seem that, on the occasion of this his courtship of the Jews of Corinth, not only was the name of Peter an object of his declared rivalry, but the name and person of his own sub-disciple Apollos, an object of his jealousy. "For, while one saith," 1 Cor. iii. 4, "I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not," says he, "carnal?—Who then," continues he, "is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?—I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.—Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." Fifteen verses after comes a flourish, in which Apollos is spoken of for the last time. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours;—23. And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." At the word *Cephas* ends, it may have been observed, common sense: what follows being dust for the eyes: dust, composed of the flowers of Saulo-Paulian eloquence.

As to Apollos, if so it was, that, at one time, in the mind of our spiritual monarch, any such sentiment as jealousy, in regard to this sub-minister had place, it seems to have been afterwards, in some way or other, removed: for, in his Epistle to Titus, bearing date about seven years after, namely A.D. 64, the devotion of the subject seems to have been entire. Speaking to Titus, Tit. 3:13, "Bring with you," says Paul, "Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos, on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting to them."

[84] Paul must have thought that he had the Church at Corinth under complete control of his hypnotic suggestion or otherwise so much under his control as to assume the exalted office of Clairvoyant Oracle without question. He says, 2 Cor. 1-7, "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord, I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not, God knoweth). Such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not, God knoweth); how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. On behalf of such a one will I glory: but on mine own behalf I will not glory, save in my weakness. For if I should desire to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I shall speak the truth: but I forbear, lest any man should account of me above that which he seeth me to be, or heareth from me.

"And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations—wherefore, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me *a*

thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

"And he has said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee."

It would require a Swift, Dryden, Pope, Milton or Knowles to stage the above so as make appreciable objective quantities out of the above verbal terms. They might create characters and give them the plumage of angels, nymphs, spirits, heathen gods, etc., and so feast the imagination into paranoia.

"Thorn in the flesh." This phrase has baffled the Ecclesiastics. The earlier Commentators interpreted it to mean Paul's great disappointment in all his schemes to subordinate the Apostles of Christ to his personal dominion of which so much has been disparaged by the author.

END.

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