

Moses came and told the people all the words of Jahve. The people promise to do all the words Jahve has spoken. On the next day the covenant between Jahve and His people is read. Then Jahve commands Moses to go up into the mount in order to receive the law that He Himself has written upon tables of stone. Moses went up, and Jahve read to him the legislation, Exodus xxi.-xxiii. 13, and gave the tables to Moses.

Before concluding this article two questions must yet be answered: "What is the relation between the second Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv. 14-26 and the Book of the Covenant? How is it that the Ten Commandments are not mentioned in the original form of the tradition of Exodus?"

B. D. EERDMANS.

*HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST
EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.*

VIII. THE FALSE TEACHERS AND THEIR PLACE IN THE
EARLY CHURCH.

IN the preceding Section the attempt has been made to put clearly the question regarding the position in the Church of the false teachers, whom Paul describes in this and in the other Pastoral Epistles. That the same class of teachers is alluded to in all three Epistles is universally admitted; and we have assumed it from the outset.

There is not the slightest ground for classing these false teachers along with the great leaders and teachers of heresies in the second and later centuries. Paul's attitude to them is totally different from that of the Church leaders in that subsequent period to the heretics and the heresiarchs; and his description of the false teachers contains little that suits those heretic leaders, while it contains a good deal that is inconsistent with those later heretic sects and their

founders. The Pastoral Epistles set before us a time in which almost everything connected with the Church is still fluid and inchoate. Organization, administration, the order and manner of Church service, etc., are not yet settled, but are only in process of evolution. On the other hand the heretics of the second century diverged from an already established rule and order; and were regarded by their Orthodox opponents as doing so.

The Pastoral Epistles should be interpreted throughout on this plane of inchoateness. They refer to the circumstances of a growing, not of a fixed and matured, Church. The words of the writer are pregnant with meaning, and yet one must not everywhere insist too much on the words. The circumstances to which they referred were sometimes only the incomplete stage of something which should hereafter become fixed and definite, sometimes perhaps obsolescent and about to give place to another more permanent fact.

The preceding paragraph must not be understood as detracting in any way from the continuity and uniformity of development that characterized the early Church. The present writer is as strongly convinced as any one can be that the Church in the first century is an example of singularly regular growth and that the germ of almost everything in the second-century Church can be traced in the earliest stages of that Church's history. The development was, in a sense, natural and inevitable; the seed grew into the tree. But the development was inevitable only in the environment: it would have been stunted or altered in a different environment. Paul, who watched over and in an exceptional degree guided—so far as human powers could be said to guide—that development, considered that it was accomplished in a perfectly normal way, according to its own nature, because the environment of the Roman Empire

was suitable for it,—because the Purpose and Will of God had selected that time and those surroundings—because, “when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son.” Such was his opinion at an earlier date, when he was writing to the Galatians (iv. 4; cp. i. 15, 16) and to the Ephesians (i. 10); and there is no reason to think he had changed his mind one whit in this regard, when he wrote to Timothy. It is quite evident that he was, if possible, more firmly convinced than ever of the truth of his own earlier view.

Now, however, he saw more clearly the difficulties of the case. In the course of his own experience he had learned more easily and quickly to appreciate the external difficulties and the way of meeting them; but the internal difficulties were always present to him, and they seemed only to grow more numerous, more aggravated and more dangerous as time passed. In each stage of the growth of the Church, as one internal difficulty was surmounted, there seemed to arise others greater and worse. Human nature was subject to an endless series of errors. The weakness, the follies, and the earlier habits of the young converts were always asserting their power. Even the excellences of individuals were liable to turn into faults and to produce dangers. The Jewish Christians, who formed an appreciable, though usually a small, part in all those congregations of the Aegean and the Anatolian lands, started their life in the Church on a much higher platform of moral knowledge, if not always of moral practice, than the ordinary pagan converts; but in different ways there were as many and as grave dangers from the former as from the latter class of members.

Anxieties like these were always weighing heavy on Paul's spirit, and prompted the warnings and advice on points of detail, as they occurred to him, which he noted down and sent to Timothy in this first Epistle. The warnings are sometimes, apparently, rather disjointed and un-

connected ; but they have a real connexion in the nature of Paul's mind, always pondering over and sympathizing with the difficulties to which his converts and his coadjutors were exposed. They are strung on the thread of his own personal character : they follow the order in which his mind recurred to them. Nor does this anxiety as to Timothy's success in his difficult task imply any unfair or too great mistrust of Paul's comrade of many years. Paul would doubtless have felt the same anxiety about his own success in that task : he was often distressed and terrified respecting his power of accomplishing the work that lay before him : " he was afflicted on every side : without were fightings, within were fears " (2 Cor. vii. 5). If we had his own meditations and his warnings to himself, we should probably find that he often gave himself counsels of the same kind that he gives to Timothy.

Among those difficulties that Timothy had to face the false teachers seem to have roused most apprehension in Paul's mind, if we may argue from the frequency with which they recur in the Epistles. Either they were a very serious danger, or Paul was afraid lest Timothy might be unable to stand against them : they were clever in specious reasoning, fluent in words, and confident in their own powers, whereas Timothy was rather timid and distrustful of himself, and in all probability neither very highly educated nor very smart as a speaker. There was, therefore, serious danger lest they might intimidate and browbeat him, and thus obtain the mastery in the Asian congregations. A boy brought up in so remote and rude a colony as Lystra was not well equipped by his early training for facing such opponents as those false teachers. They were all the more dangerous because they were not open enemies. They do not seem to have taught anything consciously opposed to the fundamental truths of Christianity. They were members of the

congregation. They were obeying in their own way the precept of Paul, and the opinion universal in the Church of that time, that every Christian should be a teacher. It was difficult for the less nimble-witted Timothy to cope with their quick and well-trained intellects.

To get some clearer idea as to the character, position, and profession of those teachers, we must of course begin by putting together all that is said about them in the Pastoral Epistles: that has been already done in many excellent books, and need not be formally repeated here.¹ But it is necessary also to interpret these scattered allusions, and to reconstruct the figure from the fragmentary details. The reconstruction must be made in the light of all that is known about the social conditions of such cities as Ephesus at that period; and it is inevitable that a certain element of subjective opinion should be applied in the process. The picture which we draw cannot be proved to be certain in all its details; and it will be least convincing to those who are thoroughly familiar with the accepted views about Greek cities and Greek society in the classical period without going on to study carefully the scanty evidence regarding the Hellenistic cities of Asia in the century before and after Christ: there are profound differences between the society of Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. (as we all learn about it for many years at school and college) and the society of such a town as Ephesus in the time of St. Paul; and many details of the later life assume a different aspect to, and are misinterpreted by those who have too thoroughly and exclusively saturated themselves with the other Greek knowledge. It is more really useful to compare the Ephesus

¹ Especially, 1 Tim. i. 4-10, 19-20, iv. 1-8, vi. 3-5, 9, 20 f.; 2 Tim. ii. 14-18, 23-25, iii. 6-8, iv. 4; Tit. i. 9-11, 13-16, ii.-iii. 9. Some of these refer to the future, and are expressed in the future tense; but they refer, not to future dangers and heresies, but to the inevitable consequences of present errors.

of the period in question with the educated Roman society of the early Empire, for education at Rome in that period was largely Hellenistic in character.

We must in the outset lay down as our guiding principles (1) that the early Christian Churches in the Aegean lands did not cut themselves off from the education of their own time; (2) that the education of their time was (as described above ¹) far too exclusively given up to words, and too little concerned with the study of real things. The early Christian Churches in the Aegean lands consisted largely of the energetic middle classes, who were comparatively well-to-do through their industry and trade, and who were favourably disposed towards education (as the Hellenic race always has been and still is) and able in their comfortable circumstances to have leisure for acquiring education.² In Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, he shows his fear that already at that early stage in its history the Church of Corinth was dangerously prone to philosophic and dialectic display. In writing to the Colossians (ii. 8) he warns them "to let no one make them a prey through the philosophy which is an empty deceit." The same danger existed in those Churches which fills him with growing anxiety later, when he was writing the Pastoral Epistles. In every pagan social gathering of which we know any details, the guests prided themselves on making some show of their interest in and knowledge of literature or mythology or philosophy. There is no reason to think that the Christians were free from this foible—which has its good side as well as its bad side. They were men of their time, with its faults and its excellences;

¹ EXPOSITOR, June, 1909, p. 491 f. The passage referred to in the *Agamemnon*, 740 ff., is more genealogical in Paley's text than in that of the MSS. or of later editors; but the idea is there in all forms of the text.

² I would venture to correct in this respect Professor Deissmann's teaching in his valuable articles in the EXPOSITOR Feb.-April, 1909.

and from St. Paul's letters we gather that they had a liberal share of its faults.

It must also be remembered what a large and important part was played in the society of the period by teachers of philosophy. When all classes of the population, which were sufficiently well off to have any leisure, loved to make some show of education and skill in literary and philosophic discussion, it is evident that there was abundant opening for teachers of philosophy in every city. To illustrate the language of the Pastoral Letters about the false teachers, we turn to the writers who describe the society of the first century, Petronius, Suetonius, Juvenal, Statius, Martial, etc.; and we recognize the same general type in a character often mentioned by them. This character was one which has no exact modern counterpart. The class of persons described by those writers present certain features corresponding to many different classes of persons in modern society, schoolmasters, private tutors, popular lectures, university professors, Sunday-school teachers, professional entertainers in social meetings, preachers: they have some of the features of each, but all the features of none. They were of the most varied kind and type themselves, from men of the loftiest moral standard ever attained in pagan society to persons little above vulgar magicians or buffoons. They were usually foreigners in Italy, coming from Greece or the Greek-speaking cities of Asia; and native-born Italians tried to compete with them, but failed lamentably in the competition.

Take, for example, Juvenal's picture, bearing in mind his tendency to exaggerate (in which respect he is perhaps worse than any other writer that has ever won literary fame) and to paint in black and detestable colours. The words which have been used above, on p. 170, about the false teachers in Ephesus and other Aegean cities, "clever in

specious reasoning, fluent in words, and confident in their own powers," might almost be regarded as an unconscious translation¹ of Juvenal's words about the Greeks who crowded into Rome, coming from Samos, Tralleis, Alabanda, and other cities of Asia and islands of the Aegean Sea : *ingenium velox, audacia perditā, sermo promptus* : their quick intellect, unblushing self-confidence, and ready oratory made them far too clever for the more slow-witted and less versatile Romans to cope with. Many other features are common to the two pictures. Both Paul and Juvenal give a bad account of the moral character of those persons, of their false pretences, and of the influence which they exerted on the households and families into which they were admitted, and the way in which they gained their influence. According to Paul they were corrupted in mind (1 Tim. vi. 5 ; 2 Tim. iii. 8) : they " creep into houses and take captive silly women laden with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth " (2 Tim. iii. 6, 7) : " evil men and impostors² shall wax worse and worse " (2 Tim. iii. 13) : " they overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake " (Tit. i. 11) : " giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron " (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2) :³ in the congregations people " will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts ; and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables " (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4 ; Tit. i. 14). Juvenal⁴ tells how they insinuate them-

¹ Sat. III. 70 ff. It was only after the preceding pages of the present article had been written, when I began to put on paper in order the features of the Ephesian teachers, that the analogy with Juvenal's description occurred to my mind with startling vividness.

² Wizards would be nearer the meaning than " impostors " ; but the two ideas pass into one another.

³ This passage relates to the future, but the future is the effect of the teaching that has already begun.

⁴ It has sometimes been wrongly inferred from III. 83, that Juvenal

selves into wealthy households, where they become dear and intimate friends (iii. 72); they are teachers of literature, oratory, etc., physicians, magicians: they adapt themselves to every humour of their patrons with cunning hypocrisy: they practise on the vices and weaknesses of every member of the household: they betray their own pupils to death (iii. 16). As Paul consigns them to Satan (1 Tim. i. 20), Juvenal loathes the very city where they have settled (iii. 60).

Paul dwells most on those sides of their character which he found most dangerous to his converts: Juvenal describes with special care either what was ugly and repulsive (so that his words often defy quotation), or the qualities which aided their competition with himself as a humble friend in the same household, whom they completely outshone in the estimation of the family. It would be easy to complete the analogy by quoting from other writers of the period (and from other passages in Juvenal) characteristics of these Greek teachers corresponding to every trait which Paul mentions, e.g., the kind of teaching that they gave in mythology, empty verbal dialectic, pretentious moral theories about the simple and ascetic life (in striking contrast with the conduct of the teachers). The striking feature of difference lies in the teaching of celibacy, to which Paul refers, and to which I cannot quote any sufficient parallel. But this difference brings us to the consideration of an apparent difference in nationality. Paul several times mentions the Judaistic character of the false teaching.¹ The teaching of celibacy springs from a mixture of Oriental with western speculation and teaching. The speculative teachers in the

is here describing Greek slaves, who have risen in the world through the Roman slave-market; but the line will not bear this inference; and the picture as a whole is that of free Greek strangers, who win their way first as teachers, and afterwards by their universal talents and their versatility.

¹ 1 Tim. i. 7 and Tit. iii. 9; Tit. i. 10, 14, 15; 1 Tim. iv. 3, 8.

Pauline Churches found a special source of inspiration and profit in the weaving of theories which affected a synthesis of Hebrew and Greek thought. That sort of speculation was readily received in the early Church, where every one who could think was thinking about the relation between the Jewish and the Christian teaching, between the Law of Moses and the doctrine of Christ.

But such differences of teaching existed necessarily in different localities. The teachers adapted themselves to the varying requirements of different people. There is no reason to doubt that similar differences would be observable between the pagan teachers in different regions, and even in different households of the same city. Where the teacher found a place in a Roman family that was interested in Oriental ideas, and perhaps practised the worship of Sabazios or of Isis, he adapted himself to the tastes of his hearers. Theories which brought together western and eastern ideas and myths and deities were fashionable and frequent in the Imperial time. Juvenal speaks chiefly of Greek teachers; but he really has in mind those Hellenistic teachers, whose language was Greek although they were often Syrian or Egyptian or Cilician by birth. The Stoic teacher whom he describes as having betrayed his own pupil to death was a native of Beyrout (Berytos); and he says that Rome was full of Syrians and Syrian vices (iii. 116, 66).

In short, we must conclude that the false teachers of the Pastoral Epistles are only a species of the general class of popular instructors and lecturers who were found over the whole Roman world throughout the Imperial period. The species adapted itself to the local conditions and the tastes of their patrons. These teachers taught for the sake of earning a livelihood or making a fortune: not because they were filled and inspired with the knowledge of the truth and compelled to utter the knowledge which burned in their

hearts. They had not been selected by the congregations to be officials and teachers. They were volunteers, and they had to seek pupils by specious arts, by teaching what would make them popular, even (as Paul declares) by practising on the superstitions and on the vices of the weak and foolish.

In this there is nothing that is inconsistent with the period 60-70 B.C. It is probable that the letter to the Colossians briefly refers to teachers of the same class, though this opinion may be disputed by some scholars, who would prefer to regard the Colossian heretics as missionaries coming in to combat the Pauline doctrine. However that may be, the picture given in the Pastoral Epistles is sufficiently detailed to give certainty. The teachers there described may be placed quite as probably in A.D. 65 as in A.D. 95; and the fluid, unformed condition of the congregations forbids us absolutely to put the Epistles later than the first century.

In illustration of the readiness with which such teachers might find an opening in the early Church, we must not forget that Paul and other missionaries, when they entered for the first time into one of those cities of the Aegean lands, appeared to the population in the same character, as volunteer lecturers in philosophy and morals. It was expected that, as soon as they had acquired popularity and were sought after, they would begin to charge fees and make money; and Paul maintains that the teacher who gave right teaching was worthy of being paid, though he himself preferred always to give his instruction free, and rather to earn his living by manual labour and to teach only in the intervals of working.¹

The exaggerated picture which Juvenal draws of the

¹ In Ephesus "from the fifth to the tenth hour" (Acts xix. 9), Bezan text: he evidently worked as a craftsman from break of day to the fifth hour (xx. 34).

moral character of the Graeco-Asiatic teachers whom he describes cannot, of course, be applied to the false teachers in the Ephesian and other Asian congregations. His picture is false even about Roman society. He was an exaggerator by nature as well as by intention and habit. He took the occasional evils and described them as the normal character of the teachers, whom he hated as successful rivals. But, further, many and serious as were the faults of the converts in Paul's Churches, those congregations represented a distinctly higher level of moral life and conduct than ruled in ordinary pagan society. Hence Paul's picture wants the blackness of Juvenal's. He alludes to moral faults in the Ephesian teachers ; but when his statements are carefully read, the worst moral features are seen to be more in the future than in the present : the evils are going to be the result of special and conceited theorizing, but there is no reason to think that they were all existent already. Paul is rather uttering warnings than denouncing crimes.

Some scholars find that there is a difference of tone in the three Pastoral Epistles towards the false teachers, and that this difference cannot be explained in any other way than as a consequence of the progressive development of the false teaching. If the view stated above is even approximately correct, there was no single heresy, with a definite tendency and line of development of its own ; and therefore there can be no possibility of explaining the difference in Paul's tone toward the false teachers by the development and growing intensity of its peculiar system of error. There was, as we think, no system of error : There was only an unregulated and therefore dangerous habit of using opportunities for gaining a livelihood by specious and unstable teaching : the false teachers had no common doctrine except the Christian Faith, which

they were united in assuming to be true, but they had no right understanding of it in itself, or of the Mosaic Law, or of the relation between the two. The cure lay in supplying right teaching in place of this haphazard and capricious teaching; and this was possible only through better organization and regulation of the congregation and through steady insistence on the right doctrine, which ought to be consistently placed before learners by all teachers.

Here, as everywhere in the study of the Pastoral Letters, everything depends on the point of view; and the champions of the opinion and argument which we have just alluded to have been misled by the presumption, which underlay their thought from the beginning, that there was a definite school of heretical doctrine against which the writer of the three Epistles is directing all his efforts. In fact, we find that in this, as so often in the so-called "Higher Criticism," the entire position is assumed in the outset: grant the preliminary assumption, and the rest follows with unerring logic. If the foundation is safe, the rest of the building is often faultless and lasting. Unfortunately, we hold the preliminary assumption to be wrong, and the foundation of the structure to be unstable as a quicksand.

How then explain the difference of tone in the Epistles? The slight difference of tone is due to subjective, not to objective causes. It arose in Paul's mind and nature, and was not forced on him by external circumstances and by the more defined and alarming character of the false teaching. The view against which we are contending is that in 2 Timothy the danger is least, the condemnation mildest, and the heresy vaguest and least sharply defined; Titus occupies a middle position; and in 1 Timothy there is the sharpest and clearest definition, the strongest condemnation, and the most vivid apprehension of the danger.

The conclusion from this statement of the facts is that 2 Timothy was composed last, and 1 Timothy first, of the three Epistles. The case for the authenticity of the Pastoral Letters is thereby annihilated, for they allude to historical facts in the opposite order : in 1 Timothy Paul is free and planning further travels and missionary enterprises : in 2 Timothy he is in prison, and his condemnation and death are imminent. If 2 Timothy is a genuine writing of Paul's, it is almost the last expression of his wishes in life. From this, again, it follows that the writer deliberately and intentionally took on himself the character of Paul, and placed his letters successively in certain situations of Paul's life, inserting references to the circumstances of the Apostle in order to give verisimilitude to the letters and to cheat readers into the belief that they were composed by the founder of the Ephesian and other Aegean Churches, and thus to gain increased authority for his statement of his own views.

As to the difference of tone between Titus and 1 Timothy the case seems to me to break down entirely. I see none. The one letter is a much briefer statement of advice which is practically on the same stage as the warnings and counsel given in the other.

The difference in tone between 1 and 2 Timothy is extremely interesting. It is the difference between the tone of a fighter in the midst of a keen struggle and the tone of the same man on his deathbed. The earlier letter is the harder, sharper and more threatening expression of the combatant ; whereas 2 Timothy is the milder and gentler word of him whose warfare is over. But even in 2 Timothy the tone is every whit as serious : Paul regards the danger in as grave a light as formerly ; but he does not condemn his present opponents so sharply ; he rather insists on the future consequences that will result from

their line of action and teaching. In a sense, the condemnation expressed in 2 Timothy iii. 1-9 is as uncompromising as anything in 1 Timothy. The dying Apostle has not relaxed a whit in his warfare against error and wrong. But on the whole there is a gentler tone in the last letter, and a firmer conviction that the evil is evanescent and that the right will win. This difference in tone, misunderstood by an unsympathetic judgment contemplating the facts from a false point of view, is the foundation for an imposing but perishable structure of theory.

The false teachers of Ephesus interest us both as a stage in the history of education, and as a moment in the development of organization and discipline in the Church; but they play no part and have no importance in the development of doctrine, for they do not represent a heretical movement or system, but their teaching was the result of a tendency of human nature. They present certain analogies to the Sophists in Athens in the fifth century. Like the Sophists they were a heterogeneous aggregate of individual teachers, having no common system of thought to form them into a class, but having a common aim, viz., to make a livelihood and a reputation by teaching, and seeking this aim by methods similar in the different cases, because they were suggested by the circumstances of the situation and by the nature of human beings. It is always the case that such volunteer teachers, competing with one another, are tempted to seek for popularity by accommodating themselves to the weaknesses of the people whom they seek to attract. Individual teachers resist this temptation, and if they are possessed of strong character and endowed with considerable powers in their profession, they may not suffer from their resistance, but win success and be respected all the more because they have resisted a serious temptation. But the temptation is too strong

for many of the competitors, especially for the weaker ones. It is easy to find much to say in defence alike of the Sophists and of the Ephesian false teachers ; but the fact remains that both were condemned on similar grounds by the greatest of thinkers and moralists in their own time ; and history must pronounce the decision, that they were a dangerous phenomenon in the development of society and education.

In the development of organization in the Church the false teachers also had a distinct importance. How was this danger to be met ? So far as Paul could see, the cure lay in stricter discipline within the Church, and in placing the teaching more exclusively under the care of persons approved by the choice of the congregation after scrutiny of their character and knowledge and doctrinal position. For this purpose organization must be systematized and strengthened, and the virtue of obedience to authority must be inculcated. That is the general subject and tendency of the Pastoral Letters, as contrasted with the earlier Pauline Letters ; and this characteristic it is which most brings their authenticity under suspicion. Yet the development in Paul's views seems natural and necessary, if he lived long enough : i.e. if he was not condemned to death at the first Roman trial. There is always in every spiritual and intellectual movement the same sequence : first, the insistence on the individual freedom and the individual right to live his own intellectual and moral life : then, the realization by experience of the other truth, that man is not really free when he is left too much to individual caprice, that he attains true freedom best under the reign of law, and that the virtue of obedience must be cultivated carefully, because only through obedience does one learn to be free, and only by obeying the law can one attain to freedom from the law. Such is the lesson

that we who are engaged in the practical work of education at the present day in this country are learning; and we have not learned it sufficiently. Many teachers who have lived long enough must be conscious of having gone through a similar development of view and method to that which is observed in the earlier and in the Pastoral Epistles of Paul.

As we have stated above, much can be said in defence of the false teachers; and, when we scrutinize the three letters carefully, we find that Paul's condemnation is stronger of the results and future consequences of their teaching than of their actual present character. The moral evils that originate from them are rather contingent and future than actual and present. Their influence on "silly women, laden with sins" (2 Tim. iii. 6)¹ is a feature that looks very ugly, especially when one thinks of the character and faults of ancient life. But we must bear in mind that, in that stage of religious development, it is the more emotional and frivolous who are most easily led into extremes of fantastic and emotional religiosity. Paul foresaw the prospect that various abnormal types of an over-excited and enthusiastic religious devotion might acquire a hold on that kind of women whose feelings were stronger than their judgment; and in guarding against this he insists on the need for inculcating a norm and rule and law. Yet a careful weighing of all the references in the Epistles certainly points to the result that the Apostle was taking this danger at a very early stage, and did not allow it to grow serious before he began to organize precautions against it. The Epistles belong to an early stage—a very early stage indeed—in Church history.

¹ One need hardly guard against the misinterpretation that this is Paul's characterization of all women. The master of Luke did not think like that; but he was painfully well aware that such is one class of women.

Only in this interpretation of their meaning and purpose can we reconcile the evidence about Ephesus contained in the two letters to Timothy, with the strong and hearty testimony which the Revelation and the letter of Ignatius bear to the services rendered by the Ephesians in detecting and rejecting false teachers, and to their career of patient truth and steadfast love "for my name's sake."¹ The evidence from widely different sources works into the one uniform picture, when all is rightly contemplated.

There are two questions which insistently present themselves on this subject: Was St. Paul's opposition to these teachers successful? and, if so, what was likely to be the effect on Christian society?

That his opposition was successful seems beyond question. The authority of the officials appointed in each congregation gradually established itself, and was fully and generally recognized early in the second century. The volunteer teachers' profession seems to have decayed and disappeared in the Church. The results were unfortunate: the counsel given in the Pastoral Epistles was regarded as complete and final, whereas it ought to have been treated as only the beginning of legislation. The Epistles readily open to be misinterpreted in the sense that Christian teaching should be in the hands, or at least under the control, of the Church officials (presbyters or bishops and deacons then, bishop with presbyters and deacons later). In the Lycaonian Church of the fourth century it would appear almost that the priests were the only teachers; at least, the office of teaching is mentioned in various epitaphs as if it were an important and necessary part of their official duties.² Dr.

¹ *Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 240.

² Some evidence bearing on this matter is collected in the writer's book *Luke the Physician, and other Studies in the History of Religion*: see the last paper in that volume.

Bigg, in his singularly able, learned, and suggestive book on *The Church's Task in the Roman Empire*, points out that the education of Christian children lay largely in the hands of pagan teachers. This proves that the discouragement of the volunteer teachers was successful, and that the substitution of clerical in place of lay teaching (which was practically the result, though these terms clerical and lay anticipate the actual facts of the second century, and are therefore rather anachronistic) was unable to supply the educational needs of the congregations. The needed supplement to the Pastoral Epistles was the establishment of an educational system in Christian society. The task was too great. The forces of the empire were against it. The tendency was for education to degenerate and disappear. Despotism in government, apathy among the governed, increasing rigidity of caste and class distinctions in society, the system of cheap amusements and charitable feeding of an idle and uneducated proletariat were destroying the empire. Very few among the leaders of the Church in post-Pauline times felt the need and the value of education in Christian society. None attained to a statesmanlike conception of the nature, causes, and cure of the evil. Whether Paul, if he had lived, would have met the situation cannot be known. He was cut off immediately after the Pastoral Letters were written; and their purpose was narrowed and hardened in the estimation of subsequent generations.

W. M. RAMSAY.