

ST. PAUL IN ROME
5. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS¹

By F. F. BRUCE, M.A., D.D.

RYLANDS PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND EXEGESIS IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

I

FOUR years ago the first lecture in this series ended with the hope that, in view of the ambiguity of the closing sentences of Acts regarding the outcome of Paul's hearing before the emperor or his deputy, and Paul's fortunes at the end of his two years of house-arrest, Paul's own epistles might throw more light on the question.² On this point it cannot be said that our hope has been fulfilled, whatever other matters of interest have emerged on the way.

Colossians and Ephesians, although written in captivity, do not provide the kind of evidence we should require. Philemon expresses Paul's expectation that he will soon be able to pay a further visit to friends in the province of Asia; this in itself has been used to cast doubt on the Roman provenance of this letter. Philemon, indeed, is so closely associated with Colossians that it must have been sent at the same time and from the same place, but we have argued that the doctrine of Colossians (especially the presentation of the church as the body of which Christ is the head) is too developed, in comparison (say) with 1 Corinthians and Romans, for this letter to be dated during Paul's Ephesian ministry, in which case it would be nearly contemporary with 1 Corinthians and earlier than Romans.³ Philippians, where also the hope of release is fairly confidently cherished, has not been treated in the present series, because I have inclined hitherto to date it during the Ephesian ministry, following in this regard my predecessor, who treated it in the course of his series on "St. Paul in Ephesus".⁴

¹ A lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library on Wednesday, the 8th of November 1967.

² BULLETIN, xlvi (1963-4), 345.

³ Ibid. xlviii (1965-6), 273.

⁴ Ibid. xxiii (1939), pp. 182 ff., reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (Manchester, 1962), pp. 149 ff.

Perhaps insufficient attention has been given to the case for the Caesarean dating of the epistles dealt with in the present series of lectures. This case will shortly, I believe, be presented afresh by an American scholar, Dr. John J. Gunther, who has kindly permitted me to see part of his work in advance of publication. But even if all three were proved to be of Caesarean provenance—i.e. written during Paul's two years' custody under Felix, before his appeal to Caesar—the amount of relevant evidence to be gathered from them concerning Paul's Roman imprisonment would not be greatly diminished, for as it is there is little to gather except that, if they were indeed sent from Rome, Paul's immediate intention now was to return to Asia and not go straight on to Spain.

Another portion of Paul's correspondence which at least one scholar has interpreted in relation to his Roman imprisonment is 2 Corinthians x-xiii. That these four chapters did not originally belong to the same letter as chapters i-ix has been widely held for two or three generations, but those who have held this have tended to look on chapters x-xiii as part of the "severe letter" written between 1 and 2 Corinthians, to which Paul refers back in 2 Corinthians ii. 3 f., 9, vii. 8, 12.¹ There are, however, features in chapters x-xiii which suggest a later date than chapters i-ix²: for example, what Paul says in 2 Corinthians xii. 18 about the mission of Titus to Corinth seems to refer back, after some lapse of time, to the sending of Titus announced in 2 Corinthians viii. 6 ff. But how long a lapse of time should be envisaged?

In 1949 L. P. Pherigo contributed an article to the *Journal of Biblical Literature*³ in which he argued that chapters x-xiii were written after Paul's release from the Roman imprisonment of Acts xxviii. 30 f. The case, though ably argued, is not cogent. There is nothing in 2 Corinthians x-xiii which presupposes a recent Roman imprisonment as its background; the theory,

¹ Cf. T. W. Manson, BULLETIN, xxvi (1941-2), pp. 101 f., 327, reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, pp. 190 f., 210.

² Cf. C. K. Barrett, "Christianity at Corinth", BULLETIN, xlvi (1963-4), 269 ff., esp. 286 ff.

³ L. P. Pherigo, "Paul and the Corinthian Church", *J.B.L.* lxxviii (1949), 341 ff.

moreover, requires us to suppose that Paul paid no visit to Corinth since the "sorrowful visit" alluded to in 2 Corinthians ii. 1 until after his Roman imprisonment, when the promised—or threatened—visit of 2 Corinthians xii. 14, xiii. 1, was announced as forthcoming. This implies that Paul's three months in "Greece" (i.e. Achaia), mentioned in Acts xx. 3, did not include a visit to Corinth, that "Gaius my host" of Romans xvi. 23 is not the Corinthian Gaius and that "Erastus the city chamberlain" mentioned in the next sentence is not the Erastus whose pavement came to light in Corinth in 1929¹—despite the fact that at the beginning of Romans xvi (which, regardless of its destination, was sent at the same time as Romans i-xv²) Phoebe, deaconess of the church of Cenchreae, the eastern seaport of Corinth, is commended to the recipients. Much that Professor Pherigo says in this article and in a later one³ about the probability of Paul's release after his two years in Rome is worthy of serious consideration, but his hypothesis of the date and life-setting of 2 Corinthians x-xiii does not contribute to the strength of his general argument.

II

We have still to look at the Pastoral Epistles. Their evidence is not conclusive, for even if their Pauline authorship be accepted *simpliciter*, such a sober historian of early Christianity as J. Vernon Bartlet found it possible to date all three in the period before Paul's arrival in Rome.⁴ If, on the other hand, they represent *disiecta membra* of Paul's correspondence and instruction, collected by one or more of his friends and disciples, and given a continuous form by means of editorial additions (a work of *pietas* such as some of us have undertaken from time to time),

¹ Cf. P. N. Harrison, *Paulines and Pastorals* (London, 1964), pp. 100 ff. and frontispiece.

² Cf. T. W. Manson, "St. Paul's Letter to the Romans—and Others", *BULLETIN*, xxxi (1948), 224 ff., reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, pp. 225 ff.

³ L. P. Pherigo, "Paul's Life after the Close of Acts", *J.B.L.* lxx (1951), 277 ff.

⁴ J. V. Bartlet, "The Historic Setting of the Pastoral Epistles", *Expositor*, series 8, v (1913), 28 ff., 161 ff., 256 ff., 325 ff.

then it is not necessary to date all the authentically Pauline passages at the same time (and the same is true of the "fragment" hypothesis propounded by P. N. Harrison).¹ Some of the passages might then belong to earlier phases of Paul's career (his Ephesian ministry, for example), while others might belong to the last phase, such as the passage beginning "I am now ready to be poured out as a libation and the time of my release is at hand" (2 Tim. iv. 6) and probably the reference to Onesiphorus (2 Tim. i. 16-18).

It is appropriate to mention here two recent proposals towards a solution of the Pastoral problem, both associated with Manchester.

One is the Manson Memorial Lecture delivered in November 1964 by C. F. D. Moule and published in the *BULLETIN* the following March.² Professor Moule, recognizing on the one hand the difficulties in the way of accepting the Pastoral Epistles as completely Pauline in the customary sense, and on the other hand the improbabilities inherent in the "fragment" hypothesis (and I suppose also in the "editorial" hypothesis), suggests that for these letters Paul employed as his amanuensis a man whom he could trust with much greater discretion than could be allowed to any ordinary amanuensis—namely, Luke. The non-Pauline elements in them would then reflect Luke's thought rather than Paul's.

So far as the question of life-setting is concerned, Professor Moule suggests that 1 Timothy—for which, on this theory, Luke enjoyed the greatest freedom—was written shortly before Paul's release from his Roman imprisonment, when Paul wanted to send a message to Timothy in a hurry while he himself was particularly busy with preparations for leaving Rome after his release and perhaps with completing the judicial details just preceding his release.

The other proposal which I have mentioned is made in an unpublished thesis on "The Authorship and Date of the Pastoral Epistles" for which the University of Manchester earlier this

¹ P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 93 ff., 115 ff.

² C. F. D. Moule, "The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal", *BULLETIN*, xlvi (1964-5), 430 ff.

year conferred the degree of Ph.D. on J. M. Gilchrist. He discerns two separate life-settings for the Pastoral Epistles—one post-Pauline, the other reflecting the situation in the middle fifties on Paul's mission-field in Macedonia and Achaia. He accepts in general G. S. Duncan's hypothesis, dating the Captivity Epistles during the Ephesian ministry, but with important modifications: in particular, he holds that in Acts xx. 1 Luke has telescoped two separate crossings of Paul into Macedonia and Achaia after a spell of trouble in Ephesus—the first after the Demetrius riot of Acts xix. 23 ff. and the second after the "affliction" of 2 Corinthians i. 8. He argues that the earlier occasion was that on which Paul paid his "sorrowful visit" to Corinth, but that he not only visited Corinth but made an extended tour of areas he had not previously visited, including Dalmatia, Epirus and Crete. On his departure for this tour he left Timothy behind in Ephesus to carry out the task indicated in 1 Timothy i. 3. When his visit to Crete was finished he left Titus behind there to carry out the tasks prescribed in Titus i. 5 ff. and then directed him to go on to Dalmatia (2 Tim. iv. 10). The imprisonment which forms the setting of 2 Timothy iv. 9 ff. was endured (thinks Dr. Gilchrist) not in Ephesus but in Macedonia, after Paul left Ephesus for Europe for the second (and last) time.

The Pauline elements in the Pastorals are thus provided with their respective contexts; the non-Pauline features are accounted for by the supposition that, instead of being (as has often been suggested) attempts to construct what Paul *might* have written, they are attempts to reconstruct what he *did* write, in letters to Timothy and Titus, by someone who no longer had access to them but who partially remembered them. This "reconstructor", who might perhaps be identified with Luke, operated somewhere between A.D. 85 and 95.

Such a summary as I have given fails to do justice to the skill with which the details of this reconstruction are pieced together, each of them correlated not only with passages in the Pastorals but with the data of the Pauline letters belonging to the middle fifties, especially 1 and 2 Corinthians.

If Dr. Gilchrist's hypothesis were to be accepted, the Pastorals would have no bearing on the subject of St. Paul in Rome. But

there is in them as they stand one reference to Rome: 2 Timothy i. 17. Referring to the landslide away from loyalty to Paul in the province of Asia, the letter goes on:

But may the Lord's mercy rest on the house of Onesiphorus! He has often relieved me in my troubles. He was not ashamed to visit a prisoner, but took pains to search me out when he came to Rome, and found me. Pray God he may find mercy from the Lord on the great Day! The many services he rendered at Ephesus you know better than I could tell you (2 Tim. i. 16-18).

Here mention is made of one Onesiphorus, evidently an Ephesian who had proved very helpful during Paul's ministry in his home town, who at some later date had occasion to visit Rome and sought Paul out in circumstances where to do so involved not only trouble and possible loss of face, but it may be danger too. It is usually inferred from the language used here that Paul was no longer enjoying the *libera custodia* of Acts xxviii. 16 ff. but undergoing more severe restraint.¹ The circumstantiality and incidental character of this personal reference bespeak a genuine Pauline reminiscence, but if so, it cannot be dated before Paul's Roman imprisonment. Some who would like to date the Pastorals, or the Pauline fragments in them, to an earlier period in Paul's career must come to terms with the phrase ἐν Ῥώμῃ. Some have dismissed it as a gloss or resorted to conjectural emendation,² but there is no independent evidence to support such procedure, and the practice of removing an obstacle from the path of a hypothesis by emending the obstacle out of existence is not to be recommended. Dr. Gilchrist suggests that the man who rewrote the Pastorals from memory included this anachronism through a lapse of memory.

The scholarship and ability of Dr. Gilchrist's reconstruction deserve high commendation. It is more satisfactory, however, to think of the reference to Onesiphorus in Rome in 2 Timothy i. 17 and also to the farewell words of 2 Timothy iv. 6-18 as both relating (not anachronistically) to some phase—a late phase—of

¹ Cf. J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London, 1963), p. 170; reference should also be made to P. N. Harrison's moving and vivid picture of Onesiphorus's "one purposeful face in a drifting crowd" (*The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 127 ff.).

² Cf. G. S. Duncan, *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* (London, 1929), pp. 188 f., 193 f.

Paul's Roman imprisonment, and to envisage one of Paul's associates, such as Luke (2 Tim. iv. 11a), either as doing him the service which Professor Moule suggests or else as collecting, editing and publishing such remnants of Paul's correspondence after his death.

III

Even so, we have not come much farther forward in trying to discover what happened to Paul at the end of the "two whole years" of Acts xxviii. 30. Dr. Gilchrist, referring to this phrase, remarks that if someone said, "We had a whole fortnight of uninterrupted sunshine in November", we should know the sequel without being told: "only one thing follows an Indian summer". So the last few sentences of Acts show "that Luke well knows that winter followed for the church in Rome, and for Paul himself".¹

On the other hand, we have arguments for Paul's release at the end of these two years, such as those put forward in one of the most recent commentaries on the Pastoral Epistles—that of J. N. D. Kelly. Dr. Kelly argues that since Paul's martyrdom cannot be dated before the outbreak of the Neronian persecution of Christians following the fire which devastated Rome on July 18/19, A.D. 64, and since it is difficult to see how his house arrest could have lasted until then, it is most reasonable to infer that he was released after the expiry of the two years, and after a further spell of missionary activity was arrested again and imprisoned in Rome for the second and last time.² There is a weak link in this argument—it is not impossible that Paul's execution preceded the events of A.D. 64³—but this may very well have been the course of events. Even so, Dr. Kelly goes on, when Paul's case came up for hearing during his second imprisonment, the verdict at the *prima actio* was *non liquet* or *amplius*: this required a further inquiry or *secunda actio*. The paragraph 2 Timothy iv. 9-18 belongs to the interval between these two *actiones*, but Paul

¹ *The Authorship and Date of the Pastoral Epistles* (typescript in Manchester University Library, 1967), p. 162.

² *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, p. 9.

³ See p. 272 below.

knew that the outcome of the *secunda actio* was likely to be adverse, perhaps because of new developments outside his prison of which he had become aware.¹

One thing is clear: no dogmatic statements are justified when the sequel to Paul's first period of house arrest in Rome is under discussion. If we cannot affirm so confidently as tradition does that he was released (even Eusebius, who first records this tradition explicitly, introduces it with the phrase *λόγος ἔχει*, "the story goes"),² neither can we affirm with James Moffatt that, "as a matter of fact, Paul was not released".³ To such an unqualified affirmation one may legitimately reply, "How do you know?"—and no evidence was available to Moffatt that is not available to us. We may suspect that he was more influenced than a scholar should have been by the prevalent reaction of his day *against* traditional views. The more correct attitude is that of A. N. Sherwin-White, already quoted, that "there is no necessity to construe Acts [or any other New Testament book] to mean that he was released at all".⁴

But release on the one hand and condemnation to death on the other do not exhaust the possibilities. A third possibility is that his *libera custodia* may have given place to a much stricter confinement, such as P. N. Harrison thinks he was enduring at the time when Onesiphorus took so much trouble to track him down.⁵ A fourth possibility is that he may have been exiled. Clement of Rome, writing some thirty years after Paul's death, includes exile among his sufferings.⁶ This suggests that there was an early tradition of exile—unless Clement, with rhetorical exaggeration, is talking loosely of Paul's enforced departure from one city after another in the course of his apostolic ministry. If exile in the proper sense is intended, when was he supposed to have been exiled, and what was supposed to be the place of his exile? It would be odd if it was Spain—if Paul, having achieved

¹ *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 217 f.

² *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 22.2.

³ *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*⁸ (Edinburgh, 1918), p. 313, cf. pp. 416 f.

⁴ *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford, 1963), p. 119; cf. *BULLETIN*, xlvi (1963-4), 345.

⁵ *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, p. 127.

⁶ 1 Clement v.6.

his ambition of visiting Rome by the unforeseen means of journeying there under armed guard to have his appeal heard in Caesar's court, later achieved his ambition of preaching in Spain by the unforeseen means of exile.

IV

We turn now to early evidence outside the New Testament.

The earliest is that provided by Clement of Rome, and it does not add much to our sum of positive knowledge. The letter which, as foreign secretary of the Roman church,¹ he wrote in the name of that church to the church of Corinth, begins by warning the latter church of the terrible effects of jealousy and envy. Seven examples are given from the Old Testament; then Clement continues :

But, to leave the examples of former days, let us come to those who were athletes in the days nearest to our own. Through jealousy and envy the greatest and most righteous pillars of the church were persecuted, and maintained their athletic contest unto death. Let us set before our eyes the good apostles. Peter, on account of unrighteous jealousy, underwent not one or two but many toils and, having thus borne witness, he made his way to his allotted place of glory. Paul, on account of jealousy and strife, showed the way to the prize of endurance; seven times he wore fetters, he was exiled, he was stoned, he was a herald both in the east and in the west, he gained the noble renown of his faith, he taught righteousness throughout the whole world and, having reached the limit of the west, he bore testimony before the rulers, and so departed from this world and was taken up into the holy place—the greatest example of endurance.²

In a rhetorical essay of this kind we do not expect the precision which is properly looked for in a work whose primary purpose is the supplying of historical information. Clement is not imparting to the Corinthians facts which they did not know, but drawing morals from facts which, in general outline at least, were common knowledge to him and them. Indeed, even to us he does not say anything concrete about Paul's later life to supplement the narrative of Acts from the point where it breaks off. That Paul bore his testimony before the rulers could have been an inference from the record of Acts, as well as being a reminiscence of the words of Jesus about Paul to Ananias of Damascus: "he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings

¹ Cf. *Hermas, Shepherd, Vision* ii.4.3.

² 1 Clement v.1-7.

and the sons of Israel" (Acts ix. 15).¹ But what was "the limit of the west" (τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως) that Paul reached? From the standpoint of one who, like Clement, lived and wrote in Rome, would it not indicate some place west of Rome, presumably Spain? Perhaps it would, but even so we cannot be sure that Clement knew for a fact that Paul did go to Spain; if he meant Spain by τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως, he might simply have been making an inference from Paul's statement of his plans in Roman xv. 24, 28.

On the other hand, we must give serious attention to the argument for translating τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως not by "the limit of the west" but by "the goal in the west"—Paul's western goal. Amid so many other athletic terms, τέρμα might well be intended in the sense of "goal". But even if we take Clement to mean Paul's western goal, the phrase is not unambiguous. For Luke, Paul's western goal was Rome, but for Paul himself it was not Rome but Spain. P. N. Harrison, who argues convincingly for the meaning "goal", goes on to say: "the goal of this race was certainly not Spain, but Rome, from whatever point in the world-stadium one happened to be regarding it."² That, however, is going too far, when we consider that in Paul's own programme Rome was but a temporary station on his way farther west, or at best an advance base for the evangelization of Spain. Yet it should probably be granted that, to a Christian of a later generation, in the light of Paul's martyrdom at Rome, Rome would naturally suggest itself as the "goal" of his race; and this interpretation is confirmed by the plain implication of Clement's language that the τέρμα τῆς δύσεως was the place where Paul "bore testimony before the rulers, and so departed from this world".

As for the time of Paul's martyrdom, Clement may be thought to say something with a bearing on this when he goes on :

To these men of holy life were gathered together a great multitude of the elect, who through their endurance amid many indignities and tortures because of jealousy presented to us a noble example. . . .³

¹ There may also be an echo here of the words of Matt. x. 18; Mark xiii. 9.

² *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, p. 107.

³ 1 Clement vi. 1.

That this is a reference to the persecution of Christians in Rome under Nero is hardly to be doubted: with Clement's *πολὸν πλῆθος* may be compared Tacitus's *ingens multitudo*.¹ If we took Clement's language *au pied de la lettre* it would imply that Peter and Paul had suffered martyrdom before the persecution which followed the great fire and, so far as Paul is concerned, that he was executed on conviction some time after the end of his two years' house arrest in Rome. But, although Moffatt² and others were inclined to deduce this from Clement's language, to insist on it demands from him an exactitude in the use of terms which he probably did not intend. Moreover, "these men of holy life" need not be restricted to Peter and Paul, mentioned in the immediately preceding sentences; they may include the Old Testament heroes of endurance who are listed before Clement turns to "the good apostles". The most that can safely be said is that Clement bears witness to Paul's death at Rome under Nero.³

V

The Muratorian fragment is a Latin list of New Testament books drawn up in Rome towards the end of the second century. My late colleague Dr. Arnold Ehrhardt has presented a convincing argument in favour of its having been originally written in Latin and not (as others had thought) translated from Greek.⁴ After its account of the Gospels, the list has this to say about Acts:

Then the "Acts of All the Apostles" were written in one book. Luke tells the "most excellent Theophilus" that the various incidents took place in his presence, and indeed he makes this quite clear by omitting the passion of Peter, as well as Paul's journey when he set out from Rome for Spain.

The author takes Paul's Spanish journey for granted. There is no indication that he had any independent evidence of this; in

¹ Tac. *Ann.* xv. 44.5.

² *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*⁸, p. 417; cf. P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, p. 105.

³ Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* iii.1.3) indicates that Origen bore similar witness in the third volume of his commentary on Genesis.

⁴ A. Ehrhardt, *The Framework of the New Testament Stories* (Manchester, 1964), pp. 11 ff.

itself, the mention of this journey could be nothing more than an inference from Roman xv. 24, 28. But since it is mentioned along with "the passion of Peter", another source is indicated—the apocryphal "Acts of Peter".¹

This Gnostic work was probably composed about A.D. 180, shortly before the Muratorian list was drawn up. It is extant only in fragments in various languages. The best known fragment is the Vercelli manuscript (in Latin), which begins by describing Paul's departure from Italy by sea for Spain, and goes on to recount Peter's controversy in Rome with Simon Magus, ending with a description of Peter's crucifixion.² It looks as if the Muratorian fragmentist is trying to explain why the contents of the Acts of Peter do not appear in the canonical Acts. If we are right in identifying the Acts of Peter as the source of his reference to Paul's departure for Spain, it is not an authority which inspires great confidence.

As for the fourth-century authors who report Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment—Eusebius, Jerome, etc.—they were merely repeating inferences of their predecessors, and doing so with proper caution: Eusebius, as we have seen, says that "the story goes" that he resumed his ministry of preaching after his first appearing before Caesar.³ Our literary sources, therefore, leave us with a verdict of "not proven" in this regard.

VI

Another witness from the closing decades of the second century is the Roman presbyter Gaius who, in the course of a controversial correspondence with the Phrygian Montanist Proclus, says that, if Proclus can invoke in support of his views the names of distinguished early Christians whose tombs can still

¹ For the dependence of the Muratorian statement on this document cf. T. Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament*, E.T., ii (Edinburgh, 1909), pp. 62 f., 73 ff. On the other hand, A. Ehrhardt (*The Framework of the New Testament Stories*, p. 35) discerns in it a reaction against the doctrine of the Muratorian list.

² Cf. M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1924), pp. 304 ff.; R. McL. Wilson (ed.), *New Testament Apocrypha*, ii (London, 1965), 279 ff.

³ See p. 269; cf. Jerome, *de uiris illustribus*, 5.

be pointed out in the province of Asia, *he* can improve on that, for (says he) "I can point out the trophies of the apostles: for if you will go to the Vatican hill or to the Ostian Way, you will find the trophies of those who founded this church".¹ By "the apostles" Gaius meant Peter and Paul, claimed by the Roman church as its joint founders. By "trophies"² he means monuments marking the traditional sites of the martyrdom of the two apostles. He probably meant in addition that the bodies of the two apostles were buried on the sites indicated, since he is countering Proclus's claim to show the *tombs* of early Christians in his home province. In any case, that Peter and Paul were actually buried at the places mentioned became a matter of general belief, on the strength of which the Constantinian basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls was built on the Ostian Way and that of St. Peter on the Vatican hill.

That Paul was beheaded, as tradition asserts, at Tre Fontane on the Ostian Way may be accepted provisionally in default of a rival tradition. There was no particular reason why tradition should pick on that spot in preference to another if in fact he was not executed there. In Rome (unlike, for example, Jerusalem) we are dealing with the corporate memory of an on-going community whose continuity was unbroken from the middle of the first Christian century onwards. By Gaius's time a monument had been erected on the site in honour of Paul's martyrdom (as one was erected on the Vatican hill, probably in the time of Marcus Aurelius, to commemorate Peter).³

The small basilica which Constantine erected in Paul's honour on the Ostian Way was replaced at the end of the fourth century by a larger one, which survived substantially until it was destroyed by fire during the night of 15/16 July 1823. The present building was reconsecrated by Pope Pius IX on December 10, 1854. Some details of the substructure were preserved in

¹ *Apud* Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 25.7; cf. iii. 31.4.

² *Ἐπιθόματα*, monuments set up by the victorious army on a battlefield to commemorate their triumph.

³ Cf. J. M. C. Toynbee and J. B. Ward-Perkins, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations* (London, 1956); E. Kirschbaum, *The Tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul*, E.T. (London, 1959), pp. 143 ff.

sketches made by the architect of the new building, Virgilio Vespignani, when a new *confessio* was constructed in front of the altar, instead of behind it (where the *confessio* in the old basilica had been).¹

The flooring of the high altar is formed by two slabs, one bearing the inscription PAVLO and the other completing it with a second line of letters, APOSTOLO MART ("to Paul, apostle and martyr"). The lettering belongs to the fourth century, and has been assigned by some epigraphists to a Constantinian date. There are several indications that the two slabs are no longer in their original position: there are signs that at one time they stood upright, alongside each other, so as to present one line of writing, or even at right angles, forming two of the four sides of the apostle's *memoria*.²

A further point of interest is that Paul's *memoria*, like Peter's, was located in a pagan necropolis, not the environment which later piety would have chosen.

There is a rival tradition—not to the site of Paul's martyrdom but to that of his burial. In the *Calendar of Philocalus* (A.D. 354) and thence in the earlier part of the *Liber Pontificalis* (c. A.D. 530) Peter and Paul are associated with the site later occupied by the basilica of St. Sebastian on the Appian Way.³ In the *Depositio Martyrum* included in the former document, an entry under 29 June (III Kal. Iul.) mentions that the remains of Peter (and Paul?) were deposited in *Catacumbas* in the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus (A.D. 258), a date probably denoting the establishment of the apostolic cult on this spot. (This general area was then known as *Ad Catacumbas*, "By the Hollows". Since the underground galleries there were the only early Christian cemeteries known in the Middle Ages, the term "catacombs" was extended from these cemeteries to denote others which were discovered from the sixteenth century onwards.) Although the reference

¹ E. Kirschbaum, *op. cit.* pp. 165 ff. The *confessio* is the chamber round the tomb together with the shaft connecting it with the altar.

² Kirschbaum, *op. cit.* pp. 179 ff.

³ A specially important examination of this rival tradition is provided by H. Chadwick, "St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome: The Problem of the *Memoria Apostolorum ad Catacumbas*", *J.T.S.*, n.s., viii (1957), 31 ff.

to Paul is ambiguous in the *Depositio Martyrum*,¹ the tradition that his remains as well as Peter's were deposited there is attested by a number of *graffiti* on the site invoking the names of Peter and Paul. The hymn *Apostolorum Passio*, dating from the middle of the fourth century (traditionally ascribed to Ambrose), describes how on 29 June the martyrdom of Peter and Paul was commemorated at three sites—the Vatican hill, the Ostian Way and the Appian Way.² This attempt to meet the competing claims of rival sites was judged unsatisfactory: when Pope Damasus (A.D. 366-383), in the course of restoring the Christian cemeteries of Rome, turned his attention to the *Memoria Apostolorum ad Catacumbas*, he indicated what was henceforth to be the official line in the opening words of an inscription which he set up in the *Basilica Apostolorum* which was built over the *memoria*:

Hic habitasse prius sanctos cognoscere debes
Nomina quisque Petri pariter Paulique requiris—

“Here you must know that the saints formerly dwelt, whosoever you are who ask for the names of Peter and Paul.” In other words, their bodies once lay here, but are here no longer. These words, with their implication of a transference of the two bodies from the Appian Way to the Vatican hill and the Ostian Way respectively, represent an attempt to harmonize the conflicting traditions and divert the attention of pious pilgrims to the Constantinian basilicas. Some students of later days, beginning apparently with John Pearson, seventeenth-century bishop of Chester,³ envisaged a temporary translation of the apostles' bodies from the other sites to the Appian Way because of the circumstances of the persecution under Valerian (A.D. 258), when Christians were forbidden to hold their ordinary public meetings

¹ The wording, “III Kal. Iul. Petri in Catacumbas et Pauli Ostense Tusco et Basso consulibus”, seems to associate Peter with the site Ad Catacumbas but Paul with the Ostian Way.

² “Tantae per urbis ambitum/Stipata tendunt agmina;/Trinis celebratur uis/Festum sacrorum martyrum.”

³ This is pointed out by Professor Chadwick, *J.T.S.*, n.s., viii (1957), p. 41, n.2. E. Kirschbaum (op. cit. pp. 198 ff.) suggests that only the heads of the two apostles were transferred to the site Ad Catacumbas in 258.

and access to their cemeteries was prevented. But this harmonistic reconstruction of two separate traditions, the one enjoying official approval and the other popular favour, has no independent evidence in its support. The temporary removal of the bodies and their restoration to the earlier burial-places are purely hypothetical events.

The “trophy” mentioned by Gaius were believed to mark the sites of the two apostles' martyrdom, but not necessarily the places where they were buried. From the mid-third to the mid-fourth century some Roman Christians at least regarded the site Ad Catacumbas as their burial place. It is not at all likely that there was any solid ground for this belief, but if there had been solid ground for thinking that Gaius's “trophy” marked their tombs this alternative location of the tombs would probably not have enjoyed the vogue it did.¹ In the circumstances of the Neronian persecution it may have been impossible for the Roman Christians to secure possession of the bodies or even to discover what had happened to them.

These, however, are relatively unimportant matters compared with the real memorials to Paul in Rome—those which he might have been gratified, though surprised, to foresee. The church and city of Rome have not forgotten their association, brief and limited as it was, with the Apostle to the Gentiles. Although Paul himself makes it plain that Roman Christianity flourished years before he first visited the city, the Roman church has claimed him as one of its two apostolic founders. Clement of Rome, as we have seen, appeals to the example of Peter and Paul. Ignatius of Antioch, writing to the Christians at Rome, will not lay commands on them, as Peter and Paul did; they were apostles, he is “a convicted criminal”²—although they were no more than that in Roman law. Dionysius of Corinth (c. A.D. 170), writing to Pope Soter, sees a special bond between the churches of Corinth and Rome in that each was founded by Peter and Paul and profited by the teaching of both apostles.³ (While Paul would have deprecated nomination as one of the founders of the Roman

¹ Gaius himself apparently had no doubt that the “trophy” marked the apostles' burial-places (see p. 274).

² *Ad Rom.* iv. 3.

³ *Apud Euseb., Hist. Eccl.* ii. 25.8.

church, he would have turned in his grave at the suggestion that Peter was joint-founder with him of the Corinthian church!) Gaius of Rome, as we have seen, points to the "trophies" of Peter and Paul as the most illustrious material monuments of Roman Christianity. Irenaeus of Lyons, about the same time, reviewing the churches which were founded by apostles, gives pride of place to that "very great, very ancient and universally known church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul",¹ and adds that they committed the episcopate in that church to Linus.² This is in keeping with early tradition which names Peter and Paul as founders not only of the church of Rome but also of the Roman succession of bishops. Irenaeus's informant may have been Hegesippus,³ although Irenaeus himself was in sufficiently close touch with the Roman church to know directly what its local tradition was. Down to the middle of the third century the two apostles are regularly conjoined as joint founders of the Roman church; even Eusebius, in the fourth century, can on occasion name them in a Roman context in the order Paul-Peter⁴ (although in his Chronicle he mentions Peter only: "*Post Petrum primus Romanam ecclesiam tenuit Linus*").⁵

But, as C. H. Turner put it, "in transcribing a catalogue it was easier to use one name than two, and as soon as the habit grew up of including the name of the Apostle-founder as the first of the list rather than as a title at the head of it, . . . the use of a single name was dictated by the principle that there could only be one bishop at a time".⁶ The naming of Peter alone is first attested in Hippolytus, who calls Pope Victor "thirteenth from Peter"⁷—although even so this leaves Peter outside the numbered episcopal list. The first to attach dogmatic significance to the

¹ *Haer.* iii. 3.1.

² *Haer.* iii. 3.2.

³ Cf. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, I i (London, 1890), pp. 202 f., 327 ff.

⁴ *Hist. Eccl.* iii.2.1, iii.21.1.

⁵ Anno Abraham 2084 = Nero 14 (i.e. A.D. 67).

⁶ *Catholic and Apostolic* (London, 1931), p. 225; see also his essay "Apostolic Succession" in H. B. Swete (ed.), *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry* (London, 1921), pp. 93-214, esp. pp. 141 f.

⁷ *Apud* Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.* v. 28. 3.

name of Peter alone at the head of the Roman list is Cyprian.¹ So Paul in practice was largely set aside. Perhaps, as others have said, there is a symbolical fitness in the location of St. Paul's basilica *outside* the walls—but Paul might have understood and approved. He might even have approved of the choice of St. Paul's rather than St. Peter's for the common declaration of his namesake Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Ramsey during the latter's recent visit to Rome—who knows?

¹ *De unitate ecclesiae*, 4; *Epp.* 43.5; 70.3; 73.7, etc.