

*LUKE'S AUTHORITIES IN THE ACTS, CHAPTERS  
I.-XII.*

THERE is among many modern people a strong inclination to doubt such general statements as those in Acts v. 12, "by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people," or viii. 7, "from many of those which had unclean spirits they came out; and many that were palsied and that were lame were healed." Along with this doubt follows a general tendency to rate low the credibility of the book in which such statements occur, and the intelligence of the author who admits them. But let us take into consideration the character of an Oriental population, where physicians and medical attendance are unknown (except in some small degree among the wealthier classes), where ignorance and a low standard of living and of thought are prevalent, and where that peculiar class of trouble or disease called in the New Testament "possession by devils" is rife. I feel convinced that those who can appreciate from experience the actual situation and conditions of such a state of society will be the slowest to doubt the credibility of statements like those which have just been quoted. It is true "that the Hebrew nation was at that time the most highly educated people in the world—in the true meaning of the word education."<sup>1</sup> Yet the description given in the preceding sentences was quite fairly applicable to the very mixed population, and especially to the mass of the inhabitants of cities like Jerusalem and Samaria. Now imagine that amid this Oriental population, keenly susceptible to religious emotions and strongly influenced already by many superstitious ideas and customs, a great religious idea is introduced and propagated widely through the degraded masses by one extraordinary per-

<sup>1</sup> *The Education of Christ*, p. 67.

sonality and by a devoted enthusiastic group of followers, all themselves men and women of eminent power and magnetic influence. Take into consideration the strange and yet indubitable facts of faith-healing and "Christian Science." No one who weighs the conditions of this question can regard these general statements in the Acts as improbable in themselves or as detracting from the credibility of the book as a whole. The present writer can only assert his own conviction that those statements express just what must have occurred.

At the same time it must be frankly acknowledged that the general prevalence of such conditions must always lead to the too ready acceptance without investigation of particular instances; and that many of the individual cases would not stand rigorous scientific examination. Contributory causes would be traced in many such cases by a medical expert. Imposture and trading on pretended diseases would be detected in other cases. Yet none the less do even these examples of common delusion attest the reality of the curative influence. The public mind and body have as a whole been diseased, and they undergo a health-giving renovation. The impostor, who deludes the world with his pretended disease of body, is really diseased in soul; and it is no small thing that his mind should be cured and his life transformed into a healthy one. But most of the so-called impostors are physically diseased to some extent as well as morally diseased in their whole nature. All these cases furnish real proofs of the power which the new religious idea exerts on those whom it seizes. The medical expert would not label the disease and the cure exactly as the popular opinion does; but there is in each case a disease and a cure.

There is little, therefore, to gain by attempting to investigate each case. There is no proper evidence, and no sufficient

material to work on. We can lay no stress on many of the actual instances ; we must simply state them as vouched for by popular belief : the evidence is not such as to satisfy the critical judgment. Nor will modern judgment be convinced that, because a person who believes is cured, therefore his belief is truth. Belief in a delusion may sometimes produce a curative effect, though only in exceptional cases.

But a strong and general popular belief is a great power. The new idea as preached by the apostles had this great power supporting it and pushing it forward. And there was no pretence on the side of the apostles and of the Church. They felt and knew what a revolution they were making in the world. They saw with their own eyes that the souls and bodies of men were growing healthier around them ; and they knew that the cause was simply and solely belief in the Jesus whom they were preaching. Their own faith was made stronger by those cures, as well as the faith and character of the people that were cured.

Since the preceding and following paragraphs were written, I have read Dr. Schofield's remarkable article on "Spiritual Healing" in the *Contemporary Review*, March, 1909. While he differs in some matters from what I have said, and especially in admitting (and attesting from his own experience in a way that seems to me for the present to be conclusive) the existence of a healing power in some people which acts quite independently of any faith felt by the patient,<sup>1</sup> and also in setting apart from his discussion the whole range of the phenomena described in

<sup>1</sup> Some of my views as expressed recently on the necessity of faith in the patient would require to be revised on the ground of Dr. Schofield's evidence. But still there remains no doubt, even on his showing, that faith in the patient is an enormously potent influence, and by far the most common. Cure by the simple power of the healer must be always rare and exceptional. The record of a cure is more credible when it lays stress on the faith of the person cured.

the Acts as being cases of miraculous healing, yet any one who reads the article must, I think, conclude that in the essential point it confirms what I am contending for : viz. that those statements which are made in the Acts about wide and general healing produced by the apostles should not be set aside as incredible or as casting any doubt upon the trustworthiness of the history and the intelligence of the historian. With regard to "faith-healing" he strongly corroborates the view, which has been stated in the preceding pages of this article, that cure by faith affords in itself no direct proof of the truth of the thing believed in ; but the indirect proof afforded by it, for which I contend, is, I think, entirely in the spirit of his remarks. Although I have made no change in what I have written, and leave the two different expositions to stand in their own form, I need hardly say that I bow humbly to Dr. Schofield's superior knowledge and more scientific way of stating the facts—with the solitary exception that I do not recognize the need or propriety of putting the narrative in the Acts out of discussion as recording a series of examples of a separate class, called "miraculous cures."

As we read the case of the lame man in chapter iii. 1-10, 12, 16 ; iv. 9-10, 14, 16, 21-22, we cannot but feel that we are reading the narrative related to Luke by an eye-witness<sup>1</sup> and recorded by Luke without any essential change. That eye-witness had seen the man holding Peter and John, unable to let them depart from him. He knew the popular belief that the man had been a cripple from his birth, forty years previously. He had not investigated evidence for that belief : no such evidence existed, and none was then needed. The people knew what they saw, and the apostles knew. The supreme Council of the Jews

<sup>1</sup> As already stated, I think that this eye-witness, evidently a man of education and intellectual power, was Philip the Evangelist.

regarded the facts as undeniable without accepting the inference that the teaching of Peter and John was true. A modern scientific man would investigate the facts before believing them; and even if his investigation justified the popular opinion fully, he would not, any more than the Council did, accept the inference that Peter and John were teaching the truth: he would probably say that the cure was effected by the belief which the people entertained, and not by the truth of the thing in which they believed. That opinion would be the diametrical opposite of the ancient opinion, which regarded the cure as the final and complete proof that the belief was true. Which opinion is nearest to the truth?

It must be admitted that the evidence in the case of Aeneas, ix. 32-34, is weaker than in the case of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful. The story does not so vividly convey the impression of being narrated by an eye-witness. It is far slighter and vaguer. There is no reference to what was after all the fundamental fact in this kind of cure, viz. faith. In this case we are brought nearer to the mere popular story, passing from mouth to mouth amid the congregations of Palestine; and such stories can never be ranked high as regards accuracy of detail. They only prove what were the general feeling and belief among the congregations.

If we knew who was Luke's authority, the story would at once acquire a more convincing character, even though it would still rank below the other. The speculation may be hazarded that Mnason was the authority. I believe that Luke has a historical purpose, when he names obscure individuals like Rhoda and Mnason; and in both these cases the reason is probably the same. They had been the sources of information to the historian. The common idea that Mnason was Paul's host in Jerusalem must be

abandoned; Paul and his company had a two days' journey at least to make between Caesareia and Jerusalem, 64 M.P., even with the help of horses; and they lodged for the night with Mnason. The journey is more fully described, and the details of the narrative analysed, elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The place where they stayed was naturally Lydda; and the brethren from Caesareia who convoyed them so far, brought them to the house of Mnason.<sup>2</sup> Luke describes him as one of the early disciples, suggesting that he had been settled there for some time, perhaps one of those who had been scattered from Jerusalem after Stephen's death. He lived in Luke's memory and narrative as one of the authorities on whom the historian relied.

The episode of Tabitha-Dorcas is inferior in historicity to that of Aeneas. The authority is probably the same for both. The two towns were not far from one another, and the stories are connected. There is no reason to doubt that Peter was called to Joppa by Tabitha's relatives and neighbours. The uncertainty is with regard to her being really dead. No one can venture to claim that there is good evidence for that. The people believed her to be dead, and prepared her body for the grave. But how often is that done to persons who after all recover! And how often is premature burial suspected or proved to have occurred! In the Levant countries, where burial takes place with a celerity that seems to us revolting, there is far more opportunity for such errors to occur than with

<sup>1</sup> *Pauline and other Studies*, p. 266 f.

<sup>2</sup> The Western Text makes this quite clear; but even the Accepted Text is inconsistent with the vulgar translation. The order of events is: they began to make the upward journey to Jerusalem: they were entertained by Mnason: they reached Jerusalem. It is sheer mistranslation to put Mnason in Jerusalem; but those who do so quote Acts xxviii. 14-16 as an illustration, mistranslating it likewise. The meaning in the latter passage is: we came to the city-state Rome (whose bounds were in Southern Latium): we reached Forum Appii: we reached Three Taverns: we entered the city Rome (by the Porta Capena).

us.<sup>1</sup> Tabitha seems to have remained unburied for an unusually long time, in order that Peter might be sent for and have time to arrive. It is as absurd as it is unreasonable to stake the truth of Christian history on the correct judgment of Tabitha's friends as to her death. It is notoriously difficult for even the most experienced physicians to be quite certain that death has occurred. In the rustic East any person who falls and continues motionless for a time is assumed to be dead. That Luke heard the story as he relates it is quite sure. That Mnason and the world of Lydda and Joppa believed it is equally sure. Beyond this we cannot attain any certainty; and the right way is to confess that assurance is unattainable.

Closely connected with this topic of faith-cure and wide-spreading curative influence is a subject of very obscure character. The "laying on of hands" was an act to which evidently great importance was attached in the early Church and by the Apostle Paul or his circle.<sup>2</sup> It is sometimes curative (especially in the Gospels), sometimes ecclesiastical. The question must arise whether this act, as a part of ecclesiastical ritual, was regarded as purely symbolical, or as conveying with it some kind of authority or even of personal power. In the Gospels the Saviour often lays His hands on those to whom He gives power or imparts curative influence. It cannot be doubted that here the touch is regarded as really efficacious and not merely symbolical. When we read that sick people were laid where even Peter's shadow might fall on them (v. 15), and that Paul's hand-

<sup>1</sup> I have seen a case in which a man who fainted or died in the field was brought into the village, washed, mourned over, carried out, and buried within three hours; and I have never been able to shake off the feeling that he had merely fainted on a hot day: the feeling often returns to me by night.

<sup>2</sup> The act is mentioned by St. Paul in the Pastoral Epistles (which many would consider as originating from the circle of the Apostle rather than from himself), also by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

kerchiefs and aprons carried with them to a distance curative power (xix. 12), it is equally clear that the populace in Jerusalem and Ephesus believed in the efficacy of actual touch even in the second degree; and the probability is that Luke (and the circle of Paul's coadjutors along with him) were also believers.<sup>1</sup> Are we to suppose that Paul stood apart from the belief of his age and his circle? I cannot think so. They thought as he thought: the belief was common to the early Church as a whole. This subject, so far as it is ecclesiastical, will be more suitably treated in connexion with the Pastoral Epistles; and at present we restrict ourselves to remarking that the Acts in this respect approximates more closely to the Pastoral than to the other Pauline Epistles. The Pastoral Epistles are here nearer to the plane of feeling which characterized the circle of Paul, than that on which he himself stood; or shall we say that they form the transition from the pure and lofty Pauline teaching to the level of his associates?

In the episode of Ananias and Sapphira the intention to point a moral is so obvious as to force itself on the reader. This excites justifiable suspicion. In real history—and especially in the book of the Acts generally—the moral does not lie so openly on the surface. But here the purpose to bring out the contrast between honest real charity and dishonest pretence at charity is undeniable. The story is recorded, not for the sake of the importance of the facts in themselves, nor for the outstanding character of the

<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that Dr. Schofield, in the article quoted above, mentions from his own experience similar examples which he considers indubitable. Very similar conduct may be seen at the present day in Asiatic Turkey. At Scutari, opposite Constantinople, the chief of the Dervishes treads on the sick to cure them; but, if the sick are very young children, he merely touches them with his hands and breathes upon them; and, if the invalids are unable to come, their garments are brought that he may touch them.

persons, nor as a stage in the growth of the Church or in the development of its organization, nor even from the simple desire to exemplify the power of the Spirit in the early congregation, but mainly for the sake of the moral which it teaches. Now this is the class of story which is most exposed to suffer as it lives on in Oriental tradition. There is an unavoidable tendency to drop out the points which do not serve the special purpose, and thereby to heighten the effect of the points which help to bring out the didactic purpose.<sup>1</sup> The story becomes a moral apologue, not because it is invented to bear the moral, but because it has lived through the moral which it bore and it was remembered only in so far as it was suited to impress this moral on the hearers of the story.

We are assuming that in certain real facts which occurred there lay a very evident moral, and that the early Church tradition preserved the memory of these facts for the sake of the moral, emphasizing it by selection and perhaps by slight modification. But the question requires to be investigated whether this moral may not have been observed and emphasized by Luke himself: in that case the fixing of the story belongs to a distinctly later period, and its historicity is proportionately diminished. On our assumption the story was fixed in the early Church, and recorded by Luke as he heard it about 57-59 A.D. A story whose type was fixed in that way stands on a much surer and firmer basis than one to which form was given by Luke himself at a period about A.D. 80 in a distant country and amid seriously altered circumstances.

That the form was given to it by Luke may be (and has been) maintained on the ground that the moral of the

<sup>1</sup> How often among ourselves, especially perhaps in University circles, do we observe the tendency in retailers of anecdotes, which are on the whole true, to avoid spoiling the effect of a story by injudicious adherence to exactness in the details.

story is very characteristic of that writer. It is true that he was specially interested in the poor, in charity, and in everything that seemed to teach the doctrine of the duty of the richer to share their possessions with the poorer. But the whole history of the Church in the early centuries shows that charity was much practised and was regulated as a Christian duty ; and there is not the slightest reason to doubt Luke's authoritative account of the organization which was gradually created in the primitive Church for helping the poor.

There existed much poverty in Jerusalem, which was a city devoid of almost all opportunity of creating out of natural resources sufficient means of maintenance for the population which for various reasons tended to congregate there. In this city the attention of all must have been much directed to charitable efforts and charitable system. Luke found in the current ideas of the Church abundant matter which was akin to his own strong sympathy for the relief of poverty and distress. The whole story of the development of Church organization as primarily charitable was a natural memory in the congregation at Jerusalem ; and this story was taken by Luke as he heard it. The fact was that, as the Church grew in numbers, some organization was necessary for efficiency and even for existence. There could not be an effective Church, unless it was well administered. The congregation, as it existed about 57-59 A.D., believed that the needs of the poor, and the desire of the Twelve to satisfy those needs well, had produced the first steps in organization, viz., the appointment of the Seven and the formation of a regular Church fund for charitable purposes. Luke accepted this belief and the account which was given him of the circumstances. He did not require to alter the account. The tone and belief of the Church in Jerusalem were in harmony with his own

ideas, but they were not invented by him in accordance with his ideas. No one could even suggest that the idea of binding close the new Church of Antioch, or later the new Churches of Asia, Macedonia and Galatia, to the old Church of Jerusalem, was invented by Luke. Yet there we see that the charitable motive supplies the strongest force to weld the whole Church together and to promote its organization.

The account of the facts, therefore, was given to Luke and not invented by him. It may be accepted as trustworthy. Some doubt might be felt whether there may not have been certain other causes, which co-operated to drive on the young congregation towards the gradual formation of a government within its own borders; but on consideration of the case we must reject such a supposition. The organization did not arise through conscious desire to institute a system of government, or through any aiming at an ideal form in the future. It sprang from the pressing needs of the moment, and each step in forming it was taken to suit the immediate occasion. Moreover in each step we trace the imitation of models existing in the world around, and the first steps did not lead in the direction which was ultimately taken. The appointment of the Seven was an experiment that caused no permanent custom. It was too Oriental: it resembled a college of priests, such as managed one of the Asiatic temples.<sup>1</sup> The forms in which the organization finally took shape were closer to the Græco-Roman type. Now as the organization grew in obedience to the dictates of occasion and need, there cannot be any doubt that the most pressing need was the one on which the record insists. The memory of the Church was not wrong in regarding charity and the feeding of the poor as the most urgent duty after the preaching

<sup>1</sup> *Cities and Bishopricks of Phrygia*, i. p. 293.

of the Gospel. As soon as the conversion of the world had begun, the first step in the young Church was to ensure that all its members were properly fed and cared for. Pity for want and suffering was the most fundamental, the oldest, the deepest, and the strongest feeling in the Christian mind; it sprang from the mind and life of Jesus; on it the Church is founded; and this motive forced the first steps in the creation of an administrative system.

So far as these considerations go, Luke's history stands on a firm basis as a record of what was remembered and thought about A.D. 57 in Jerusalem regarding the primitive Church; and the time that had elapsed since the events was too short to permit memory to grow very dim or facts to be invented. But, while we must regard Ananias and Sapphira as real persons, who suffered a sudden and terrible penalty, and who were remembered as a warning, their story was exposed to suffer from the cause which kept it fresh in the memory of the Church. No one cared to remember such obscure persons for their own sake. Everything about them sank into oblivion except the fact that they had combined to deceive the Church and had been punished for their act. Hence it is not easy to make out the exact facts about their fault. They had a property. They sold it. They brought part of the price as a donation to the Church fund. This property can hardly have been at Jerusalem, for in the publicity of Oriental life the price would in that case have been matter of common knowledge, whereas Luke was evidently under the impression that Peter's knowledge about the price was gained through Divine information—though he does not exactly say this. Moreover, if the price had been known generally, there would have been no deception and no crime; for Peter says that it was quite open to Ananias to retain the property as his own, and afterwards to keep the money as his own,

if he chose to do so. Ananias therefore seems to have appeared before the public assembly and to have pretended that he was, like Barnabas, giving to the Church fund the entire price of his property. This is not stated precisely, and it looks very much as if Luke was not quite free from the idea that it was a crime to retain any part of the price and that it was an imperative duty to give the whole. That would be an intrusion of personal Lukan feeling into the story; but it is at least very slight, and not clear or certain. The words of Sapphira and of Peter, which are faithfully recorded, supply the corrective, and show what the facts were.

Incidentally, we notice that words and speeches in this part of the Acts are our best authority. They are most correctly remembered and recorded. Statements of fact are more liable to modification. This is an extremely important point in the critical study of the Acts.

We must also notice that in several other places Luke's personal opinions, i.e. the ideas of the period when the book of the Acts was actually composed (i.e. about A.D. 80), can be traced in the work, although as a whole it reflects most accurately the views and thoughts of the original authorities about A.D. 57-9. Among these later and personal ideas I would reckon, for example, the insistence on community of goods in the early Church, Acts ii. 45, iv. 32. These expressions are so strong that taken alone they would be counted, and have often been counted, sufficient to prove that the principle of absolute community of property was accepted in the primitive Church. But they are contradicted by the narrative generally; and they must be regarded as too emphatic statements by Luke of his own impression and opinion. If the principle had been universally held as fundamental in the Church, it would be useless to record Barnabas's individual act of

charitable sacrifice, iv. 36-37, as deserving special note or praise. And Peter expressly contradicts that principle in his words of rebuke to Ananias. It was open to all to treat their own property as their own, only remembering always that the poor had a strong claim upon them.

One must also think that the celerity and secrecy of the burial of Ananias have been over-coloured. It is so repugnant to custom and feeling in the East to bury any person without letting his own family attend to the corpse and mourn over it, that one can hardly accept the record as literally accurate. True Christianity never tramples on the deep-seated and justifiable feelings of human nature; it strengthens and encourages them. The tradition in the Church, like all Oriental popular tradition, here sacrifices exactitude in striving for emphasis.

But such slight modifications do not interfere with the credibility of the narrative as a whole. This was the first example of punishment for sin in the congregation, the first occasion on which the baser feelings of human nature intruded themselves publicly into congregational work, and the difficulties of managing ordinary men and keeping them up to a uniformly high level of conduct were brought strongly before the notice of the people. And it occurred within less than two years after the Resurrection.

Another place in which we may recognize the hand and the point of view of Luke is xiv. 22, "exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." Some scholars have inferred from this that Luke was one of those who were listening to Paul's exhortations in the Galatian cities. This opinion is based on the "We-Passages" in the later chapters, where indubitably the first personal plural pronoun is used to intimate the personal presence of Luke in the scenes described. But in those later passages the "We" has a

different character : it is evidently part of a narrative recording the travel and personal experiences of a small number of persons. Here the word means " we Christians " as a body. The author of the book feels the truth of this so strongly that he associates himself with the speaker and the audience and the whole body of the Church. We must gather that at the time when he was writing this truth was strongly impressed on him by the position of the Christians : in other words, he was writing during a period of persecution. Now in one way or another persecution, milder or graver, was the lot of the Christians continuously from 64 A.D. onwards, and before that intermittently but always in some part or another of the Church. The reason for this unusual touch of personal sympathy in the teaching doubtless lies in the fact that at the time the general state of persecution was specially accentuated by the Roman State.<sup>1</sup> But it is quite unjustifiable to place this use of " we Christians " on a level with the other use of " we," where it is found denoting " our little company of travellers and missionaries " in the sequel of the book.<sup>2</sup>

This passage has tempted the Bezan Reviser to make his remarkable addition in xi. 27-28, where Luke is made to speak as one of the congregation present at Syrian Antioch. It is evident that the Reviser (who was probably at work as early as the second century) understood xiv. 22 in the way which we have rejected. He regarded Luke as having been Paul's constant companion from the day when he

<sup>1</sup> *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Bartlet in his *Commentary on the Acts* accepts my interpretation of " we " in this passage as " we Christians," and " as expressing a maxim of the Christian life which he himself strongly realized and to which he had special reason for wishing to direct attention in his own day." It is therefore, strange that he should quote it on his p. 21 and elsewhere as a proof that Luke speaks as one who was listening to Paul in the Galatian audiences. You must choose one meaning or the other. You cannot have both.

was brought by Barnabas to Antioch onwards. This opinion we can only regard as erroneous; it is contrary to the evidence that can be gathered from Luke's own words; but evidently it was widely spread in ancient times, and isolated manifestations of it have often been quoted by modern scholars as authority for various details in the life of Luke.

The apostles are mentioned in viii. 1 as remaining in Jerusalem through the storm of persecution, although the rest of the congregation was scattered abroad. This statement has been often understood as implying that the whole Twelve remained there; but that seems to be a false understanding of the words. The author of the Acts had a strong interest in the method of administration and government of the early Church: had he not possessed this interest, he would not have been such a good historian. He fully recognized that "the Apostles" were the original governing body of the central Church, and that subsequently in Jerusalem, and from the first in other places, the governing body of the local Church and of the Universal Church came to be different in constitution: there could never be any new apostles in the higher sense of the word after those who "have companied with us from the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us" had died out. We have inferred from the language put in Peter's mouth i. 17, 20, that Luke understood the bishops and deacons (as found in his own Philippian Church) to be the substitutes who had succeeded there to the authority of the apostles.

There are several passages in which this use of "the apostles," indicating merely "the supreme governing body in so far as its members were present in Jerusalem," gives the key to understand rightly the general sense. For example, in Acts ix. 27, Barnabas took Saul "and brought

him to the apostles." All that Luke intends here to say is that Barnabas introduced Saul to the heads of the Church (so far as they were present at the time in Jerusalem), and guaranteed his good faith. Accordingly the narrative proceeds that Saul "was with them going in and going out." This does not imply that the Twelve were always together and Saul with them during his visit; but merely that Saul was in perfectly friendly and confidential relations with the leaders of the Church, communicating with them as occasion required. Paul himself tells us that he saw none of the apostles on this occasion except Peter and James (Gal. i. 18-20); and there is no inconsistency between the two statements and no reason even to infer that Luke was ignorant of the exact facts, which he had doubtless often heard from Paul himself. The apostles were probably much absent from Jerusalem; and Acts ix. 32 is typical of a general fact among them.

From this frequent absence arose the headship of one of the great apostles, viz. James, whose sphere of action lay specially in Jerusalem. The new condition of government had evidently come into force before A.D. 44, when "James and the Brethren" are mentioned. It would be as fallacious to infer from this that none of the other apostles were in Jerusalem in the spring of 44, as it would be to argue from viii. 1 that the whole Twelve continued stationary in Jerusalem after the death of Stephen. The same state of things certainly ruled in the Church at Jerusalem about A.D. 49-50, as we may gather from xv. 19: though "the apostles and elders" are usually mentioned as acting on that occasion. The same was the case in A.D. 57 (Acts xxi. 17-18).

In general, the governing body of the local Church acted for the Church; and in xiii. 2-3 it is assuredly the governing body which chooses out two of its own number and lays

hands on them.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bartlet says well that "the whole Church, in a meeting at which the dismissal took place, was conceived to act in the prayer and acts of its most gifted members, 'the prophets and teachers' (compare xiv. 27, the report to the Church)."

A modern scholar contrasts the great amount of attention devoted to Syrian Antioch in the Acts with the scanty references to that city in the Pauline Epistles, and draws some inferences from it. I have mentioned elsewhere that this argument cannot stand examination.<sup>2</sup> But it may be added to what is said there that, considering the epoch-making importance of Antioch in the development of the Church as the first Gentile congregation and the mother of all the Churches of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia, the remarkable feature in the book is that so little space is devoted to the foundation and development of this Church. Compare the space given to the beginning of the Church in Samaria, or to the episode of Cornelius, with the space assigned to Syrian Antioch!

I may take this opportunity of drawing attention to a new piece of evidence bearing on the chronology of the Acts and of St. Paul's life, which has strangely escaped general notice, though it was published so long ago as 1905. It was only in the winter of 1906-7 that I learned that M. Emil Bourguet had published<sup>3</sup> the long-desired inscription which gives the date when Gallio governed the Province of Achaia. The text is unfortunately much mutilated, and the full meaning cannot be recovered; but the most important points for Pauline [chronology are practically certain, (1) the document was a letter sent by the Emperor Claudius when he bore the title Imperator XXVI., i.e. A.D.

<sup>1</sup> I rather think that I once erred in this matter; but I at present am without the means of verifying.

<sup>2</sup> *Luke the Physician*, i.

<sup>3</sup> *De Rebus Delphicis Imperatoris Aetatis*, 1905, p. 63.

52, to the city of Delphi, (2) he mentions Junius Gallio his friend and proconsul of Achaia.<sup>1</sup>

The date depends on the time when the twenty-sixth salutation as Emperor was accorded to Claudius.<sup>2</sup> This is not known exactly ; but according to M. Cagnat's tables, that Emperor was still only Emperor XXIV. at the beginning of A.D. 52, and was Emperor XXVII. before the end of the same year.<sup>3</sup> Therefore the date must be some time during that year, and presumably not too early (for victories in war causing successive salutations xxv., xxvi., xxvii., would naturally take place in the time of summer). Gallio therefore governed Achaia in the year 52-3, entering on office according to the usual custom in the spring of the year.

In my paper on Pauline Chronology,<sup>4</sup> the residence of the apostle in Corinth is placed October A.D. 51 to February 53. This suits exactly the evidence of the inscription. The trial before Gallio occurred some considerable time before Paul left Corinth (Acts xviii. 18). On the other hand it is equally evident that Paul had resided some considerable time in Corinth before the trial occurred. We may fairly presume that it took place in the summer or autumn of A.D. 52. Further, Paul found that Aquila and Priscilla had arrived in Corinth not long before he came there, after their expulsion from Rome by Claudius. The expulsion, according to Orosius, occurred in A.D. 50 :<sup>5</sup> if

<sup>1</sup> The words "friend," "of Achaia," and the "Ju" of "Junius," are all restorations.

<sup>2</sup> Claudius was Imp. XXVII. on December 11, 52 (C.I.L. III. *Dipl.* I.), and he was Imp. XXV. in that year (C.I.L. III. 13880): the latter date depends on Mommsen's restoration of the number of the Tribunician authority, but can hardly be doubted.

<sup>3</sup> The number of his Tribunician authority is lost.

<sup>4</sup> *Pauline and other Studies*, pp. 361, 365, making more precise the chronology stated in *St. Paul the Traveller*.

<sup>5</sup> The principle of Orosius's dating by years of Nero is often misunderstood, and wrong dates assigned as his.

we suppose that it occurred late in the year, this would suit their arrival in spring 51. We do not know that Aquila came direct to Corinth from Rome, without visiting any other city, but it is evident from Luke's words that any such visit must have been brief.

The inscription is irreconcilable with Mr. C. H. Turner's chronology. He places the residence of Paul in Corinth from late in 50 to the spring of 52. It is still more completely irreconcilable with Professor Harnack's system, according to which Paul was in Corinth A.D. 48-50. It is reconcilable with Lightfoot's view that the residence in Corinth was A.D. 52-54; but the adherents of Lightfoot have to reject Orosius's date as valueless, and they must suppose that the trial before Gallio took place rather soon after Paul's arrival. Gallio's year of office would naturally run from April 52 to April 53; and there is great probability that it was cut short by his illness and voyage to Egypt for health: while Paul on this system only arrived in Corinth in the late autumn of 52.

There remains for Mr. Turner's chronology always the supposition that Gallio governed the Province Achaia for more than one year, and that the letter of Claudius was sent in the second year of the Proconsul's tenure of office. The ordinary tenure of Provinces (especially Senatorial or proconsular Provinces) was one year; but there are occasional instances of tenure for a second year. But the safe plan in chronological reasoning is to follow the general rule, and refuse to have recourse to exceptions without clear evidence in their favour. Here, however, as in almost all chronological questions in ancient history, the reasoning falls short of certainty; and those who are bent on supporting any view can always constrain the evidence to suit themselves by a liberal allowance of exceptions to the general practice.

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