

*HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST
EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.*

IX. TWO EXAMPLES OF THE FALSE TEACHERS.

IN 1 Timothy i. 20 two individual false teachers, Hymenaeus and Alexander, are mentioned, and Paul's condemnation of them is described ; but the brevity of the allusion is such that doubt might be felt whether it is as false teachers or for some totally different cause that they are mentioned here. But the doubt is unnecessary. The false teachers and the antidote to their influence on the Asian congregations is the guiding thought throughout the Epistle ; and it continually recurs to Paul's mind, without any formal connexion with the preceding thought. Moreover, Hymenaeus is again mentioned in 2 Timothy ii. 17 as a false teacher, and the doctrine which he and Philetus taught is described briefly : " who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." This is evidently a popular-philosophical explanation of the idea of the resurrection, an idea which seemed so irrational and absurd to the ordinary Gentiles, that Festus called Paul a fool for speaking about it seriously, and the Athenian audience in the Court of Areopagus, when he mentioned it, either mocked or politely postponed the further hearing to some remote and more convenient time.¹ Inevitably, the Christianized Hellenes must have begun to speculate, to theorize and to frame philosophic explanations of this doctrine, which was to them so incomprehensible, almost as soon as they became Christians. One such rationalistic explanation is alluded to in the *Acta of Paul*

¹ I cannot feel any doubt that this is the right interpretation. There was no real intention to hear the argument again ; postponement, when a preacher is speaking by invitation and has not yet finished his discourse, is equivalent to condemnation.

and *Thekla* as being current in Paul's lifetime and repro-
bated by him ; viz., that the resurrection of the dead is
merely an expression for the continuity of the household,
and that the parent lives again in the children. This ex-
planation is so natural and so much in accordance with the
old religious thought of Asia Minor,¹ that it was sure to be
suggested in Christian circles at a very early date, and the
statement of the *Acta* that it was current during the life of
Paul probably preserves a true tradition.

What was the exact form of allegory or theory by which
Hymenaeus explained away the resurrection into some idea
that was embraced in the shallow philosophy current in
educated society of that period, is not specified by Paul.
Timothy knew the teaching which he had in mind, and
therefore there was no need to describe it more fully. Here
we need not offer any conjecture about it. It is sufficient
to recognize that it belonged to a type of philosophic theoriz-
ing which must have been current at the earliest period in
the Hellenic congregations ; and that it was just the sort of
teaching which was likely to be in the mouths of the class
of false teachers whom we have described.

Paul's treatment of Hymenaeus and Alexander was stern :
"whom I delivered unto Satan that they might be taught
not to blaspheme." What is the meaning of this penalty,
which is so remote from our way of thinking and speaking ?
Probably it expresses an idea which is alien to modern and
western minds, and can hardly be understood by us ; but we
can see at least part of what was meant. The often-discussed

¹ "Life subject apparently to death, yet never dying, but reproducing
itself in new forms, different and yet the same. . . . This annihilation
of death through the power of self-reproduction was the object of the
enthusiastic worship of Asia Minor. . . . The parent is the child . . . ;
they seem to men different ; religion teaches that they are the same, that
death and birth are only two aspects of one idea, and that the birth is
only the completion of the incomplete apparent death." See *Luke the
Physician and Other Studies in the History of Religion* (1908), pp. 205-206.

passage, 1 Corinthians v. 3-5, refers to a similar penalty, but the manner of it is, if possible, more obscure: the penalty in that case was inflicted, not on a false teacher, but on one who had been guilty of an extremely gross moral offence. "For I, at all events, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as if really present, formed the decision in respect of him that hath so wrought this thing, in the name of the Lord Jesus, you being gathered together and my spirit, in association with the power of the Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord."

In both cases it is important to observe that the punishment is not merely vindictive, but reformatory: its purpose is "that the spirit may be saved," "that they might be disciplined not to blaspheme." The means of punishment is through bodily suffering and even death. The phrase "for the destruction of the flesh" in the one case shows what sort of discipline is indicated in the other. The analogy to a common usage in the religious and social custom of Asia Minor is so close and evident, that we cannot neglect it. Paul and his readers knew this custom too well to miss the likeness. He must have been conscious of it, and they must have recognized it in his words. One who had sinned against the God or the Goddess was punished with some disease (usually fever) or some bodily suffering or loss of some part, and no cure was possible until the sin was admitted and expiated. Numerous "confessions," inscribed on stone and deposited in or near the sanctuaries of Asia Minor, have been found, which record the sin, the suffering, the repentance, the pardon, and the acknowledgment of the Divine power and law.¹

¹ See a series of papers in the *Expository Times*, Oct., 1898, to Jan., 1899; also *Expositor*, March, 1900, p. 212.

The analogy, though striking, is not complete. In the first place the pagan belief was that the deity interfered and punished the sin. Paul and the Church,¹ in association with the power of God made manifest to mankind, consigned the criminal to Satan. But here we must recognize that Satan is merely the instrument which the power of God employs to chastise and to teach the criminal: the criminal is not placed eternally under Satan's power, but only for a season and for a purpose.

In the second place, Paul acts with authority and power: he calls in the power of evil, and hands over the criminal to that power: it is true that he does this in the name and under the authority of Jesus, but he appears to the eyes of men as the agent, and the power of Jesus is an unseen influence acting through him and with him. In the pagan custom either some person who has suffered through the criminal's act invokes the god, or the god acts on his own initiative: no human being has any power or authority: that belongs to the god alone, and any man who intervenes does so as a suppliant. This is a real and deep difference; but it stands in close relation to the most striking feature in the Apostles' conduct: they always speak and act with authority: they always claim to be armed with the Divine power "in the name of Jesus." You can never escape from this claim: the Apostles act as wielding superhuman power in virtue of the commission and charge of God. You cannot eliminate this superhuman element from the New Testament: it is implicated in the structure and spirit of every book and every letter. Even though you may reject the book of the

¹ No mention is made in 1 Tim. i. 20 of the Church or of Jesus as associating themselves with the action of Paul; but the fact that Paul mentions only his own action constitutes no proof that the others were not co-operating with him: it may be assumed as a matter of course that *ὄν τῇ συνδρομῇ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ* was as true in the one case as in the other; and, if Paul passes in silence over the co-operation of Jesus, it is quite possible that the Church also is omitted: the facts were familiar to Timothy.

Acts and so get rid of such a punishment as Paul inflicted on Bar-Jesus at Paphos, you find him claiming to act with the same power at Corinth and at Ephesus. In short, you must either deny the whole, or accept the whole.¹ A non-miraculous Gospel cannot be found by any process of elimination of parts.

Paul claims this superhuman power, not as his own, only as a trust confided to him in so far as the Spirit of God fills him and speaks through him. But he does lay claim to the possession of such power. In estimating its character, we must remember the difference of circumstance between Oriental life and our modern, western, and northern situation. We must bear in mind the much more impressionable nature of ordinary men in that Levantine world, their susceptibility to demoniac influence, the power which climate, sun, sickness and fever, and many other conditions exercise over them. Much is experienced among them at the present day, which would be incredible in our cooler and more self-reliant personalities. Their impressionability produces a far keener physical sympathy, so that one mind can act on another more powerfully. But still, with all these allowances and admissions, you cannot escape the miraculous, superhuman element throughout the New Testament. Power is the keynote throughout; and, if you neglect that, you ignore the fundamental fact in the Christian teaching, and inevitably miss its true character.

We need not speculate whether Alexander, who is mentioned here, is identical with "Alexander the coppersmith," who "did me much wrong; the Lord will render to him

¹ This does not, it need hardly be said, imply that every episode and verse in the New Testament is equally certain and authoritative. Variations in degree of authoritative character occur. Some episodes do not rest on such good testimony as others. The Gospels are not free from traces of the age when they were written, though these are few. To distinguish these later elements is the function of a sane and unprejudiced criticism, which as yet has not been consistently applied.

according to his works" (2 Tim. iv. 14). The identity is not impossible; but the word "coppersmith" is more probably added to distinguish this man from the other Alexander who was one of the false teachers.¹ In any case the false teacher, who was a member of the Ephesian Church, must be distinguished from Alexander the Jew, evidently not a Christian, who is mentioned in Acts xix. 33. The name was extremely common, and was specially favoured by Jews in the Greek Hellenic cities. Those who regard it as too strange a coincidence that there should be in the Christian Church at Ephesus two persons named Alexander, both of whom opposed Paul, though evidently in different ways, may either identify them, or suppose that the coppersmith belonged to a different town. Timothy was left in charge, not only of Ephesus, but doubtless of all the Asian congregations.

X. THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.

Here, where we regard only historical evidence and treat only historical questions, the religious side of these wonderful words in i. 16, "sinners, of whom I am chief," does not concern our present purpose. There are no four consecutive words in Paul's writings that throw more light on his character, none which more deserve to be carefully pondered over than these. They have been best understood and most valued by those who have the truest religious feeling. But in this place it is unsuitable and needless to do more than point out what astounding incapacity to understand religious feeling is shown by those who argue that the idea, "sinners, of whom I am chief," is unlike Paul, and can only be the exaggerated imitation of 1 Corinthians xv. 9 by some pretender. One is prompted to ask how we can look for sympathetic understanding of Paul's writings from critics to whom the

¹ In 1 Tim. i. 20 the association with Hymenaeus is in itself sufficiently distinctive.

religious feeling is so alien. How can such unsympathetic minds appreciate Paul, or give any illuminating criticism or trustworthy judgment as to what is or is not his work ?

One must feel that it is an inconsistent and untenable position to suppose that this letter was written by some person who wished to clothe himself with the authority of Paul in order to acquire more influence in condemning the false teachers of his own later age, and yet that this person, assuming falsely such authority, would make Paul speak of himself as the chief of sinners. How could he think that it would increase the weight of the letter with the Christians of his later age to put such a self-condemnatory phrase in the supposed Paul's mouth ? Had he so carefully thought out the imposture as to invent a touch of religious feeling, which has gone direct to the heart of thousands ? Who can invent such a wonderful expression of religious emotion except one who feels it in himself ? and how can an impostor feel it in his assumed character ? and how could the impostor so accurately gauge the character of his readers as to know that they would recognize in this the character of Paul ? and was the ordinary Christian of the second century capable of understanding Paul so well as to appreciate this extremely able assumption of his character ? That is a series of improbabilities too great for any one to face. The only path open to those who deny the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is the one which those scholars have as a rule taken, viz., to suppose that the later author who assumed the personality of Paul, while he was ignorantly and irrationally exaggerating and distorting a saying of the great Apostle's, blundered into the accidental creation of one of the great religious thoughts—one which has ever since been quoted and cherished by religious minds with grateful hope. It is a necessary accompaniment of this theory that the writer who blundered into the wonderful thought expressed

in those words was as blind and insensitive to their religious character as the modern theorists are.

The only other alternative would be to suppose that the unknown forger was by nature and character more Pauline in some of his thoughts than Paul, and that he occasionally penetrated deeper into the mystery of religious emotion than Paul did; but no one is likely ever to maintain or imagine that such a thing is possible. Such a personality would be too powerful to remain hidden in three pseudonymous Epistles, and would have influenced his age far too strongly to be forgotten. The modern theorists tacitly reject such a supposition, for they maintain that the later author was consciously imitating and really spoiling a true Pauline saying.

In every direction, the theory of false authorship of these four words breaks down, for any one who can appreciate their religious quality. And literary criticism loses all reason, and wanders into a pathless jungle of fancies, unless it proceeds on the principle that a great illuminative or creative saying is to be credited to the author who wrote it as the result of his own genius, and not to be reckoned as the result of his blundering exaggeration of some other person's words. What would be left of Aeschylus or Plato, if their deepest thoughts are regarded as the accidental result of bad and ignorant imitation? Such a principle of criticism is seen to be too ludicrous, when it is applied to other writers. What justification is there for applying it to the writer of this Epistle? A great thought well expressed must be credited to intention and not to chance error. One may guess at truth, but one does not blunder into truth.

The other class of theorists, who find in the Pastoral Epistles some genuine scraps of Pauline writing mixed up with work by a later hand, might explain i. 16 as a Pauline fragment; but most of them regard it as of later, non-

Pauline character, and thus fall under the same condemnation as the advocates of entire forgery. Knoke, however, has the merit of recognizing this passage as Pauline, though his extraordinarily complicated theory of two different Pauline letters mixed up in scraps with one another and with non-Pauline interpolations will never be accepted by any one except himself. His analysis is, however, interesting and suggestive.

XI. THE OBJECT OF PRAYER IN THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY.

Paul first of all gives some advice about the manner of public worship, not in its entirety, but only in regard to the prayers which should be offered by the congregation. He regards it as a matter of primary importance that the common prayers in the assembly should include the whole human race. There is to be no narrowing of their scope to the Church. The benefit of the whole world in which we live, "that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," should be prayed for by the Saints in every public meeting. The importance attached to this wide charity suggests that some question had arisen as to the scope of Christian prayer. In Ephesians vi. 18 prayer "for all the saints" is advised. Here a wider and nobler outlook dictates the instruction.

Now, inasmuch as after Ephesians was written, and before this letter to Timothy was composed, there had occurred the terrible events of A.D. 64, when the Christians were treated as monsters and enemies of mankind and the hatred of the Roman mob was roused against them, we can readily understand why Paul now thinks it so important to command that all men should be embraced in the prayers of the congregation. The same fact explains why he immediately adds, "for sovereigns and all that are in high place." You should "pray for them which despitefully use you." There

was now great need to emphasize this principle, which the persecution of A.D. 64 might tempt the Christians to forget. Hence a rule is prescribed for this part of the Church service, though the other parts of the service are not mentioned, being assumed as sufficiently known and appreciated.

The purpose of the prayers for all the world and for the governing power is that the Church may have the peace and tranquillity which are favourable to its rapid development and therefore to the ultimate good of all men. The thought is allied to the view taken in 2 Thessalonians, chapter ii., that the Imperial power stood between the Church and anarchy, protecting it for the time, though destined ultimately to ally itself with the powers of evil against the Church.¹ The end was not yet. Peace and order must always be the object of the Church's desire and prayers. For the present the Emperor was the sovereign, and as such the Church prayed for him. The salvation of the world still depended on the continuance of his authority, which was a condition of the preservation of tranquillity. Later, he should pass away, and a new sovereignty be substituted for him, the sovereignty of the Church of God. Von Soden has a note which shows strange misapprehension of this passage, and he has found followers: he thinks that it would be selfish to pray for tranquillity, and tries to make out that the tranquil and quiet life is not the object of the Church's prayers, but only of Paul's exhortation to pray. In opposition to this opinion, we have attempted to show that a prayer for tranquillity was a prayer for the good of all men and for the spread of knowledge of the truth.

XII. THE MANNER AND ORDER OF PUBLIC PRAYER.

The bearing of the next verses, ii. 8-10, causes difficulty.

¹ The meaning of this enigmatic passage in 2 Thessalonians is more fully discussed in the *Cities of St. Paul*, p. 284 ff.

These words were written with the scene to which they referred clearly pictured before the mind alike of the writer and of his correspondent. It is precisely because they presuppose this perfect acquaintance with the situation in all its details that they are to us obscure and easily open to several interpretations. We have to reproduce before our minds the scene as Paul and Timothy knew it, and if we could do that, then forthwith the words would become clear and their meaning indisputable ; but it is difficult for us to reconstruct the scene, because the subject is obscure and the evidence extremely scanty.

The critical and decisive question which arises first of all, is whether Paul here is thinking of a scene in the assembly where the leader or priest is uttering a prayer and the rest of the congregation is silent, or of a general prayer in which all take part alike. Until that question is answered the interpretation of the passage is involved in confusion and uncertainty. Yet none of the commentators whom I have consulted determines or even proposes the question. Several of them either use ambiguous language which can be understood equally well of common prayer and of prayer uttered by one person on behalf of all, or speak in one sentence as if they held the former view and in another as if they favoured the latter : others definitely take the view that one man prays and the rest keep silence (except, of course, to utter the universal Amen at the conclusion), apparently without having thought of the other alternative.

When the question is thus fairly and clearly put, it seems hardly possible to avoid the answer that Paul has before his mind a scene of general, common, congregational prayer, in which all join equally. The subject of this common prayer is described in verses 1 f. Then the manner is described in verses 8 f. The balancing against one another of " the men " in verse 8 and of " women " in verse 9 sug-

gests, though certainly it does not definitely prove, that Paul was thinking of an assembly in which the two sexes were not mingled together indiscriminately, but the men stood apart from women. The two groups are conceived as acting "in like manner." This word (*ὡσαύτως*), coming emphatically as the opening word of the sentence, loses all power and emphasis, and becomes practically meaningless, when the scene is pictured after the fashion in which some commentators understand it, "that the men pray, and that in like manner women dress themselves simply": in fact, this is merely a disjointed collocation of two unconnected ideas, in which the word "in like manner" has no force. The necessary and inevitable sense of this word is that the whole body of women is to be understood as affected by what has been said about the men.

Then Paul, assuming¹ by the word "in like manner" all that has just been said as to prayer, adds further regulations about the conduct and appearance of the women. He was always anxious and troubled about the latter; he felt that the reputation of the Church in pagan society, together with the future development of Christian society, depended largely upon them. Both early habit in Tarsus,¹ a thoroughly Oriental city, and reasoned experience during life, confirmed his strong opinion that it was unwise and dangerous for Christian women to go far outside of the conventions and current views as to propriety which were accepted in the Graeco-Roman world around them. A certain degree of progress was right. The Christian woman then was freer than the Jewess. In the Christian con-

¹ On the strict custom as to complete veiling of women which prevailed at Tarsus—a custom previously unknown to but highly approved by Dion Chrysostom (when he visited Tarsus about 112 A.D.): he had been accustomed to Hellenic cities, where women were not veiled, though they were treated as distinctly inferior creatures—see *Cities of St. Paul*, p. 202 (Hodder & Stoughton, 1907).

gregation women occupied a higher, freer and more honourable position than they had in Greek society. In the less Hellenized cities of Asia Minor women enjoyed more liberty and influence than in the Greek cities; the early Church followed this more liberal and enlightened practice; and the Christian ideal is expressed by the Apostle to the Galatians iii. 28, "Christ is the sum of all who believe in Him; He takes them all into Himself; He admits no distinction of nationality or of rank or of sex; all are placed on an equality and made one in Him."¹ This was the ultimate aim and end of Christian society; but to grasp at it prematurely was to sacrifice it; slavery of men and subjection of women would disappear in the perfect Church; but the Christian slave must accept his lot at the moment, and women must act in general accordance with the social ideas of their city and their time.

Paul's advice about women, therefore, always varies between the ideal and the actual; early habit made him tend to emphasize the latter side; and ardent feminists will consider that he emphasized it far too much. In this sentence the phrase "in like manner" expresses something of the ideal, but all the rest is devoted to the emphasizing of the actual and practical conditions. The men should pray with pure hands raised to heaven, and in like manner the women (i.e. should pray); but immediately comes in the thought of the existing social conditions, and the sentence proceeds to caution them against too much attention to dress and adornment; in the Church assembly, the best way of attaining to the ideal is to attend to the inner character and not to the outer appearance.

Thus both the verbal fact (the use of *ὡσαύτως*) and the Pauline spirit make us reject the idea that Paul's sole intention here is to assign the duty of praying to the men and to

¹ *Historical Commentary on Galatians*, p. 386.

confine the attention of women in Church to looking after the character of their dress. Prayer is a part of the Church service in which all join.

Paul's advice about public service in every assembly of the congregation (*ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ*) is confined to the subject and spirit and manner of the common prayer. He has nothing to say about praise, or about preaching (except to forbid women absolutely to teach, by which undoubtedly he means public teaching in the assembly, 1 Tim. ii. 12, and certainly does not refer to teaching in the home, which he regarded as a most important element in the development of Christian character, 2 Tim. i. 5). He never mentions the prophesying and other forms of inspired utterance, which indubitably formed an important part of the proceedings in the public assembly. On the other hand in 1 Thessalonians v. 12-20, where he is giving similarly a body of general advice to a young congregation, the only reference which he makes to the duty of assembling in common worship is to utter a caution against depreciating and belittling the inspired utterances of individuals. It would be as absurd to suppose that, when writing to the Thessalonians, Paul had not yet attained to the idea that common prayer should be made in the assembly, as to infer that he now in the Epistle to Timothy regards prophesying and ecstatic utterances as unsuitable or unimportant, because he does not allude to them when prescribing rules of conduct for the public assembly. We observe that he never mentions the common meal or the breaking of bread throughout this Epistle; yet no one doubts that, at whatever time the Epistle was written, those acts were habitual and most important parts of the congregational life.

The truth is that Paul, who was writing a letter, not a treatise, mentioned only what presented itself to his mind as of urgent consequence; and at the moment the custom

and order of common prayer was most urgent in the Asian congregations : " first of all I exhort " (where importance, not time, is the principle of order). Doubtless, its importance was as a preventive of the evil that might be caused by false teaching : this regular common prayer was the best means of ensuring " a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity " under the established law and order of the State ; and such a life was less exposed to danger from the wild speculation and rash theorizing of the false teachers. Discipline and order were the best safeguard.

Now in this common prayer there was no prescribed form of words. Clement of Rome, in writing to the Corinthians about thirty years later, gives a specimen in his sections 59-61 of what might be said in such prayers, and I cannot doubt that he had in mind this passage of the Epistle to Timothy. The words repeated could not be the same, but the thought was to be the same. In such a situation the only method to ensure order and seemliness was that the prayer should be silent ; and any one who has been present at an assembly of the Friends knows how impressive this silent prayer is to all who take part in it. This was known even in the pagan mystic ritual. " One of the most characteristic and significant features in the writings of Ignatius is the emphasis that he lays on silence, as something peculiarly sacred and divine . . . he speaks of God as having manifested Himself through His Son, who is His Word that proceeded from silence." ¹ The silence of the Quakers exacts a high standard of thought.

Such a rule of silent prayer did not exclude the spoken prayer of any one in the congregation whom the Spirit prompted to pray aloud. That is evident from the whole

¹ *Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 163 f. The circumstance that Ignatius was accustomed to silent prayer in the assembly would have to be taken account of in that chapter from which I am quoting.

tone and tendency of the early Church. The conclusion from our investigation seems, therefore, to be that in the common prayer, there was no official leader who spoke while others listened: it was led only when the Spirit moved a leader: otherwise it was expressed in common silence and the prayer of thought.

The passage of Clement, which was quoted above, is far from conclusive and definite in its evidence, but on the whole gives the impression of a model for congregational use,¹ not for an individual official taking the lead in prayer. The use of the plural "us" and "we," of course, proves nothing; a single person, speaking on behalf of the congregation, must use the plural number. But the spirit and tone perceptible in 59-61 are subtly different from 64, which has the evident character of a prayer uttered by an official on behalf of the people. The Jewish usage of that early period, as the Rev. G. H. Box informs me, cannot be determined precisely and certainly; but the custom probably was that, when ten men assembled, they would appoint one of their number to act as the Reader. The modern custom is that the Eighteen Benedictions (part of which, especially the first three and the last three, are very early, though the whole series was not fixed in its present form till about A.D. 110) are said first silently by Reader and congregation together, and then repeated aloud by the Reader.² Hence

¹ I mean a model to be imitated, not a form of words to be slavishly, repeated. But, as soon as the custom begins that the whole congregation should speak any prayer aloud, there must be a set form; otherwise there is confusion and anarchy.

² I am deeply indebted to the Rev. G. H. Box, Rector of Sutton, Beds., for an admirably instructive statement on this subject and on the relation of 1 Tim. ii. 8 to Jewish ritual, which I should have liked to print entire as it stands if I had his permission. Dr. Sanday kindly procured the statement for me; and favoured me with some notes of his own impressions, which I have used in the text. My own views were written and sent to the printer before receiving the statement, but it does not necessitate any change in them, and I have left them as they were formed. The last five paragraphs have the advantage of being written subsequently.

there is great probability that silent prayer of the whole congregation was not unknown in the Jewish synagogues of the first century.

Dr. Sanday, who expresses no definite opinion on either side, points out to me that while in the *Didache* x. 7 the prophets may say as much as they please, the parallel passage in *Apost. Constit.* vii. has 'presbyters' for 'prophets,' which would be in favour of ascribing the set form of prayer, x. 1-6, to the congregation. It is, as was stated above, part of our view that any inspired person, i.e., a prophet or prophetess, might be moved to speak the prayer, while the rest remained silent.

The condition which is prescribed, that the hands of the worshippers be "holy" (*δσίους*), is an interesting point. In the first place it probably implies that the hands be ceremonially pure, i.e. washed immediately before the service begins. This custom of washing before prayer was common both to many pagan cults¹ and to the Jewish ritual. Synagogues and places of prayer (*προσευχαί*) were commonly placed near a running water (Acts xvi. 13) or beside the sea, for the convenience of worshippers. There is very often an artificial fountain of running water within the precinct of a Mohammedan mosque so that the ablutions may be made easily before entering the sacred building. A fountain or, in places where water was scarce and streams did not exist, a cistern formed a common feature of the sacred precincts that surrounded earlier Anatolian churches;² and the Mohammedan custom (like many of the Mohammedan tenets) was probably derived from Christian refugees

¹ In the ritual of Men Tyrannos, for example, complete ablution is prescribed for the impure before entering the temple (Foucart, *Associations Religieuses*, p. 219, who is, however, surely in error when he understands *κατακέφαλα λούσασθαι* as *se jeter de l'eau sur la tête*: it must denote complete washing from the head downwards).

² See EXPOSITOR, 1908, Oct. p. 299, Nov. p. 407.

persecuted as heretics by the Orthodox Church. That the Jewish custom should persist in the Pauline congregations of Asia Minor is highly probable. I have elsewhere pointed out examples of the influence of Jewish rites which can be observed in the Anatolian congregations.¹

In the second place, it would probably be too narrow a view to restrict the force of "holy" hands to ceremonial purity. Although there is always a tendency in human nature to forget the spiritual aspect of a rite and to attend only to the ceremonial and external side, and this tendency worked as strongly in Judaism as in other religions, yet even the Jews in many cases were conscious that external purity was not sufficient without moral purity; and Paul was not likely to forget this, nor do the Pastoral Epistles show any signs of neglect in this respect. But it is quite sufficient for us to establish the probability that the external condition of purity was considered and enforced in the earliest Pauline Churches of Asia Minor alongside of the moral conditions.

On the other hand, the Jewish analogy, so far as it goes, would favour the view that the men alone prayed in the Pauline Church; and would thus be dead against our conjectural restoration of the scene as it was clear in the minds of Paul and Timothy. But we must consider that the early Christian Church tended to give greater freedom to women, and that this tendency was restrained by the desire not to offend too distinctly against existing prejudices. Prophetesses might be inspired equally with prophets to speak with tongues and to pray aloud in the assembly; and Paul never forbade this, though he forbade them to give formal teaching or to do anything which assumed a position of authority over men. We may also freely admit that personally he

¹ *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, ii. pp. 545 ff., 674 ff.; *St. Paul the Traveller*, pp. 141-144.

was not favourable to prophetesses speaking publicly at all; but his principle "quench not the Spirit," i.e. never belittle or depreciate or discourage any working of the Spirit, would not permit him to forbid them speaking as the Spirit moved them, and he never denied that the Spirit may move women as much as, and in the same way as, it moved men.

W. M. RAMSAY.

"MENDING THEIR NETS."

(NOTE ON THE CALL OF THE APOSTLES JAMES AND JOHN.)

Two evangelists (Matthew and Mark) relate the call of these Apostles in nearly the same words. St. Matthew, after describing the call of Andrew and Peter, who were casting a net into the sea, proceeds to describe the call of their fellow-apostles, engaged in the like business. James and John were "also" (Revised Version, but why?) in the boat with Zebedee their father, "*mending* their nets." St. Mark's account is practically the same. The purpose of this brief paper is to question the translation "mending" given in the Authorised and Revised Versions.

This translation of the Greek words seems, in modern times, to have gone unchallenged. But there has been by no means always an unanimous consent to the meaning. The Greek words in the two Gospels are "*ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ, καταρτίζοντες τὰ δίκτυα.*"

The presence of Zebedee their father is noted in each Gospel, but in a different part of the sentence. Our inquiry is, What were James and John actually doing at the moment when our Lord approached and called them? The assumption that they were "mending" their nets is, I suppose, universal. I think it open to question. The witness of the Vulgate is interesting. In the First Gospel the trans-