

with the life on earth. The Christian looks forward to a common citizenship in heaven (Phil. iii. 20, Heb. xiii. 14) and to "the general assembly and Church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. xii. 2 f.).

Apart from similitude and parable the spirit of 'fellowship' animates the whole of the New Testament. The history of Christianity would have been very different if the same spirit had continued to be the predominant influence. But events belied the early promise. The four great notes of the Apostolic times were all infringed or broken within the memory of the generation which upheld them. (1) The teaching of the Apostles was challenged by false Apostles (Rev. ii. 2), by Judaisers (Gal. i. 6), and by adversaries like Phygelus and Hermogenes and Diotrophes (2 Tim. i. 15, 3 John 9); (2) the earliest contention in the Church arose from a dispute concerning the daily distribution of food (Acts vi. 1 foll.); (3) the Eucharist itself gave occasion to abuse and scandals (1 Cor. xi. 20); (4) and we learn from the Epistle to the Hebrews of neglect by some of the daily prayers of the Church (Heb. x. 25).

Still we may believe that in every age thousands of the faithful have 'continued steadfastly' in this charter of the Christian Church. And Christ Himself, around whom first the brotherhood of the disciples gathered and worked, still summons all His followers to join Him in the fellowship for the furtherance of the Gospel and the advance of His Kingdom.

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TWO NEW TESTAMENT PROBLEMS.

I

ST. PAUL'S FATE AT ROME.

IN THE EXPOSITOR for March, Sir W. M. Ramsay has urged afresh that Paul was released from Rome in 62 A.D. and remained free till c. 65 A.D. But though I follow him in

his general attitude to the Acts, I cannot agree with his exegesis of it in this matter. He argues¹ that the Jews never presented their case against Paul at Rome, feeling that they had no prospect of success after the failure of their efforts to induce the Roman provincial authorities to yield to their pressure on the spot ; and that for this reason the case simply went in Paul's favour by default at the end of the two years referred to in the closing verses of Acts. Against this I would urge : (1) If Luke had meant this to be understood, it would have been easy for him to have said so. That is what the analogy of the end of his Gospel, to which appeal is made, would demand, viz., a *clear summary statement* of what was to be developed more fully in the beginning of the sequel, the third writing which Sir W. M. Ramsay assumes the author of Acts here to have in mind. Yet nowhere does Acts point to any plan of Paul's beyond "seeing Rome also" ; which is now fulfilled.

(2) "The analogy between the case of Paul and the trial of Jesus" tells all the other way. "In both instances the Roman judge thought that the accused party was innocent." Yes, and yet in the sequel Jesus was put to death ; therefore by analogy Paul also, in spite of the finding of the trials actually recorded.

(3) Such an issue I still see hinted at in Luke's record of Agrippa's comment, "This man might have been set free, if he had not appealed to Cæsar" ; but he had, and the reigning Cæsar was Nero ! That is how I believe Luke meant his readers to read these words (together with his silence as to a favourable issue at the end of the book), relying upon the Christian estimate of Nero after 64 A.D. to guide their reading, in view of what was, moreover, the notorious fact as to the fate of Paul. Paul's doubly recorded foreboding at Miletus that he would never again see the Ephesian elders

¹ Like Prof. K. Lake, in *The Interpreter* for 1909, pp. 147-156.

points the same way ; and so does the very fulness with which Acts records the preliminary hearings in Palestine, as though meant to suggest the proper and normal verdict, as distinct from that of an " abnormal monster " like Nero—which is naturally passed over in silence as well known and dangerous to refer to explicitly from the Christian standpoint.

(4) The real cause of Paul's condemnation at Rome was the development of the aspect of the case against him only alluded to but not pressed with witnesses in Cæsarea, viz., his dangerous effect on law and order among the Jews in the provinces generally, especially Asia (Acts xxiv. 5, 9 ; xxv. 7 f.). Though the Jews may have felt that there was no hurry ; that with the lapse of time the chapter of accidents (e.g., as to the weight which Festus' favourable report would carry) was on their side ; yet they intended to work up and present this side of their case, if needful, relying on influences at Rome, e.g. " the partiality of the powerful Poppæa," to help them in the last resort. Sir W. M. Ramsay himself says that the Jews " played a waiting game. This procedure was clever : it meant success to a certain degree : it was economical for the Jews, and expensive for Paul." May we not say rather, on the analogy of the case of Lampon, as reported by Philo *In Flaccum*, that since they were not sure of their case in view of the opinion of Agrippa and the probable tenor of Festus' report to Rome, they determined at least to shut Paul up until the legal time-limit was about to expire, and so harass him all that time with anxiety as to the final issue. Meantime they might intrigue at Rome, in order to prepare the ground for the most favourable hearing possible, when their witnesses (e.g. from Asia) should at last be brought forward. That they let the case go by default within the period open to them by usage is most unlikely. Indeed, does not the fact that Luke specifies not eighteen months, which to judge from third

century usage was the limit for capital charges sent on appeal from the provinces, but "two whole years" as spent by Paul in confinement awaiting trial, suggest that the Jews had at least given notice within the legal limit that they would press their case as soon as the winter of 61-2 was over and their witnesses could arrive?

(5) The nature of the references to his prospects made by Paul in Philemon and Philippians respectively, is against the theory that the Jews did not support their case at Rome. For if so, we should expect the tone of Philippians, as nearer the end of the time-limit for such action, to be *more confident* than that used in the earlier Philemon; whereas the opposite is the case. That is, Paul had growing cause to doubt the issue of the case as time went on and he knew more of his actual prospects as seen in Rome itself.

(6) Finally, this new view is excluded by the joint witness of 1 Peter and 1 Clement, which (as I have pointed out in the article "Paul" in the *Encycl. Britannica*) do not permit of Paul's having survived the Neronian persecution of 64, in which Peter also suffered. For Clement says (c. 6) that the Neronian victims of 64 were "gathered together," in the place of reward, unto these two Apostles just referred to. These last two arguments seem to me fairly decisive against Sir W. M. Ramsay's theory, and the latter of them against any theory of St. Paul's release from the imprisonment at Rome, where Acts lets him pass from our view.

VERNON BARTLET.

THE NEW CODEX "W."

THE publication of the new Greek uncial MS. "W" marks a further epoch for the textual history of the Gospels in Greek.

From the wonderful land of the Pharaohs this treasure has come to us. It is not to be known as the "Freer" MS., but