

undergoing *change*, whether dead or alive, at the Coming. But in our case the body does undergo dissolution and corruption ; and that shews that the outer husk of our personal individuality here is only an *instrumentum* or temporary mode of expression of our truer self, which lives on through and after the experience of death.

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THE EARLY DATE OF " GALATIANS " : A REPLY.

As one whose mind has been for some years unsettled regarding the date of the Epistle to the Galatians, and for some months has been settling towards a date anterior to the Council of Jerusalem, I have read Mr. Maurice Jones' article in the September (1913) number of the EXPOSITOR with interest not unmingled with embarrassment. It is not that any of his arguments are exactly novel, but when massed together in this way, with the inferences to be drawn from them marshalled with considerable rhetorical force, they undoubtedly leave the impression after a first reading that he has good grounds for the confidence with which he rejects the early date. His presentation of the case gains further plausibility from the fact that as a holder of the south Galatian theory the early date has become a possibility for him, and as a champion of Luke as a credible historian it must have attractions for him on general grounds. Mr. Jones may therefore fairly be regarded as an impartial critic of the early date, and for that reason also his arguments deserve careful consideration. I may say at once that such consideration has convinced me that no one of Mr. Jones' objections to the early date is really cogent. It will be convenient to discuss them seriatim.

(a) " The question of time."

This resolves itself into the question whether there can have been a sufficient interval between Paul's return to Antioch after the first Missionary Tour and his departure for Jerusalem to allow for the creation within the Galatian Churches of the situation which called forth the Epistle, and further for the news of this change to reach the Apostle in Syria. And this breaks up into two subordinate questions: How long did Paul remain at Antioch? and How long would it take to bring about the new situation?

On the first point Mr. Jones is very decided. "All this happens within the space of four or five months." But does he not exaggerate, to the serious detriment of his case, both the degree of certainty attainable in such a matter, and the conclusions of the authorities to whom he refers? "All the systems of New Testament Chronology with which I am acquainted, Harnack's, Ramsay's, Turner's, and countless others, while they vary as to the particular year perhaps which saw the return of the Apostles to Syrian Antioch, at the close of the first Missionary journey, are absolutely at one in this, that six months is the extreme limit which you can allow between the arrival of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch and their arrival at Jerusalem prior to the holding of the Council." After reading that, it is not a little surprising to find on turning to Ramsay that he reckons the interval as extending from July to "Spring," and covering therefore not six months but at least eight and possibly nine.¹ And that must be understood to be Ramsay's minimum, for he adds elsewhere: "It was probably not less than a year after the Apostles had returned when they started for Jerusalem."² Neither is Mr. Jones' statement consistent with the conclusion to which Turner comes in his article on the Chronology.³ For he brings the

¹ Ramsay, *Church in Roman Empire*, pp. 74, 168.

² *Ibid.* p. 75 note.

³ Hastings, *Bible Dictionary*, i. p. 422.

Missionaries back to Antioch S. in November, five months earlier than Ramsay; and though he does not reject Ramsay's reckoning, he points out that "the shorter estimate, if it satisfies Luke's language, and it seems to do so, is to be preferred on the ground it seems unlikely that the apostles on this their first missionary experiment should have separated themselves from their base at Antioch for so long a period as over two years." And this illustrates the second point, viz., that all these calculations are so hypothetical—depending on the number of days, weeks or months, spent at each several place, the possibility or the reverse of Paul's travelling in winter and so forth—that the totals arrived at in any case must be entirely provisional. But the point is that our two great English authorities¹ to whom Mr. Jones appeals give us a margin not of six months, but of nine, twelve or fifteen.

Would fifteen months be sufficient, or twelve? That again depends on how we conceive the situation in the Galatian Churches, and the way in which it had been brought about. Here also one is tempted to put a mark of interrogation after most of Mr. Jones' statements. We do not know that "the effect of this announcement [of Paul's success] was to rouse the Judaistic party in Antioch to immediate action": and much of what follows is likewise pure conjecture. So far from the Jewish propaganda being the effect of Paul's success made known at Antioch, it is quite possible that it had begun before he reached that city. There is no necessity for taking the occurrences recorded in Acts xv. 1 as wholly posterior to Paul's arrival, or the "judaising" activity as commencing only then. The

¹ It is possible that Harnack (the only other authority whom Mr. Jones mentions by name) gives better support to his contention: but I have not come across the passage. In the passage in the *Chronologie* (I. p. 238 f.), where he goes fully into the Pauline chronology, there is no reference to this particular question.

movement which we describe as "anti-Pauline" started in Jerusalem, and started in all probability quite independently of any report of his success. The question of the conditions on which the Gentiles might be admitted was no new one: it must have been before the Church for ten years or more. Men had taken sides upon it, and any missionary activity on the part of definitely Jewish Christians must have assumed a form which could be described in the words of Acts xv. 1: "And certain men had come down from Judæa and were teaching the brethren, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses ye cannot be saved." It would be quite in Luke's manner thus to start a new stage of his history by picking up a dropped thread. And there is nothing inherently improbable in the suggestion that such representatives of the narrower view had reached Galatia even before Paul quitted the country. Considerations such as these seem quite sufficient to meet Mr. Jones' objection that "six months is an utterly inadequate period wherein to produce the situation and events which the Epistle to the Galatians imply." Moreover, it need not have been six months: it was probably twelve.

(b) "How are we to reconcile this date with Acts xv. 3?"

That is, how are we to reconcile the early date with the fact that, according to Luke, Paul and his companions "passed through both Phœnicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: "and they caused great joy unto all the brethren"? This is an artificial difficulty, due partly to an illegitimate narrowing of the reference to "Gentiles," and partly to an exaggeration of what had actually happened in Galatia. We are not concerned to deny that Paul's success in South Galatia would provide part of the evidence for "the turning of the Gentiles": but it is quite gratuitous to assume that it provided the whole. There was Antioch itself, represented in the company

itself by "certain others" of the Church, in all probability themselves Gentile Christians. If we may judge from the analogy of a modern missionary meeting, the appearance of these Gentile converts from Antioch would make even more impression than anything Paul might have to tell about his success in an unknown land.

But it was not either the scope of his work or the measure of his success which he and his companions "declared" to the "great joy" of all the brethren. It was the simple but all-significant fact that Gentiles also had "turned" to seek and to find a Saviour in the Messiah of the Jews. Nothing that had happened subsequently in Galatia could invalidate or even diminish that fact. How great a marvel it represented to Paul and to many of his contemporaries, we have continually to keep before our minds in studying the period. Moreover, supposing that Paul had already written his Epistle and despatched it, he may be credited with some confidence that it would not be without effect. He wrote it in keen anxiety: but he did not write it in despair. It is only this unjustifiable narrowing of the reference to the Churches of Galatia and this exaggerated representation of these as lost to Paul and to Paul's form of Christianity that causes any difficulty in reconciling this joyful proclamation with an early date for the Epistle. And as to Luke's silence on the subject, of what other Epistle do we find the occasion narrated or even hinted at in the Acts? For his silence on this occasion there are many possible explanations, such as the scope and scheme of his work, or the fact that Paul's journey to Jerusalem was quite sufficiently explained by the events at Antioch.

(c) "How is St. Paul's attitude at the Council to be explained if the Galatians were in open rebellion and this Epistle had been already written?"

This difficulty is similar in character to the previous one.

It is true that "the matter to be discussed by this assembly was the very question which lies at the heart of the Epistle to the Galatians." But it was at Antioch that it had first become pressing, and it was a deputation from the Church at Antioch which represented the Gentile cause at Jerusalem. One great advantage of the early date is that it makes it possible to put the "vacillation" of Peter at Antioch before the Council. This would become therefore part of the situation at Antioch which led to the sending of the deputation of which Paul was a member. No doubt the Galatian crisis would deepen the Apostle's anxiety for a settlement. But even that was only a specially distressing case of a general situation. And it is surely going quite beyond the record to describe it as a state of "open rebellion." The situation to which the [Epistle is addressed, is rather one of genuine perplexity, the religious uneasiness of half-instructed converts, anxiety to know how Paul could meet the attack on his own authority, and the insinuations that the Gospel he had preached was incomplete. Of course these things carried with them the danger, the imminent danger, that the Galatian Christians might go over completely to Paul's opponents. But granted that the news of this situation reached Paul while he was at Antioch, he did the two things most clearly demanded by it. He despatched this letter in which he combines remonstrance, argument and appeal, and he proceeded himself to grapple with the difficulty at its source, in Jerusalem.

As to the part he took in the Council, it is again a gratuitous assumption that all he did was "to quote the undoubted success of his Mission among the cities of South Galatia," and a yet further assumption that what had happened in Galatia was of such a character as to preclude his appealing to his experiences there to show that the Gospel was "the power of God also to the Gentile." Whether the Apostle

sat "meek" in the Council ("silent" he certainly was not), or whether he displayed "pusillanimous conduct," is a matter of subjective opinion. At any rate he stated his case and gained his point. And perhaps the method he adopted of relating "all the signs and wonders which God had wrought through them among the Gentiles" was more effective than any amount of "burning indignation" would have been.

(d) "Could Timothy have been circumcised by Paul after the Epistle to the Galatians had been written?"

To deal fully with this objection would require much space; but it may be possible to state very briefly why it is not so conclusive as Mr. Jones believes. This circumcision of Timothy is a serious difficulty, if it be a difficulty at all, on any view as to the date of the Epistle. In the one case Paul wrote the Epistle containing all the sweeping sentences which Mr. Jones quotes and others to like effect, knowing that he would be met with the easy retort: Then why did you cause Timothy to be circumcised? In the other case, if the Epistle is early, he wrote the same sentences, and then, in spite of them, caused Timothy to be circumcised. For my part, there seems little indeed to choose between these alternatives on the ground of the intrinsic improbability of either. On the surface they seem to involve the Apostle equally in self-contradiction. And the inference I should draw is that it is impossible to make any effective use of this action of Paul as bearing on the date of the Epistle. If the Apostle "stultified himself by circumcising Timothy in the district of South Galatia within a few months after he had written the Galatian Epistle," he stultified himself no less if he wrote the Epistle to the very Churches to which he had introduced Timothy as a half-Gentile circumcised at his instance.

But did he "stultify himself"? The assumption which

underlies such a statement is one which is far too common, namely, that Paul's criticism of the Law involved or amounted to its equal and entire abrogation for Gentile Christians, for himself, and for Jews who became Christians. It is, on this assumption alone that there rests the charge of inconsistency or time-serving so freely launched against the Apostle whenever he is found conforming to some practice of the ceremonial law. It ought not to be so difficult to understand that what Paul joyfully discovered to have come to an end was the Law as the system or principle on which the relation between God and man was based and ordered. It was the Law in its quality of encouraging men to "trust in themselves that they were righteous" to build up and assert a claim on the Divine favour and forgiveness, of which Christ was "the end." To use phraseology familiar in another connexion, the Law was no longer of the *esse* of the relationship with God, but it did not cease to be of the *bene esse*, some parts of it for Jews and Gentiles alike, other parts besides for those who had been born Jews. Paul's contending was with those who, because they did not understand the change wrought by Christ, sought to make the keeping of the whole Law *de fide* for all Christians, and so to make it part of the *esse* of the relationship with God.

One might find a useful illustration in the Foreign Mission field. It might be harmless (many of our wisest missionaries think it would) for Chinese converts to Christianity to continue the practice of ancestor-veneration.¹ But it would be a serious mistake, involving a perversion of the Christian Gospel, for such converts to insist that only those, whether Chinese or non-Chinese, who practised ancestor-veneration,

¹ I write "ancestor-Veneration," not forgetting that what has been the practice in China is commonly described as "ancestor-worship." The substitution of the one for the other is (1) what first missionaries as I refer to have in view, (2) what would be a natural result of accepting Christianity, and (3) illustrates rather strikingly what I conceive to have been the effect of Paul's faith in Christ on his attitude to the Law.

were truly in the way of salvation. In face of such an assertion a Chinese Paul would vehemently maintain the liberty of non-Chinese to abstain from ancestor-veneration, and yet to possess all the fulness of Christian salvation and experience. But the same Chinese Paul, who had himself been trained in the practice, might without any inconsistency continue it for himself even while vindicating the liberty of others. That might indeed be the action of a large-hearted, open-eyed man: but if it were otherwise, it would not be the action of a Paul.

There is thus no reason to suppose that Paul either believed or taught that even the ceremonial law had been cancelled as regards himself or his fellow-believers who were also Jews. But for them its character had been completely changed, and with its character their relation to it. It had become something in the observance of which they might be guided by circumstances; it was not an end, but a means. That Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised shows neither inconsistency nor vacillation. It simply means that he recognised Timothy to be to all intents and purposes a Jew, yet without the outward sign, and seeing no objection in principle, provided it was clearly understood that circumcision made no difference in a man's standing with God, caused him to be circumcised because it was expedient for the work he was called to do.¹

I do not propose to deal with the two further objections raised by Mr. Jones on the ground of internal evidence. He himself does not desire "to attach too much weight to them." Of course there is a very simple explanation of the fact that according to the Epistle "Paul himself is the important personage," and "it is his figure that fills the foreground of the picture." It is surely quite unnecessary to postulate lapse of time and changed conditions in order to account

¹ Cf. Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, p. 180: also *Jewish Christianity*, p. 86.

for this, when it was Paul who had been attacked, Paul whose relation with the older Apostles it was important to describe, Paul, whose "gospel" was in question. There is as little ground for deducing from the language of the Epistle that when it was written Barnabas was "of only secondary importance" as there is for deducing from Acts xi. 29, 30 that the relationship between Barnabas and Paul was at the time there referred to "in some way that of patron and client."

It has been acknowledged that Mr. Jones puts his objections with vividness and vigour, and just for that reason it seemed worth while to examine them. But after examination they do not appear either singly or collectively to militate against the early date of the Epistle. The really serious difficulty lies, as Professor Lake has pointed out, in the literary relationship with the Epistle to the Romans.

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NOTE ON THE ARTICLE "TRANSMISSION
OF THE GOSPEL."

THE explanation (p. 89) of the *right* cheek in Matthew v. 39 is most ingenious; but the Lewisan text omits the word *right*, having only "whosoever smiteth thee on thy cheek." The source of the word *right* was excellently detected by Merx. It comes from the *right hand* of v. 30, omitted (with the whole verse) in the Lewisan, doubtless accidentally; the *right hand* is more important than the left, but this is not the case with the cheek.

In Mark vi. 40 we read ἀπέπεσαν πρασιαὶ πρασιαί, "they reclined garden-beds, garden-beds," a difficult expression. But when we discover the Syriac for "garden-bed," the difficulty vanishes. That word is מְשַׁכְּבָתָא, as appears from *Thesaurus Syriacus*, col. 4147, in Arabic *maskabah* (Dozy, *Supplément*, i. 666). But in the text followed by Mark it was not used in its Syriac sense "garden-beds," but in its Hebrew sense *couches, lyings-down*, i.e. companies. It would appear that the Syriac word is derived from שכב in its Arabic sense, whence a *maskabah* means properly something watered. It is curious that this ancient word is condemned as a modernism by a recent Syrian writer on the vernacular.

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