

symbol used to represent the concrete idea, and in the heavenly Jerusalem of the Apocalypse the servants of God and of the Lamb are to have "his name" on their foreheads. The one expression, however, which is peculiar in the passage: "counted worthy"—in the Acts *κατηξιώθησαν*, and in the *Shepherd* *ἀξιόους ἡγήσατο*—is a perfectly natural and simple one, the use of which cannot be exclusively conceded to the Acts of the Apostles. It is found frequently in the Pauline Epistles, as for instance in 2 Thes. i. 5, where, after saying that they give thanks to God for them and glory in the churches of God for the patience and faith with which the Thessalonians endure persecutions, the writer continues: "which is a token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye *may be counted worthy* (*καταξιωθῆναι*) of the kingdom of God, for which ye also *suffer* (*πάσχετε*)"; and again, in the same chapter, v. 11, 12, "Wherefore we also pray always for you that our God *may count you worthy* (*ἀξιώσῃ*) of the calling, and fulfil all good pleasure of goodness and work of faith with power; *that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you* (*ἐνδοξασθῇ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν*)," etc. The passage we are examining cannot be traced to the "Acts of the Apostles." It must be obvious to all that the *Shepherd* of Hermas does not present any evidence even of the existence of the Acts at the time it was written.

Only two passages in the *Epistles of Pseudo-Ignatius* are pointed out as indicating acquaintance with the Acts, and even these are not advanced by many critics. We have already so fully discussed these Epistles that no more need now be said. We must pronounce them spurious in all their recensions, and incapable of affording evidence upon any point earlier than towards the end of the second century. We might, therefore, altogether refuse to examine the passages; but, in order to show the exact nature of the case made out by apologists, we shall briefly refer to them. We at once compare the first with its supposed parallel<sup>1</sup>:—

## EP. TO SMYRN. III.

But after the resurrection he did eat and drink with them, as in the flesh, although spiritually united to the Father.

Μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἀνάστασιν συνέφαγεν αὐτοῖς καὶ συνέπιεν ὡς σαρκικὸς, καί περ πνευματικῶς ἠνωμένος τῷ πατρὶ.

## ACTS X. 41.

.....even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

.....ἡμῖν οἵτινες συνεφάγομεν καὶ συνεπίομεν αὐτῷ μετὰ τὸ ἀναστῆναι αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν.

There is nothing in this passage which bears any peculiar analogy to the Acts, for the statement is a simple reference to a

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Westcott does not claim either this or the second (*On the Canon*, p. 48, note 2), and Hefele merely suggests comparison with Acts (*Patr. Ap.*, p. 103, p. 98).



tradition which is also embodied both in the third Synoptic<sup>1</sup> and in the fourth Gospel;<sup>2</sup> and the mere use of the common words *φάγειν* and *πίνειν* could not prove anything. The passage occurs in the Epistle immediately after a quotation, said by Jerome to be taken from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, relating an appearance of Jesus to "those who were with Peter," in which Jesus is represented as making them handle him in order to convince them that he is not an incorporeal spirit.<sup>3</sup> The quotation bears considerable affinity to the narrative in the third Synoptic (xxiv. 39), at the close of which Jesus is represented as eating with the disciples. It is highly probable that the Gospel from which the writer of the Epistle quoted contained the same detail, to which this would naturally be a direct descriptive reference. In any case, it affords no evidence of the existence of the Acts of the Apostles.

The second passage, which is still more rarely advanced, is as follows:—

## EP. TO PHILAD. II.

For many wolves (which appear) worthy of belief, make captive by evil pleasure the runners in the course of God.

πολλοὶ γὰρ λύκοι ἀξιόπιστοι ἡδονῇ κακῇ αἰχμαλωτίζουσιν τοὺς θεοδρόμους.

## ACTS XX. 29.

I know that after my departing grievous wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι εἰσελεύσονται μετὰ τὴν ἀφίξίν μου λύκοι βαρεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς, μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου.

The only point of coincidence between these two passages is the use of the word "wolves." In the Epistle the expression is *πολλοὶ λύκοι ἀξιόπιστοι*, whilst in Acts it is *λύκοι βαρεῖς*. Now, the image is substantially found in the Sermon on the Mount, one form of which is given in the first Synoptic, vii. 15, 16, and which undeniably must have formed part of many of the Gospels which are mentioned by the writer of the third Synoptic. We find Justin Martyr twice quoting another form of the saying, "For many (*πολλοὶ*) shall arrive in my name, outwardly, indeed, clothed in sheep's skins, but inwardly being ravening wolves (*λύκοι ἄρπαγες*)."<sup>4</sup> The use of the term as applied to men was certainly common in the early Church. The idea expressed in the Epistle is more closely found in 2 Timothy iii. 1 f., in the description of those who are to come in the last days, and who will (v. 6) "creep into the houses and make captive (*αἰχμαλωτίζοντες*) silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts." The passage cannot be traced to the Acts, and the Ignatian Epistles, spurious though they be, do not present any evidence of the existence of that work.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 42 f.

<sup>2</sup> John xxi. 12 f.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted p. 173 f.

<sup>4</sup> See discussion of the quotation, p. 228, note 1, p. 238 f.



Only two sentences are pointed out in the *Epistle of Polycarp* as denoting acquaintance with the Acts. The first and only one of these on which much stress is laid is the following :—

## EPISTLE I.

Whom God raised (ἤγειρεν), having loosed the pains of hell (ᾗδου).

## ACTS II. 24.

Whom God raised up (ἀνέστησεν), having loosed the pains of death (θανάτου).

It will be obvious to all that, along with much similarity, there is likewise divergence between these sentences. In the first phrase the use of ἤγειρεν in the Epistle separates it from the supposed parallel, in which the word is ἀνέστησεν. The passages in the Pauline Epistles corresponding with it are numerous (e.g., 2 Cor. iv. 14, Ephes. i. 20). The second member of the sentence, which is of course the more important, is in reality, we contend, a reference to the very Psalm quoted in Acts immediately after the verse before us, couched in not unusual phraseology. Psalm xvi. 10 (Sept. xv.) reads: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell" (ᾗδην).<sup>1</sup> In Ps. xviii. 5 (Sept. xvii. 5) we have, "The pains of hell (ὠδίνες ᾗδου) compassed me about."<sup>2</sup> The difference between the ὠδίνες τοῦ ᾗδου of the Epistle and the ὠδίνες τοῦ θανάτου of the Acts is so distinct that, finding a closer parallel in the Psalms to which reference is obviously made in both works, it is quite impossible to trace the phrase necessarily to the Acts. Such a passage cannot prove the use of that work, but, if it could, we might inquire what evidence for the authorship and trustworthiness of the Acts could be deduced from the circumstance?<sup>3</sup>

The second passage, referred to by a few writers, is as follows :—

## EPISTLE VIII.

Let us therefore become imitators of his patience, and if we suffer for his name, let us praise him.

Μιμηταὶ οὖν γενώμεθα τῆς ὑπομονῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐὰν πάσχωμεν διὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, δοξάζωμεν αὐτόν.

## ACTS V. 41.

So they departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name.

Οἱ μὲν οὖν ἐπορεύοντο χαίροντες ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ συνεδρίου, ὅτι κατηξιώθησαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀτιμασθῆναι.

It is not necessary to do more than contrast these passages to show how little the *Epistle of Polycarp* can witness for the Acts of the Apostles. We have already examined another supposed reference to this very passage, and the expressions in the Epistle, whilst scarcely presenting a single point of linguistic analogy to the sentence in the Acts, only tend to show how

<sup>1</sup> Cod. E. reads ᾗδου.

<sup>2</sup> In the Sept. version of Job xxxix. 2 the expression ὠδίνες δὲ αὐτῶν ἐλευσας occurs.

<sup>3</sup> For the date and character of the Epistle see discussion, p. 175 f.



common and natural such language was in the early Church in connection with persecution. Whilst we constantly meet with the thought expressed by the writer of the Epistle throughout the writings of the New Testament, we may more particularly point to the first Petrine epistle for further instances of this tone of exhortation to those suffering persecution for the cause. For instance, 1 Pet. ii. 19 f., and again iii. 14,<sup>1</sup> "But if ye even suffer (πάσχοιτε) for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye." In the next chapter the tone is still more closely analogous. Speaking of persecutions, the writer says, iv. 13, ".....but according as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings rejoice," etc. 14. "If ye are reproached in Christ's name (ἐν ὀνόματι Χ.), blessed are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 15. "For let none of you suffer (πασχέτω) as a murderer," etc. 16. "But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but *let him praise God* in this name (δοξαζέτω δὲ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦτω)," etc. Nothing but evidential destitution could rely upon the expression in the *Epistle of Polycarp* to show acquaintance with Acts.

Few Apologists point out with confidence any passages from the voluminous writings of Justin Martyr, as indicating the use of the Acts of the Apostles. We may, however, quote such expressions as are advanced. The first of these is the following: "For the Jews, having the prophecies and ever expecting the Christ to come, knew him not (ἠγνόησαν); and not only so, but they also maltreated him. But the Gentiles, who had never heard anything regarding the Christ until his Apostles, having gone forth from Jerusalem, declared the things concerning him, and delivered the prophecies, having been filled with joy and faith, renounced their idols and dedicated themselves to the unbegotten God through the Christ."<sup>2</sup> This is compared with Acts xiii. 27, "For they that dwell at Jerusalem and their rulers not knowing this (man) (τοῦτον ἀγνοήσαντες), nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, fulfilled them by their judgment of him," etc. 48. "But the Gentiles, hearing, rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord," etc. We may at once proceed to give the next passage. In the *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin has by quotations from the prophets endeavoured to show that the sufferings of Christ and also the glory of his second advent had been foretold, and Trypho replies: "Supposing these things to have been as thou sayest, and that it was foretold that Christ was to suffer (ὅτι παθητὸς Χριστὸς προεφητεύθη μέλλειν εἶναι), and has been called a Stone, and after his first coming, in which it had been announced that he was to

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 13, according to some MSS., reads: "And who is he that will harm you, if ye become *imitators* (μιμηταὶ) of the good?"

<sup>2</sup> *Apol.*, i. 49.



suffer, should come in glory, and become judge of all, and eternal king and priest," etc.;<sup>1</sup> and in another place: "For if it had been obscurely declared by the prophets that the Christ should suffer (*παθητὸς γεννησόμενος ὁ Χριστὸς*) and after these things be lord of all," etc.<sup>2</sup> This is compared with Acts xxvi. 22, "..... saying nothing except those things which the prophets and Moses said were to come to pass, (23) whether the Christ should suffer (*εἰ παθητὸς ὁ Χριστός*), whether, the first out of the resurrection from the dead, he is about to proclaim light unto the people and to the Gentiles." It is only necessary to quote these passages to show how unreasonable it is to maintain that they show the use of the Acts by Justin. He simply sets forth from the prophets, direct, the doctrines which formed the great text of the early Church. Some of the warmest supporters of the Canon admit the "uncertainty" of such coincidences, and do not think it worth while to advance them. There are one or two still more distant analogies sometimes pointed out which do not require more particular notice.<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence whatever that Justin was acquainted with the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>4</sup>

Some writers claim Hegesippus as evidence for the existence of the Acts, on the strength of the following passages in the fragment of his book preserved by Eusebius. He puts into the mouth of James the Just, whilst being martyred, the expression: "I beseech (thee) Lord God, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." This is compared with the words said to have been uttered by the martyr Stephen, Acts vii. 60, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." The passage is more commonly advanced as showing acquaintance with Luke xxiii. 34, and we have already discussed it.<sup>5</sup> Lardner apparently desires it to do double duty, but it is scarcely worth while seriously to refer to the claim here. The passage more generally relied upon, though that also is only advanced by a few,<sup>6</sup> is the following, "This man was a faithful

<sup>1</sup> *Dial.* 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Dial.* 76.

<sup>3</sup> *Apol.*, i. 50, cf. Acts i. 8 f.; *Apol.*, i. 40, cf. Acts iv. 27; *Apol.*, ii. 10, cf. Acts xvii. 23; *Dial.* 8, cf. Acts xxvi. 29; *Dial.* 20, cf. Acts x. 14; *Dial.* 68, cf. Acts ii. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Credner, *Einl. N. T.*, i. 1, p. 274; Donaldson, *Hist. Chr. Lit. and Doct.*, ii., p. 329; Eichhorn, *Einl. N. T.*, ii., p. 75; Meyer, *Apostelgesch.*, p. 1 f.; Zeller, *Apostelgesch.*, p. 49 f. Dean Alford says: "Nor are there any references in Justin Martyr, which, fairly considered, belong to this book" (*Greek Test.*, 1871, *Proleg.*, ii., p. 20). Dr. Westcott says: "The references to the Acts are uncertain"; and he merely illustrates this by referring to the first of the passages discussed in the text (*On the Canon*, 1875, p. 168, note 3).

<sup>5</sup> P. 273 f.

<sup>6</sup> Lardner, *Credibility*, *Works*, ii. 142; Westcott, *On the Canon*, 4th ed., p. 205. Dr. Westcott, however, merely says: "There are forms of expression corresponding to passages in.....and in the Acts which can scarcely be attributed to chance."



witness both to Jews and Greeks that Jesus is the Christ"<sup>1</sup> (Μάρτυς οὗτος ἀληθῆς Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλησι γεγέννηται, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν). This is compared with Acts xx. 21, where Paul is represented as saying of himself, ".....testifying fully both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλησιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν, καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰ. Χ.). The two passages are totally different both in sense and language, and that the use of Acts is deduced from so distant an analogy only serves to show the slightness of the evidence with which Apologists have to be content.

Papias need not long detain us, for it is freely admitted by most divines that he does not afford evidence of any value that he was acquainted with the Acts. For the sake of completeness we may, however, refer to the points which are sometimes mentioned. A fragment of the work of Papias is preserved giving an account of the death of Judas, which differs materially both from the account in the first Synoptic and in Acts i. 18 f.<sup>2</sup> Judas is represented as having gone about the world a great example of impiety, for, his body having swollen so much that he could not pass where a waggon easily passed, he was crushed by the waggon so that his entrails emptied out (ὥστε τὰ ἔγκατα αὐτοῦ ἐκκενωθῆναι). Apollinaris of Laodicæa quotes this passage to show that Judas did not die when he hung himself, but subsequently met with another fate, in this way reconciling the statements in the Gospel and Acts.<sup>3</sup> He does not say that Papias used the story for this purpose, and it is fundamentally contradictory to the account in Acts i. 18, 19: "Now this man purchased a field with the reward of the unrighteousness, and falling headlong burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out" (καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ). It is scarcely necessary to argue that the passage does not indicate any acquaintance with Acts,<sup>4</sup> as some few critics are inclined to assert.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, ii. 23. <sup>2</sup> P. 296 f. <sup>3</sup> Routh, *Reliq. Sacr.*, i., p. 25 f.

<sup>4</sup> Overbeck, *Zeitschr. wiss. Theol.*, 1867, p. 39 f. Cf. Steitz, *Th. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1868, p. 87 f.; Meyer, *Die Apostelgesch.*, p. 2, anm.\* \* Dr. Westcott says: "In his account of the fate of Judas Iscariot there is a remarkable divergence from the narrative in Matt. xxvii. 5 and Acts i. 18" (*On the Canon*, 4th ed., p. 77, n. 1).

<sup>5</sup> Zahn, *Th. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1866, p. 680 f. Dr. Lightfoot says: "But there are indications, however indecisive, that Papias did use the writings of St. Luke." And further on, after quoting the passage about Judas, and mentioning the view of Apollinaris that it reconciles the accounts in the first Gospel and in the Acts, he continues: "It is too much to assume that Papias himself repeated the tradition with this aim, but the resemblance to the account in the Acts is worthy of notice" (*Contemporary Rev.*, August, 1876, p. 415).



The next analogy pointed out is derived from the statement of Eusebius that Papias mentions a wonderful story which he had heard from the daughters of Philip (whom Eusebius calls "the Apostle") regarding a dead man raised to life.<sup>1</sup> In Acts xxi. 8, 9, it is stated that Philip the evangelist had four daughters. It is hardly conceivable that this should be advanced as an indication that Papias knew the Acts. The last point is that Eusebius says: "And again (he narrates) another marvel regarding Justus who was surnamed Barsabas; how he drank a baneful poison and by the grace of the Lord sustained no harm. But that this Justus, after the Ascension of the Saviour, the holy apostles appointed with Matthias, and that they prayed (on the occasion) of the filling up of their number by lot instead of the traitor Judas, the scripture of the Acts thus relates: 'And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed and said,' etc."<sup>2</sup> Whatever argument can be deduced from this obviously rests entirely upon the fact that Papias is said to have referred to Justus who was named Barsabas, for of course the last sentence is added by Eusebius himself, and has nothing to do with Papias. This is fairly admitted by Lardner and others. Lardner says: "Papias does undoubtedly give some confirmation to the history of the Acts of the Apostles, in what he says of Philip; and especially in what he says of Justus, called Barsabas. But I think it cannot be affirmed that he did particularly mention, or refer to, the book of the Acts. For I reckon it is Eusebius himself who adds that quotation out of the Acts, upon occasion of what Papias had written of the before-mentioned Barsabas."<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence worthy of attention that Papias was acquainted with the Acts.

No one seriously pretends that the *Clementine Homilies* afford any evidence of the use or existence of the Acts; and few, if any, claim the *Epistle to Diognetus* as testimony for it.<sup>4</sup> We may, however, quote the only passage which is pointed out: ".....these who hold the view that they present them (offerings) to God as

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.*, iii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.*, iii. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Credibility*, etc., *Works*, ii., p. 133. Kirchhofer makes a similar statement, *Quellens.*, p. 163, ann. 1. Dr. Lightfoot says: "Other points of affinity to the Acts are his mention of Justus Barsabas, and his relations with the daughters of Philip" (*Contemp. Rev.*, August, 1876, p. 415). Such "indications" he may indeed well characterise as "indecisive." Dr. Westcott says: "Dr. Lightfoot notices some slight indications of Papias' use of the writings of St. Luke (in the article quoted above), but I do not think that much stress can be laid on them" (*On the Canon*, 4th ed., p. 77, note 1).

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Westcott merely speaks of "coincidences of language more or less evident with the Acts," etc., referring to c. iii. (Acts xvii. 24, 25) as "worthy of remark" (*Canon*, p. 91); but he does not include it in the *Synopsis of Historical Evidence*, p. 584.

this must  
be the story  
in B.S.  
unimpaired



needing them might more rightly esteem it foolishness and not worship of God. For he who made the heaven and the earth, and all things in them, and who supplies to us all whatever we need, can himself be in need of none of those things which he himself presents to those who imagine that they give (to him)."<sup>1</sup> This is compared with Acts xvii. 24: "The God that made the world and all things in it, he being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; (25) neither is served by men's hand as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life and breath and all things." There is nothing here but a coincidence of sense, though with much variation between the two passages; but the Epistle argues from a different context, and this illustration is obvious enough to be common to any moralist. There is not a single reason which points to the Acts as the source of the writer's argument.

Basilides and Valentinus are not claimed at all by Apologists as witnesses for the existence of the Acts of the Apostles, nor is Marcion, whose canon, however, of which it formed no part, is rather adverse to the work than merely negative. Tertullian taunts Marcion for receiving Paul as an apostle, although his name is not mentioned in the Gospel, and yet not receiving the Acts of the Apostles in which alone his history is narrated;<sup>2</sup> but it does not in the least degree follow from this that Marcion knew the work and deliberately rejected it.

A passage of Tatian's *Oration to the Greeks* is pointed out by some<sup>3</sup> as showing his acquaintance with the Acts. It is as follows: "I am not willing to worship the creation made by him for us. Sun and moon are made for us; how, therefore, shall I worship my own servants? How can I declare stocks and stones to be gods?.....But neither should the unnameable (*ἄνωμόμαστον*) God be presented with bribes; for he who is without need of anything (*πάντων ἀνευδής*) must not be calumniated by us as needy (*ἐνδεής*)."<sup>4</sup> This is compared with Acts xvii. 24, 25, quoted above, and it only serves to show how common such language was. Lardner himself says of the passage: "This is much the same thought, and applied to the same purpose, with Paul's, Acts xvii. 25, *as though he needeth anything*. But it is a character of the Deity so obvious that I think it cannot determine us to suppose he had an eye to those words of the Apostle."<sup>5</sup> The language, indeed, is quite different, and shows no acquaintance with the Acts. Eusebius states that the Severians who more fully

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. ad Diognetum*, c. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Adv. Marc.*, v. 1 f.

<sup>3</sup> Kirchhofer, *Quellens.*, p. 166; Lardner mentions, merely to disclaim, it. *Credibility*, etc., *Works*, ii., p. 139 f. Dr. Westcott does not advance it at all.

<sup>4</sup> *Orat. ad Graecos*, c. iv.

<sup>5</sup> *Credibility*, etc., *Works*, ii., p. 139 f.



established Tatian's heresy rejected both the Epistles of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>1</sup>

Dionysius of Corinth is rarely adduced by anyone as testimony for the Acts. The only ground upon which he is at all referred to is a statement of Eusebius in mentioning his Epistles. Speaking of his Epistle to the Athenians, Eusebius says: "He relates, moreover, that Dionysius the Areopagite who was converted to the faith by Paul the Apostle, according to the account given in the Acts, was appointed the first bishop of the Church of the Athenians."<sup>2</sup> Even Apologists admit that it is doubtful how far Dionysius referred to the Acts,<sup>3</sup> the mention of the book here being most obviously made by Eusebius himself.

Melito of Sardis is not appealed to by any writer in connection with our work, nor can Claudius Apollinaris be pressed into this service. Athenagoras is supposed by some to refer to the very same passage in Acts xvii. 24, 25, which we have discussed when dealing with the work of Tatian. Athenagoras says: "The Creator and Father of the universe is not in need of blood, nor of the steam of burnt sacrifices, nor of the fragrance of flowers and of incense, he himself being the perfect fragrance, inwardly and outwardly without need."<sup>4</sup> And further on: "And you kings indeed build palaces for yourselves; but the world is not made as being needed by God."<sup>5</sup> These passages occur in the course of a defence of Christians for not offering sacrifices, and both in language and context they are quite independent of the Acts of the Apostles.

In the *Epistle of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons*, giving an account of the persecution against them, it is said that the victims were praying for those from whom they suffered cruelties: "like Stephen the perfect martyr: 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' But if he was supplicating for those who stoned him, how much more for the brethren?"<sup>6</sup> The prayer here quoted agrees with that ascribed to Stephen in Acts vii. 60. There is no mention of the Acts of the Apostles in the Epistle, and the source from which the writers obtained their information about Stephen is of course not stated. If there really was a martyr of the name of Stephen, and if these words were actually spoken by him, the tradition of the fact, and the memory of his noble saying, may well have remained in the Church, or have been recorded in writings then current; from one of which, indeed, eminent critics

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, iv. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, iv. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Lardner, *Credibility*, etc., *Works*, ii., p. 134; Kirchhofer, *Quellens.*, p. 163. Dr. Westcott naturally does not refer to the passage at all.

<sup>4</sup> *Leg. pro Christ.*, xiii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, xvi.

<sup>6</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, v. 2.



conjecture that the author of Acts derived his materials,<sup>1</sup> and in this case the passage obviously does not prove the use of the Acts. If, on the other hand, there never was such a martyr by whom these words were spoken, and the whole story must be considered an original invention by the author of Acts, then in that case, and in that case only, the passage does show the use of the Acts.<sup>2</sup> Supposing that the use of Acts be held to be thus indicated, what does this prove? Merely that the Acts of the Apostles were in existence in the year 177-178, when the *Epistle of Vienne and Lyons* was written. No light whatever would thus be thrown upon the question of its authorship; and neither its credibility nor its sufficiency to prove the reality of a cycle of miracles would be in the slightest degree established.

Ptolemæus and Heracleon need not detain us, as it is not alleged that they show acquaintance with the Acts, nor is Celsus claimed as testimony for the book.

The *Canon of Muratori* contains a very corrupt paragraph regarding the Acts of the Apostles. We have already discussed the date and character of this fragment,<sup>3</sup> and need not further speak of it here. The sentence in which we are now interested reads in the original as follows:—

*“Acta autem omnium apostolorum sub uno libro scripta sunt lucas obtime theofile conprindit quia sub præsentia eius singula gerebantur sicut et semote passionem petri euidenter declarat sed et profectionem pauli ab urbes ad spania proficescentis.”*

It is probable that in addition to its corruption some words may have been lost from the concluding phrase of this passage, but the following may perhaps sufficiently represent its general sense: “But the Acts of all the Apostles were written in one book. Luke included (in his work) to the excellent Theophilus only the things which occurred in his own presence, as he evidently shows by omitting the martyrdom of Peter and also the setting forth of Paul from the city to Spain.”

Whilst this passage may prove the existence of the Acts about the end of the second century, and that the authorship of the work

<sup>1</sup> Bleek, *Einl. N. T.*, p. 341 f., p. 347 f.; Ewald, *Gesch. d. V. Isr.*, vi., 1858, p. 37, p. 191 f.; Gfrörer, *Die heil. Sage*, 1838, i., p. 404, p. 409 f.; Meyer, *Apostelgesch.*, p. 12; Neander, *Pflanzung. u. s. w. chr. Kirche*, 5te Aufl., p. 65, anm. 2; Schwanbeck, *Quellen d. Schr. des Lukas*, 1847, i., p. 250 f.; De Wette, *Einl. N. T.*, p. 249 f., etc.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Lightfoot, speaking of the passage we are discussing, says: “Will he (author of *S. R.*) boldly maintain that the writers had before them another Acts containing words identical with our Acts, just as he supposes, etc.....Or will he allow this account to have been taken from Acts vii. 60, with which it coincides?” (*Contemp. Review*, August, 1876, p. 410). The question is here answered.

<sup>3</sup> P. 427 f.



was ascribed to Luke, it has no further value. No weight can be attached to the statement of the unknown writer beyond that of merely testifying to the currency of such a tradition, and even the few words quoted show how uncritical he was. Nothing could be less appropriate to the work before us than the assertion that it contains the Acts of *all* the Apostles; for it must be apparent to all, and we shall hereafter have to refer to the point, that it very singularly omits all record of the acts of most of the Apostles, occupies itself chiefly with those of Peter and Paul, and devotes considerable attention to Stephen and to others who were not Apostles at all. We shall further have occasion to show that the writer does anything but confine himself to the events of which he was an eye-witness, and we may merely remark in passing, as a matter which scarcely concerns us here, that the instances given by the unknown writer of the fragment to support his assertion are not only irrelevant, but singularly devoid themselves of historical attestation.

Irenæus<sup>1</sup> assigns the Acts of the Apostles to Luke, as do Clement of Alexandria,<sup>2</sup> Tertullian,<sup>3</sup> and Origen,<sup>4</sup> although without any statements giving special weight to their mention of him as the author in any way counterbalancing the late date of their testimony. Beyond showing that tradition, at the end of the second century and beginning of the third, associated the name of Luke with this writing and the third Gospel, the evidence of these Fathers is of no value to us. We have already incidentally mentioned that some heretics either ignored or rejected the book, and to the Marcionites and Severians we may now add the Ebionites<sup>5</sup> and Manichæans.<sup>6</sup> Chrysostom complains that in his day the Acts of the Apostles were so neglected that many were ignorant of the existence of the book and of its authors.<sup>7</sup> Doubts as to its authorship were expressed in the ninth century, for Photius states that some ascribed the work to Clement of Rome, others to Barnabas, and others to Luke the Evangelist.<sup>8</sup>

If we turn to the document itself, we find that it professes to be the second portion of a work written for the information of an unknown person named Theophilus, the first part being the Gospel, which, in our canonical New Testament, bears the name of "Gospel according to Luke." The narrative is a continuation

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<sup>2</sup> *Strom.*, v. 12; *Adumbr. in 1 Petr. Ep.*

<sup>3</sup> *De Jejunio*, x.

<sup>4</sup> *Contra Cels.*, vi. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Epiphanius, *Hær.*, xxx. 16.

<sup>6</sup> August., *Epist.* 237; *ed. Bened.*, ii., p. 644; *De Util. Cred.*, ii. 7, T. viii., p. 36; cf. Beausobre, *Hist. de Manichée*, i., p. 293 f..

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of the third Synoptic, but the actual title of "Acts of the Apostles," or "Acts of Apostles" (πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων, πράξεις ἀποστόλων),<sup>1</sup> attached to this δεύτερος λόγος is a later addition, and formed no part of the original document. The author's name is not given in any of the earlier MSS., and the work is entirely anonymous. That in the prologue to the Acts the writer clearly assumes to be the author of the Gospel does not in any way identify him, inasmuch as the third Synoptic itself is anonymous. The tradition assigning both works to Luke, the follower of Paul, as we have seen, is first met with towards the end of the second century, and very little weight can be attached to it. There are too many instances of early writings, several of which indeed have secured a place in our canon, to which distinguished names have been erroneously ascribed. Such tradition is notoriously liable to error.

We shall presently return to the question of the authorship of the third Synoptic and Acts of the Apostles, but at present we may so far anticipate as to say that there are good reasons for affirming that they could not have been written by Luke, the follower of Paul.

Confining ourselves here to the actual evidence before us, we arrive at a clear and unavoidable conclusion regarding the Acts of the Apostles. After examining all the early Christian literature, and taking every passage which is referred to as indicating the use of the book, we see that there is no certain trace even of its existence till towards the end of the second century; and, whilst the writing itself is anonymous, we find no authority but late tradition assigning it to Luke or to any other author. We are without evidence of any value as to its accuracy or trustworthiness, and, as we shall presently see, the epistles of Paul, so far from accrediting it, tend to cast the most serious doubt upon its whole character. This evidence we have yet to examine, when considering the contents of the Acts, and we base our present remarks solely on the external testimony for the date and authorship of the book. The position, therefore, is simply this: We are asked to believe in the reality of a great number of miraculous and supernatural occurrences which, obviously, are antecedently incredible, upon the assurance of an anonymous work of whose existence there is no distinct evidence till more than a century after the events narrated, and to which an author's name—against which there are strong objections—is first ascribed by tradition towards the end of the second century. Of the writer to whom the work is thus attributed we know nothing beyond the casual mention of

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his name in some Pauline Epistles. If it were admitted that this Luke did actually write the book, we should not be justified in believing the reality of such stupendous miracles upon his bare statement. As the case stands, however, even taken in its most favourable aspect, the question scarcely demands serious attention, and our discussion might at once be ended by the unhesitating rejection of the Acts of the Apostles as sufficient, or even plausible, evidence for the miracles which it narrates.



## CHAPTER II.

### EVIDENCE REGARDING THE AUTHORSHIP

IF we proceed further to discuss the document before us, it is from no doubt as to the certainty of the conclusion at which we have now arrived, but from the belief that closer examination of the contents of the Acts may enable us to test this result, and more fully understand the nature of the work and the character of its evidence. Not only will it be instructive to consider a little closely the contents of the Acts, and to endeavour from the details of the narrative itself to form a judgment regarding its historical value, but we have, in addition, external testimony of very material importance which we may bring to bear upon it. We happily possess some undoubted Epistles which afford us no little information concerning the history, character, and teaching of the Apostle Paul, and we are thus enabled to compare the statements in the work before us with contemporary evidence of great value. It is unnecessary to say that, wherever the statements of the unknown author of the Acts are at variance with these Epistles, we must prefer the statements of the Apostle. The importance to our inquiry of such further examination as we now propose to undertake consists chiefly in the light which it may throw on the credibility of the work. If it be found that such portions as we are able to investigate are inaccurate and untrustworthy, it will become still more apparent that the evidence of such a document for miracles cannot even be entertained. It may be well also to discuss more fully the authorship of the Acts, and to this we shall first address ourselves.

It must, however, be borne in mind that it is quite foreign to our purpose to enter into any exhaustive discussion of the literary problem presented by the Acts of the Apostles. We shall confine ourselves to such points as seem sufficient, or best fitted, to test the character of the composition; and we shall not hesitate to pass without attention questions of mere literary interest, and strictly limit our examination to these more prominent features.

It is generally admitted, although not altogether without exception, that the author of our third synoptic Gospel likewise composed the Acts of the Apostles. The linguistic and other peculiarities which distinguish the Gospel are equally prominent in the Acts. This fact, whilst apparently offering greatly increased



facilities for identifying the author, and actually affording valuable material for estimating his work, does not, as we have already remarked, really do much towards solving the problem of the authorship, inasmuch as the Gospel, like its continuation, is anonymous, and we possess no more precise or direct evidence in connection with the one than in the case of the other. We have already so fully examined the testimony for the third Gospel that it is unnecessary for us to recur to it. From about the end of the second century we find the Gospel and Acts of the Apostles ascribed by ecclesiastical writers to Luke, the companion of the Apostle Paul. The fallibility of tradition, and the singular phase of literary morality exhibited during the early ages of Christianity, render such testimony of little or no value, and in the almost total absence of the critical faculty a rank crop of pseudonymic writings sprang up and flourished during that period. Some of the earlier chapters of this work have given abundant illustrations of this fact. It is certain, with regard to the works we are considering, that Irenæus is the earliest writer known who ascribes them to Luke, and that even tradition, therefore, cannot be traced beyond the last quarter of the second century. The question is: Does internal evidence confirm or contradict this tradition?

Luke, the traditional author, is not mentioned by name in the Acts of the Apostles. In the Epistle to Philemon his name occurs, with those of others, who send greeting, verse 23: "There salute thee, Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus; 24. Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-labourers." In the Epistle to the Colossians, iv. 14, mention is also made of him: "Luke, the beloved physician, salutes you, and Demas." And, again, in the 2 Epistle to Timothy, iv. 10: "For Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and departed into Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia: 11. Only Luke is with me."

He is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament;<sup>1</sup> and his name is not again met with till Irenæus ascribes to him the authorship of the Gospel and Acts. There is nothing in these Pauline Epistles confirming the statement of the Fathers, but it is highly probable that these references to him largely contributed to suggest his name as the author of the Acts, its very omission from the work itself protecting him from objections connected with the passages in the first person to which other followers of Paul were exposed. Irenæus evidently knew nothing about him, except what he learnt from these Epistles, and derives from his theory

<sup>1</sup> It is now universally admitted that the "Lucius" referred to in Acts xiii. 1 and Rom. xvi. 21 is a different person; although their identity was suggested by Origen and the Alexandrian Clement.



that Luke wrote the Acts, and speaks as an eye-witness in the passages where the first person is used. From these he argues that Luke was inseparable from Paul, and was his fellow-worker in the Gospel; and he refers, in proof of this, to Acts xvi. 8 f.,<sup>1</sup> 13 f., xx. 5 f., and the later chapters, all the details of which he supposes Luke to have carefully written down. He then continues: "But that he was not only a follower, but likewise a fellow-worker of the Apostles, but particularly of Paul, Paul himself has also clearly shown in the Epistles, saying....."; and he quotes 2 Tim. iv. 10, 11, ending, "Only Luke is with me," and then adds, "whence he shows that he was always with him and inseparable from him," etc.<sup>2</sup> The reasoning of the zealous Father deduces a great deal from very little, it will be observed, and in this elastic way tradition "enlarged its borders" and assumed unsubstantial dimensions. Later writers have no more intimate knowledge of Luke, although Eusebius states that he was born at Antioch,<sup>3</sup> a tradition likewise reproduced by Jerome.<sup>4</sup> Jerome further identifies Luke with "the brother, whose praise in the Gospel is throughout all the churches," mentioned in 2 Cor. viii. 18, as accompanying Titus to Corinth.<sup>5</sup> At a later period, when the Church required an early artist for its service, Luke the physician was honoured with the additional title of painter.<sup>6</sup> Epiphanius,<sup>7</sup> followed later by some other writers, represented him to have been one of the seventy-

<sup>1</sup> The words "they came down to Troas" (κατέβησαν εἰς Τρωάδα) are here translated "we came to Troas" (*nos venimus in Troadem*).

<sup>2</sup> "Quoniam non solum prosecutor, sed et cooperarius fuerit apostolorum, maxime autem Pauli, et ipse autem Paulus manifestavit in epistolis, dicens: 'Demas me dereliquit, et abiit Thessalonicam, Crescens in Galatiam, Titus in Dalmatiam. Lucas est mecum solus.' Unde ostendit, quod semper junctus ei et inseparabilis fuerit ab eo" (*Adv. Hær.*, iii. 14, § 1).

<sup>3</sup> *H. E.*, iii. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *De vir. ill.*, 7.

<sup>5</sup> This view was held by Origen, Ambrose, and others of the Fathers, who, moreover, suppose Paul to refer to the work of Luke when he speaks of "his Gospel" (also cf. Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii. 4), an opinion exploded by Grotius. Grotius and Olshausen both identify "the brother" with Luke. Many of the Fathers and later writers have variously conjectured him to have been Barnabas, Silas, Mark, Trophimus, Gaius, and others. This is mere guess-work; but Luke is scarcely seriously advanced in later times. Dr. Wordsworth, however, not only does so, but maintains that Paul quotes Luke's Gospel in his Epistles, in one place (1 Tim. v. 18) designating it as *Scripture* (*Greek Test.*, *Four Gospels*, p. 163, p. 170).

<sup>6</sup> Nicephorus, *H. E.*, ii. 43. Dr. Wordsworth, who speaks of "this divine book," the Acts of the Apostles, with great enthusiasm, says in one place: "The Acts of the Apostles is a portraiture of the Church; it is an Historical Picture delineated by the Holy Ghost guiding the hand of the Evangelical Painter St. Luke" (*Greek Test.*, *Int. to Acts*, 1874, p. 4).

<sup>7</sup> *Hær.* li. 11; Theophylact (*ad Luc.* xxiv. 18) suggests the view—considered probable by Lange (*Leben Jesu*, i., p. 252)—that Luke was one of the two disciples of the journey to Emmaus. This is the way in which tradition works.



two disciples, whose mission he alone of all New Testament writers mentions. The view of the Fathers, arising out of the application of their tradition to the features presented by the Gospel and Acts, was that Luke composed his Gospel, of the events of which he was not an eye-witness, from information derived from others, and his Acts of the Apostles from what he himself, at least in the parts in which the first person is employed, had witnessed.<sup>1</sup> It is generally supposed that Luke was not born a Jew, but was a Gentile Christian.

Some writers endeavour to find a confirmation of the tradition, that the Gospel and Acts were written by Luke "the beloved physician," by the supposed use of peculiarly technical medical terms; but very little weight is attached by any one to this feeble evidence, which is repudiated by most serious critics, and it need not detain us.

As there is no indication, either in the Gospel or the Acts, of the author's identity proceeding from himself—and tradition does not offer any alternative security—what testimony can be produced in support of the ascription of these writings to "Luke"? To this question Ewald shall reply. "In fact," he says, "we possess only one ground for it, but this is fully sufficient. It lies in the designation of the third Gospel as that 'according to Luke' which is found in all MSS. of the four Gospels. For the quotations of this particular Gospel under the distinct name of Luke in the extant writings of the Fathers begin so late that they cannot be compared in antiquity with that superscription; and those known to us may probably themselves only go back to this superscription. We thus depend almost alone on this superscription."<sup>2</sup> Ewald generally does consider his own arbitrary conjectures "fully sufficient," but it is doubtful whether in this case any one who examines this evidence will agree with him. He himself goes on to admit, with all other critics, that the superscriptions to our Gospels do not proceed from the authors themselves, but were added by those who collected them, or by later readers to distinguish them. There was no author's name attached to Marcion's Gospel, as we learn from Tertullian.<sup>3</sup> Chrysostom very distinctly asserts that the Evangelists did not inscribe their names at the head of their works,<sup>4</sup> and he recognises that, but for the authority of the primitive Church which added those names, the superscriptions could not have proved the authorship of the Gospels. He conjectures that the sole superscription which may have been placed

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii. 4; Hieron., *de vir. ill.* 7. We need not discuss the views which attributes to Luke the translation or authorship of the Ep. to the Hebrews.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald, *Jahrb. bibl. Wiss.*, 1857, 1858, ix., p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Marc.*, iv. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Hom. i. in. Epist. ad. Rom.*



by the author of the first Synoptic was simply εὐαγγέλιον.<sup>1</sup> It might be argued, and indeed has been, that the inscription κατὰ Λουκᾶν, "according to Luke," instead of εὐαγγέλιον Λουκᾶ, "Gospel of Luke," does not actually indicate that "Luke" wrote the work, any more than the superscription to the Gospels, "according to the Hebrews" (καθ' Ἑβραίους), "according to the Egyptians" (κατ' Αἰγυπτίους), has reference to authorship. The Epistles, on the contrary, are directly connected with their writers, in the genitive, Παύλου, Πέτρου, and so on. This point, however, we merely mention *en passant*. By his own admission, therefore, the superscription is simply tradition in another form; but, instead of carrying us further back, the superscription on the most ancient extant MSS., as for instance the Sinaitic and Vatican Codices of the Gospels, does not on the most sanguine estimate of their age date earlier than the fourth century. As for the Acts of the Apostles, the book is not ascribed to Luke in a single uncial MS., and it only begins to appear in various forms in later codices. The variation in the titles of the Gospels and Acts in different MSS. alone shows the uncertainty of the superscription. It is clear that the "one ground" upon which Ewald admits that the evidence for Luke's authorship is based is nothing but sand, and cannot support his tower. He is on the slightest consideration thrown back upon the quotations of the Fathers, which begin too late for the purpose; and it must be acknowledged that the ascription of the third Gospel and Acts to Luke rests solely upon late and unsupported tradition.

Let it be remembered that, with the exception of the three passages in the Pauline Epistles quoted above, we know absolutely nothing about Luke. As we have mentioned, it has even been doubted whether the designation, "the beloved physician," in the Epistle to the Colossians, iv. 14, does not distinguish a different Luke from the person of that name in the Epistles to Philemon and Timothy. If this were the case, our information would be further reduced; but supposing that the same Luke is referred to, what does our information amount to? Nothing but the fact that a person named Luke was represented by the writer of these letters,<sup>2</sup> whoever he was, to have been with Paul in Rome, and that he was known to the Church of Colossæ. There is no evidence that this Luke had been a travelling companion of

<sup>1</sup> *Hom.* i. in Matt. Grotius considers that the ancient heading was εὐαγγέλιον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, as in some MSS. of our second Synoptic (Annot. in *N. T.*, i., p. 7). So also Bertholdt, *Einl.*, iii., p. 1095, and others.

<sup>2</sup> We cannot discuss the authenticity of these Epistles in this place, nor is it very important that we should do so. Neither can we pause to consider whether they were written in Rome, as a majority of critics think, or elsewhere.



Paul, or that he ever wrote a line concerning him or had composed a Gospel. He is not mentioned in Epistles written during this journey, and the rarity and meagreness of the references to him would much rather indicate that he had not taken any distinguished part in the proclamation of the Gospel. If Luke be *ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁ ἀγαπητός*, and be numbered amongst the Apostle's *συνεργοί*, Tychicus is equally "the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord."<sup>1</sup> Onesimus the "faithful and beloved brother,"<sup>2</sup> and Aristarchus, Mark the cousin of Barnabas, Justus and others, are likewise his *συνεργοί*.<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence, in fact, that Paul was acquainted with Luke earlier than during his imprisonment in Rome, and he seems markedly excluded from the Apostle's work and company by such passages as 2 Cor. i. 19. The simple theory that Luke wrote the Acts supplies all the rest of the tradition of the Fathers, as we have seen in the case of Irenæus, and to this mere tradition we are confined in the total absence of more ancient testimony.

The traditional view, which long continued to prevail undisturbed, and has been widely held up to our own day, represents Luke as the author of the Acts, and, in the passages where the first person is employed, considers that he indicates himself as an actor and eye-witness. These passages, where *ἡμεῖς* is introduced, present a curious problem which has largely occupied the attention of critics, and it has been the point most firmly disputed in the long controversy regarding the authorship of the Acts. Into this literary labyrinth we must not be tempted to enter beyond a very short way; for, however interesting the question may be in itself, we are left so completely to conjecture that no result is possible which can materially affect our inquiry, and we shall only refer to it sufficiently to illustrate the uncertainty which prevails regarding the authorship. We shall, however, supply abundant references for those who care more minutely to pursue the subject.

After the narrative of the Acts has, through fifteen chapters, proceeded uninterruptedly in the third person, an abrupt change to the first person plural occurs in the sixteenth chapter.<sup>4</sup> Paul, and at least Timothy, are represented as going through Phrygia and Galatia, and at length "they came down to Troas," where a vision appears to Paul beseeching him to come over into Macedonia. Then, xvi. 10, proceeds: "And after he saw the vision, immediately we endeavoured (*ἐζητήσαμεν*) to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us (*ἡμεῖς*) to preach

<sup>1</sup> *ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος ἐν Κυρίῳ.* Coloss. iv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Coloss. iv. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, iv. 10, 11; Philem. 23, 24.

<sup>4</sup> It is unnecessary to discuss whether xiv. 22 belongs to the *ἡμεῖς* sections or not.



the Gospel unto them." After verse 17 the direct form of narrative is as suddenly dropped as it was taken up, and does not reappear until xx. 5, when, without explanation, it is resumed and continued for ten verses. It is then again abandoned, and recommenced in xxi. 1-18, and xxvii. 1, xxviii. 16.

It is argued by those who adopt the traditional view that it would be an instance of unparalleled negligence, in so careful a writer as the author of the third Synoptic and Acts, to have composed these sections from documents lying before him, written by others, leaving them in the form of a narrative in the first person, whilst the rest of his work was written in the third, and that, without doubt, he would have assimilated such portions to the form of the rest. On the other hand, he himself makes distinct use of the first person in Luke i. 1-3 and Acts i. 1, and consequently prepares the reader to expect that, where it is desirable, he will resume the direct mode of communication; and in support of this supposition it is asserted that the very same peculiarities of style and language exist in the *ἡμεῖς* passages as in the rest of the work. The adoption of the direct form of narrative, in short, merely indicates that the author himself was present and an eye-witness of what he relates, and that writing as he did for the information of Theophilus, who was well aware of his personal participation in the journeys he records, it was not necessary for him to give any explanation of his occasional use of the first person.

Is the abrupt and singular introduction of the first person in these particular sections of his work, without a word of explanation, more intelligible and reasonable upon the traditional theory of their being by the author himself as an eye-witness? On the contrary, it is maintained, the phenomenon on that hypothesis becomes much more inexplicable. On examining the *ἡμεῖς* sections it will be observed that they consist almost entirely of an itinerary of journeys, and that, while the chronology of the rest of the Acts is notably uncertain and indefinite, these passages enter into the minutest details of daily movements (xvi. 11, 12; xx. 6, 7, 11, 15; xxi. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 18; xxvii. 2; xxviii. 7, 12, 14); of the route pursued, and places through which often they merely pass (xvi. 11, 12; xx. 5, 6, 13, 15; xxi. 1-3, 7; xxvii. 2 f.; xxviii. 11-15), and record the most trifling circumstances (xvi. 12; xx. 13; xxi. 2, 3, 15; xxviii. 2, 11). The distinguishing feature of these sections, in fact, is generally asserted to be the stamp which they bear, above all other parts of the Acts, of intimate personal knowledge of the circumstances related.

Is it not, however, exceedingly remarkable that the author of the Acts should intrude his own personality merely to record these minute details of voyages and journeys—that his appearance as



*Note.* an eye-witness should be almost wholly limited to the itinerary of Paul's journeys and to portions of his history which are of very subordinate interest? The voyage and shipwreck are thus narrated with singular minuteness of detail, but if we consider the matter for a moment, it will become apparent that this elaboration of the narrative is altogether disproportionate to the importance of the voyage in the history of the early Church. The traditional view, indeed, is fatal to the claims of the Acts as testimony for the great mass of miracles it contains, for the author is only an eye-witness of what is comparatively unimportant and commonplace. The writer's intimate acquaintance with the history of Paul, and his claim to participation in his work, begin and end with his actual journeys. With very few exceptions, as soon as the Apostle stops anywhere, he ceases to speak as an eye-witness, and relapses into vagueness and the third person. At the very time when minuteness of detail would have been most interesting, he ceases to be minute. A very long and important period of Paul's life is covered by the narrative between xvi. 10, where the *ἡμεῖς* sections begin, and xxviii. 16, where they end; but, although the author goes with such extraordinary detail into the journeys to which they are confined, how bare and unsatisfactory is the account of the rest of Paul's career during that time! How eventful that career must have been we learn from 2 Cor. xi. 23-26. In any case, the author who could be so minute in his record of an itinerary, apparently could not, or would not, be minute in his account of more important matters in his history. In the few verses, ix. 1-30, chiefly occupied by an account of Paul's conversion, is comprised all that the author has to tell of three years of the Apostle's life, and into xi. 19-xiv. are compressed the events of fourteen years of his history (cf. Gal. ii. 1). If the author of those portions be the same writer who is so minute in his daily itinerary in the *ἡμεῖς* sections, his sins of omission and commission are of a very startling character. To say nothing more severe here, upon the traditional theory he is an elaborate trifler.

*Note.* Does the use of the first person in Luke i. 1-3 and Acts. i. 1 in any way justify or prepare the way for the sudden and unexplained introduction of the first person in the sixteenth chapter? Certainly not. The *ἐγώ* in these passages is used solely in the personal address to Theophilus, is limited to the brief explanation contained in what may be called the dedication or preface, and is at once dropped when the history begins. If the prologue of the Gospel be applied to the Acts, moreover, the use of earlier documents is at once implied, which would rather justify the supposition that these passages are part of some diary, from which the general editor made extracts. Besides, there is no explanation in the Acts



which, in the slightest degree, connects the ἐγώ with the ἡμεῖς. To argue that explanation was unnecessary, as Theophilus and early readers were well acquainted with the fact that the author was a fellow-traveller with the Apostle, and, therefore, at once understood the meaning of "We," would destroy the utility of the direct form of communication altogether; for, if Theophilus knew this, there was obviously no need to introduce the first person at all in so abrupt and singular a way, more especially to chronicle minute details of journeys which possess comparatively little interest. Moreover, writing for Theophilus, we might reasonably expect that he should have stated where and when he became associated with Paul, and explained the reasons why he again left and rejoined him. Ewald suggests that possibly the author intended to have indicated his name more distinctly at the end of his work;<sup>1</sup> but this merely shows that, argue as he will, he feels the necessity for such an explanation. The conjecture is negatived, however, by the fact that no name is subsequently added. As in the case of the fourth Gospel, of course, the "incomparable modesty" theory is suggested as the reason why the author does not mention his own name, and explain the adoption of the first person in the ἡμεῖς passages; but to base theories such as this upon the modesty or elevated views of a perfectly unknown writer is obviously too arbitrary a proceeding to be permissible. There is, besides, exceedingly little modesty in a writer forcing himself so unnecessarily into notice, for he does not represent himself as taking any active part in the events narrated; and, as the mere chronicler of days of sailing and arriving, he might well have remained impersonal to the end.

*Note.* On the other hand, supposing the general editor of the Acts to have made use of written sources of information, and, amongst others, of the diary of a companion of the Apostle Paul, it is not so strange that, for one reason or another, he should have allowed the original direct form of communication to stand whilst incorporating parts of it with his work. Instances have been pointed out in which a similar retention of the first or third person, in a narrative generally written otherwise, is accepted as the indication of a different written source, as, for instance, in Ezra vii. 27-ix.; Nehemiah viii.-x.; in the Book of Tobit i. 1-3, iii. 7 f., and other places;<sup>2</sup> and Schwanbeck has pointed out many instances of a similar kind amongst the chroniclers of the Middle Ages.<sup>3</sup> There are various ways in which the retention of the first person in these sections, supposing them to have been derived from some

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch. d. V. Isr.*, vi., p. 34, anm. 1; *Jahrb. bibl. Wiss.*, ix., p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald, *Gesch. d. V. Isr.*, 1864, i., p. 278; Hilgenfeld, *Einl. N. T.*, p. 607.

<sup>3</sup> *Quellen d. Schr. des Lukas*, i., p. 188 f.



other written source, might be explained. The simple supposition that the author, either through carelessness or oversight, allowed the *ἡμεῖς* to stand is not excluded; and, indeed, some critics maintain both the third Gospel and the Acts to be composed of materials derived from various sources and put together with little care or adjustment. The author might also have inserted these fragments of the diary of a fellow-traveller of Paul, and retained the original form of the document to strengthen the apparent credibility of his own narrative; or, as many critics believe, he may have allowed the first person of the original document to remain, in order himself to assume the character of eye-witness, and of companion of the Apostle. As we shall see in the course of our examination of the Acts, the general procedure of the author is by no means of a character to discredit such an explanation.

We shall not enter into any discussion of the sources from which critics maintain that the author compiled his work. It is sufficient to say that, whilst some profess to find definite traces of many documents, few if any deny that the writer made more or less use of earlier materials. It is quite true that the characteristics of the general author's style are found throughout the whole work. The Acts are no mere aggregate of scraps collected and rudely joined together, but the work of one author, in the sense that whatever materials he may have used for its composition were carefully assimilated, and subjected to thorough and systematic revision to adapt them to his purpose. But however completely this process was carried out, and his materials interpenetrated by his own peculiarities of style and language, he did not succeed in entirely obliterating the traces of independent written sources. Some writers maintain that there is a very apparent difference between the first twelve chapters and the remainder of the work, and profess to detect a much more Hebraistic character in the language of the earlier portion, although this is not received without demur. As regards the *ἡμεῖς* sections, whilst it is admitted that these fragments have in any case been much manipulated by the general editor, and largely contain his general characteristics of language, it is at the same time affirmed that they present distinct foreign peculiarities, which betray a borrowed document. Even critics who maintain the *ἡμεῖς* sections to be by the same writer who composed the rest of the book point out the peculiarly natural character and minute knowledge displayed in these passages, as distinguishing them from the rest of the Acts. This, of course, they attribute to the fact that the author there relates his personal experiences; but even with this explanation it is apparent that all who maintain the traditional view do recognise peculiarities in these sections,



by which they justify the ascription of them to an eye-witness. For the reasons which have been very briefly indicated, therefore, and upon other strong grounds, some of which will be presently stated, a very large mass of the ablest critics have concluded that the *ἡμεῖς* sections were not composed by the author of the rest of the Acts, but that they are part of the diary of some companion of the Apostle Paul, of which the author of Acts made use for his work, and that the general writer of the work, and consequently of the third Synoptic, was not Luke at all. M.

A careful study of the contents of the Acts cannot, we think, leave any doubt that the work could not have been written by any companion or intimate friend of the Apostle Paul. In here briefly indicating some of the reasons for this statement, we shall be under the necessity of anticipating, without much explanation or argument, points which will be more fully discussed further on, and which now, stated without preparation, may not be sufficiently clear to some readers. They may hereafter seem more conclusive. It is unreasonable to suppose that a friend or companion could have written so unhistorical and defective a history of the Apostle's life and teaching. The Pauline Epistles are nowhere directly referred to, but where we can compare the narrative and representations of Acts with the statements of the Apostle they are strikingly contradictory. His teaching in the one scarcely presents a trace of the strong and clearly defined doctrines of the other, and the character and conduct of the Paul of Acts are altogether different from those of Paul of the Epistles. According to Paul himself (Gal. i. 16-18), after his conversion he communicated not with flesh and blood, neither went up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before him, but immediately went away into Arabia, and returned to Damascus, and only after three years he went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and abode with him fifteen days, during which visit none other of the Apostles did he see "save James, the brother of the Lord." If assurance of the correctness of these details were required, Paul gives it by adding (v. 20): "Now the things which I am writing to you, behold before God I lie not." According to Acts (ix. 19-30), however, the facts are quite different. Paul immediately begins to preach in Damascus, does not visit Arabia at all, but, on the contrary, goes to Jerusalem, where, under the protection of Barnabas (v. 26, 27), he is introduced to the Apostles, and "was with them going in and out." According to Paul (Gal. i. 22), his face was after that unknown unto the churches of Judæa, whereas, according to Acts, not only was he "going in and out" at Jerusalem with the Apostles, but (ix. 29) preached boldly in the name of the Lord, and (Acts xxvi. 20) "in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judæa" he urged to repentance. According to Paul (Gal. ii. 1 f.), after fourteen

M.



Note.
 years he went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus, "according to a revelation," and "privately" communicated his Gospel "to those who seemed to be something," as, with some irony, he calls the Apostles. In words still breathing irritation and determined independence, Paul relates to the Galatians the particulars of that visit—how great pressure had been exerted to compel Titus, though a Greek, to be circumcised, "that they might bring us into bondage," to whom "not even for an hour did we yield the required subjection." He protests, with proud independence, that the Gospel which he preaches was not received from man (Gal. i. 11, 12), but revealed to him by God (verses 15, 16); and during this visit (ii. 6, 7) "from those seeming to be something (*τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι*), whatsoever they were it maketh no matter to me—God accepteth not man's person—for to me those who seemed (*οἱ δοκοῦντες*) communicated nothing additional." According to Acts, after his conversion Paul is taught by a man named Ananias what he must do (ix. 6, xxii. 10); he makes visits to Jerusalem (xi. 30, xii. 25, etc.), which are excluded by Paul's own explicit statements; and a widely different report is given (xv. 1 f.) of the second visit. Paul does not go, "according to a revelation," but is deputed by the Church of Antioch, with Barnabas, in consequence of disputes regarding the circumcision of Gentiles, to lay the case before the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem. It is almost impossible in the account here given of proceedings characterised throughout by perfect harmony, forbearance, and unanimity of views, to recognise the visit described by Paul. Instead of being private, the scene is a general council of the Church. The fiery independence of Paul is transformed into meekness and submission. There is not a word of the endeavour to compel him to have Titus circumcised—all is peace and undisturbed goodwill. Peter pleads the cause of Paul, and is more Pauline in his sentiments than Paul himself, and in the very presence of Paul claims to have been selected by God to be the Apostle of the Gentiles (xv. 7–11). Not a syllable is said of the scene at Antioch shortly after (Gal. ii. 11 f.), so singularly at variance with the proceedings of the council, when Paul withstood Cephas to the face. Then, who would recognise the Paul of the Epistles in the Paul of Acts, who makes such repeated journeys to Jerusalem to attend Jewish feasts (xviii. 21,<sup>1</sup> xix. 21, xx. 16, xxiv. 11, 17, 18); who, in his journeys, halts on the days when a Jew may not travel (xx. 5, 6); who shaves his head at Cenchrea because of a vow (xviii. 18); who, at the recommendation of the Apostles, performs that astonishing act of Nazariteship in the

<sup>1</sup> The Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrian, with other ancient codices, omit: "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem."



Temple (xxi. 23), and afterwards follows it up by a defence of such "excellent dissembling" (xxiii. 6, xxiv. 11 f.); who circumcises Timothy, the son of a Greek and of a Jewess, with his own hands (xvi. 1-3, cf. Gal. v. 2); and who is so little the apostle of the uncircumcision that he only tardily goes to the Gentiles when rejected by the Jews (cf. xviii. 6). Paul is not only robbed of the honour of being the first Apostle of the Gentiles, which is conferred upon Peter, but the writer seems to avoid even calling him an apostle at all, the only occasions upon which he does so being indirect (xiv. 4, 14); and the title equally applied to Barnabas, whose claim to it is more than doubted. The passages in which this occurs, moreover, are not above suspicion, "the Apostles" being omitted in Cod. D. (Bezae) from xiv. 14. The former verse in that codex has important variations from other MSS.

If we cannot believe that the representation actually given of Paul in the Acts could proceed from a friend or companion of the Apostle, it is equally impossible that such a person could have written his history with so many extraordinary imperfections and omissions. We have already pointed out that between chs. ix.-xiv. are compressed the events of seventeen of the most active years of the Apostle's life, and also that a long period is comprised within the *ἡμεῖς* sections, during which such minute details of the daily itinerary are given. The incidents reported, however, are quite disproportionate to those which are omitted. We have no record, for instance, of his visit to Arabia at so interesting a portion of his career (Gal. i. 17), although the particulars of his conversion are repeated with singular variations no less than three times (ix., xxii., xxvi.); nor of his preaching in Illyria (Rom. xv. 19); nor of the incident referred to in Rom. xvi. 3, 4. The momentous adventures in the cause of the Gospel spoken of in 2 Cor. xi. 23 f. receive scarcely any illustration in Acts, nor is any notice taken of his fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus (1 Cor. xv. 32), which would have formed an episode full of serious interest. What, again, was "the affliction which happened in Asia," which so overburdened even so energetic a nature as that of the Apostle that "he despaired even of life"? (2 Cor. ii. 8 f.). Some light upon these points might reasonably have been expected from a companion of Paul. Then, xvii. 14-16, xviii. 5, contradict 1 Thess. iii. 1, 2, in a way scarcely possible in such a companion, present with the Apostle at Athens; and in like manner the representation in xxviii. 17-22 is inconsistent with such a person, ignoring as it does the fact that there already was a Christian Church in Rome (Ep. to Romans). We do not refer to the miraculous elements so thickly spread over the narrative of the Acts, and especially in the episode xvi. 25 f., which is inserted in the first *ἡμεῖς* section, as irreconcilable with the



character of an eye-witness, because it is precisely the miraculous portion of the book which is on its trial; but we may ask whether it would have been possible for such a friend, acquainted with the Apostle's representations in 1 Cor. xiv. 2 f., cf. xii.-xiv., and the phenomena there described, to speak of the gift of "tongues" at Pentecost as the power of speaking different languages (ii. 4-11, cf. x. 46, xix. 6)?

It will readily be understood that we have here merely rapidly, and by way of illustration, referred to a few of the points which seem to preclude the admission that the general author of the Acts could be an eye-witness, or companion of the Apostle Paul; and this will become more apparent as we proceed, and more closely examine the contents of the book. Who that author was, there are now no means of ascertaining. The majority of critics who have most profoundly examined the problem presented by the Acts, however, and who do not admit Luke to be the general author, are agreed that the author compiled the *ῥημῆς* sections from a diary kept by some companion of the Apostle Paul during the journeys and voyages to which they relate, but opinion is very divided as to the person to whom that diary must be ascribed. It is, of course, recognised that the various theories regarding his identity are merely based upon conjecture, but they have long severely exercised critical ingenuity. A considerable party adopt the conclusion that the diary was probably written by Luke. This theory has certainly the advantage of whatever support may be derived from tradition; and it has been conjectured, not without probability, that this diary, being either written by, or originally attributed to, Luke, may possibly have been the source from which, in course of time, the whole of the Acts, and consequently the Gospel, came to be ascribed to Luke. The selection of a comparatively less known name than that of Timothy, Titus, or Silas, for instance, may thus be explained; but, besides, it has the great advantage that, the name of Luke never being mentioned in the Acts, he is not exposed to criticism, which has found serious objections to the claims of other better known followers of Paul.

There are many critics who find difficulties in the way of accepting Luke as the author of the "we" sections, and who adopt the theory that they were probably composed by Timothy. It is argued that, if Luke had been the writer of this diary, he must have been in very close relations to Paul, having been his companion during the Apostle's second mission, as well as during the later European journey, and finally during the eventful voyage of Paul as a prisoner from Cæsarea to Rome. Under these circumstances, it is natural to expect that Paul should mention him in his earlier epistles, written



before the Roman imprisonment, but this he nowhere does. For instance, no reference is made to Luke in either of the letters to the Corinthians, nor in those to the Thessalonians; but, on the other hand, Timothy's name, together with that of Silvanus (or Silas), is joined to Paul's in the two letters to the Thessalonians, besides being mentioned in the body of the first Epistle (iii. 2, 6); and he is repeatedly and affectionately spoken of in the earlier letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. iv. 17, xvi. 10), and his name is likewise combined with the Apostle's in the second Epistle (2 Cor. i. 1), as well as mentioned in the body of the letter, along with that of Silvanus, as a fellow-preacher with Paul. In the Epistle to the Philippians, later, the name of Luke does not appear, although, had he been the companion of the Apostle from Troas, he must have been known to the Philippians; but, on the other hand, Timothy is again associated in the opening greeting of that Epistle. Timothy is known to have been a fellow-worker with the Apostle, and to have accompanied him in his missionary journeys; and he is repeatedly mentioned in the Acts as the companion of Paul, and the first occasion is precisely where the *ἡμεῖς* sections commence.<sup>1</sup> In connection with Acts xv. 40, xvi. 3, 10, it is considered that Luke is quite excluded from the possibility of being the companion who wrote the diary we are discussing, by the Apostle's own words in 2 Cor. i. 19: "For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us, by me and Silvanus and Timothy," etc. The eye-witness who wrote the journal from which the *ἡμεῖς* sections are taken must have been with the Apostle in Corinth, and, it is of course always asserted, must have been one of his *συνεργοί*, and preached the Gospel. Is it possible, on the supposition that this fellow-labourer was Luke, that the Apostle could in so marked a manner have excluded his name by clearly defining that "us" only meant himself and Silvanus and Timothy? Mayerhoff<sup>2</sup> has gone even further than the critics we have referred to, and maintains Timothy to be the author of the third Synoptic and of Acts.

We may add that some writers have conjectured Silas to be the author of the *ἡμεῖς* sections, and others have referred them to Titus. It is evident that, whether the *ἡμεῖς* sections be by the unknown author of the rest of the Acts or be part of a diary by some unknown companion of Paul, introduced into the work by the general editor, they do not solve the problem as to the identity of the author, who remains absolutely unknown.

It may be well here to state various other reasons which seem to confirm this result, and to indicate a later date than is usually

<sup>1</sup> xvi. 1 f.; cf. xvii. 14, 15; xviii. 5; xix. 22; xx. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Einl. petr. Schriften*, p. 6 f.



assigned to the composition both of the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.

We learn from the prologue to the Gospel, i. 1-3, that, before it was composed, a considerable evangelical literature had already come into existence. It seems evident, from the expressions used, that the generation of those who, as eye-witnesses, delivered (*παρέδοσαν*) the reports upon which the Gospel narratives were based, had already passed away, and at least a second generation had undertaken to put them into writing, to which, at the very most, the writer may, in accordance with his own words, have belonged. It must be observed, however, that the passage by no means limits us to close proximity in time between the writer and those who delivered the substance of the Gospel narratives; but, on the contrary, in representing that "many" had previously undertaken to set them forth, a considerable lapse of time is necessarily implied. When we look further into the Gospel, we find unmistakable indications that the work was written long after the destruction of Jerusalem, and that variations introduced into the eschatological speeches put into the mouth of Jesus were modifications after the event. Let the reader carefully compare Matthew xxiv. 15 f., Mark xiii. 14 f., with Luke xxi. 20 f., where it is said, verse 20, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem, compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is at hand"; and in verse 24, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."<sup>1</sup> We have here a much more precise statement of facts than the mysterious reference in the other Synoptics written at an early period after the fall of the Holy City. The destruction of Jerusalem not only has taken place, but the place has long been trodden by the Gentiles. Had its fall only been recent, there would have been no motive for postponing the fulfilment of the prophecy; but a long time had passed away, and there was no immediate prospect of change, so the accomplishment was assigned to the vague epoch when "the times of the Gentiles" should be "fulfilled." In the first two Synoptics the second advent and the end of all things are closely connected with the destruction of Jerusalem, whereas in the third they are carefully separated. The first Gospel says, xxiv. 29, "And immediately (*εὐθέως*) after the tribulation of those days" the end shall come.

<sup>1</sup> In Matt. xxiv. 3 the disciples inquire: "When shall these things be? and what the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" In Luke xxi. 7: "When shall these things be? and what the sign when these are about to come to pass?" The words quoted in the text from xxi. 24 are those which, according to several, determine that the work cannot have been written after the rebuilding of Ælia Capitolina.



The second Synoptic has, xiii. 24, "But in these days (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις), after that tribulation," etc.; but the third Gospel no longer connects these events with the second coming (cf. Luke xxi. 25), but rather seems to oppose the representation of the first Synoptic; for, after referring to the wars and tumults (Luke xxi. 9), the writer adds, "but the end is not immediately (οὐκ εὐθέως)"; and earlier (xvii. 20 f.), to the question of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, Jesus replies: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, nor shall they say, Lo here, lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The passage in Matt. x. 23, "But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the other; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come," which might have seemed suitable in some primitive Gospel, from which probably our first synoptist derived it, has now lost all significance, and is altogether omitted by the third, although he evidently wishes to give the discourses of Jesus with the greatest fulness. In the fourth Gospel, still more, all such sayings are omitted, as no longer applicable through lapse of time. The third synoptist likewise omits such details of that which is to take place after the coming of the Son of Man as are given in the other two Gospels (Matt. xxiv. 30, 31; Mark xiii. 27); and even the words of the first and second Synoptics, Matt. xxiv. 33, "When ye shall see all these things, know that he is near at the doors" (cf. Mark xiii. 29), are modified into (xxi. 28), "And when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth near"; ver. 31, "When ye shall see these things coming to pass, know that the kingdom of God is near." It is difficult impartially to note such altogether peculiar and characteristic alterations of these eschatological sayings, without recognising that they proceed from a marked change in the historical circumstances at the time of the writer, which rendered such modifications necessary to preserve the significance of the prophecies. That these variations arose from such influence, and are indicative of a later period, is a fact recognised by able critics of all schools. We might add various other passages which show, by their modifications, an advanced stage of Christian development. For instance, the third Synoptic has, vi. 21: "Blessed are ye that hunger *now*, for ye shall be filled; blessed are ye that weep *now*, for ye shall laugh. 22. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake" (cf. Matt. v. 4, 6, 11). It is scarcely possible to ignore the special application of these passages to Christians who had already been subjected to persecutions and reproach, not only in the insertion of the



significant *νῦν*, but still more in verse 22 compared with Matt. v. 11.<sup>1</sup> And, again, a similar modification exists in Luke xii. 3. The first Gospel (x. 27) has, "What I tell you in the darkness speak in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, preach upon the housetops." This is altogether omitted by the second synoptist, and it had so little significance left for the third, when Christianity, which had once been taught secretly and in private, had long been so widely preached that even the passage Matt. x. 23 had to be erased, that it was altered to (xii. 3): "Therefore, whatsoever ye said (*εἶπατε*) in the darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye spake (*ἐλαλήσατε*) in the ear in the closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

Along with these alterations and modifications which directly tend to push back the limits of the prophecies, and yet to leave room for their long-delayed fulfilment, the third synoptist still retains the final indication of the first and second Gospels,<sup>2</sup> xxi. 32: "Verily I say unto you that this generation (*ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη*) shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." Whilst the ablest critics, therefore, to a great extent agree that the variations elsewhere introduced by the third synoptist demonstrate the standpoint of a later age, a difference of opinion arises as to how far back the writer could be removed from the destruction of Jerusalem, without exceeding the line drawn, in the verse just quoted, by the words "this generation." On the one hand, it is maintained that many of that generation, who had been direct eye-witnesses of the appearance of Jesus, must still have been alive when this was written to justify the expression. How did the writer interpret the traditional *γενεὰ αὕτη*, which he still retained, within which the second advent was to take place? As he omitted Matt. x. 23 and modified in such a manner the eschatological prophecies, it is obvious that, if he intelligently retained the term "this generation," he must have understood it in its widest sense, and this we shall find he was justified in doing by the practice of the time. It has been, we think, clearly proved by Baur and others<sup>3</sup> that the word *γενεά* was understood to express the duration of the longest life, like the Latin *sæculum*.<sup>4</sup> Baur rightly argues that the generation would not be considered as "passed away" so long as even one of

<sup>1</sup> Ewald, *Jahrb. bibl. Wiss.*, iii., p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Matt. xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Baur, *Theol. Jahrb.*, 1849, p. 317 f.; Hilgenfeld, *Die Evv. Justin's*, p. 367 f.; *Die Evangelien*, p. 212; *Einl. N. T.*, p. 609; Zeller, *Theol. Jahrb.*, 1852, p. 229; *Die Apostelgesch.*, p. 467.

<sup>4</sup> Baur quotes Censorinus, a writer of the third century: "*Sæculum est spatium vitæ humanæ longissimum partu et morte definitum. Quare qui annos triginta sæculum putarunt, multum videntur errasse*" (*De die Nat.*, c. 17; *Theol. Jahrb.*, 1849, p. 318, anm. 1).



that generation remained alive. Now, the fact is, as he points out, that if the Apostle John was still living at the beginning of Trajan's reign, the date of his death being commonly set A.D. 99-100, many who read John xxi. 23 long after that period may very probably have supposed him to be still alive. Indeed, that passage of the fourth Gospel, indicative of a belief in the advent within the lifetime of the Apostle, has a direct bearing upon the interpretation which we are discussing. According to Hegesippus,<sup>1</sup> again, Symeon of Jerusalem was martyred under Trajan A.D. 107, at the age of 120 years, he says, and he was one of the "generation" in question, as was also Ignatius, if the tradition regarding him is to be believed, who died a martyr A.D. 115-116. Then Quadratus, who presented an Apology to the Emperor Hadrian about A.D. 126, states, in a fragment preserved by Eusebius, that some of those who were healed by Jesus were still living in his own times.<sup>2</sup> A writer at the end of the first quarter of the second century, therefore, might consider that the generation had not yet passed away. Hilgenfeld<sup>3</sup> points out that Irenæus, in the last book of his great work, written at the very end of the second century, speaking of the Apocalyptic vision, says: "For it is not a long time ago it was seen, but nearly in our own generation (γενεά), towards the end of Domitian's († 96) reign."<sup>4</sup> Irenæus, therefore, speaks of something which he supposes to happen about a century before, as all but in his own γενεά, and it must be noted that the phrase ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας γενεᾶς is rendered in the ancient Latin version: "*sed pene sub nostro sæculo.*" Another instance occurs in the remarks of Hegesippus preserved by Eusebius. Hegesippus says that the Church remained pure from heresy till the generation (γενεά) of those who had heard the Apostles had passed away,<sup>5</sup> and this he dates in the reign of Trajan. The expression in Luke xxi. 32 is not, we think, in contradiction with the late date to which other potent considerations seem to assign the third Synoptic. It will be seen that the internal evidence supplied by the Acts of the Apostles still further confirms the indications of a late date in the Gospel itself.

The Acts of the Apostles being the δεύτερος λόγος, of course, it was composed later than the Gospel; and there is good reason for believing that a considerable interval occurred before the second work was written. According to the traditional view, some ten years probably elapsed between the production of the two works, and the interval could certainly not well be less. It will be remembered that the author not only repeats particulars of the

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii., 32.    <sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, iv. 3.    <sup>3</sup> *Die Evv. Justin's*, p. 367 f.

<sup>4</sup> Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, v. 30, § 3; Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii. 18; v. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii. 32.



Ascension, but that the account of it which is given in Acts i. 3-9 differs materially from that of the Gospel. The names of the Twelve, moreover, are detailed (i. 13), although they had already been given in the former work, vi. 14-16. One or two curious modifications are further made, which certainly indicate a more advanced period. The author represents the disciples as asking the risen Jesus (i. 6): "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" To which answer is made: "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father appointed by his own authority. But ye shall receive power through the coming upon you of the Holy Ghost, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Having spoken this, Jesus is immediately lifted up, and a cloud receives him out of their sight. We believe that the chief motive for which this singular episode was introduced was to correct the anticipations raised by the eschatological prophecies in chap. xxi. of the Gospel. These prophecies had already been modified, as we have seen, to suit the altered circumstances of the times, and the inconvenient expression "this generation" is quietly removed. There is no longer any definite limitation in the statement, "It is not for you to know times or seasons," accompanied by the vista of testimony to be borne, "unto the uttermost parts of the earth." We are here, unmistakably, in the second century, to which also the whole character of the Acts leads us.

There is an allusion to Gaza in the Acts which has been much discussed, and also advanced as an indication of date. In the account of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch the angel is represented as saying to Philip (viii. 26): "Arise and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert (*αὐτὴ ἐστὶν ἔρημος*)." The city of Gaza, after having been taken and destroyed by Alexander the Great, was rebuilt by the pro-consul Gabinius<sup>1</sup> (c. 58 B.C.), but it was again destroyed, by the Jews themselves, shortly before the siege of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> The expression, "this is desert," may grammatically be applied either to the "way" or to "Gaza" itself. Those who consider that *ἔρημος* refers to Gaza, of course understand the word as describing the devastated condition of the place, and some of them argue that, as the latest date referred to in Acts, the two years' imprisonment of Paul, carries the history up to A.D. 64, and the destruction of Gaza took place about A.D. 66—probably somewhat later—the description was applied to Gaza by the author as a parenthetical allusion, its destruction being quite recent at the time when the Acts were written. On the other side, it is

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiv. 5, § 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 18, § 1.



contended that, as there was more than one way—as there still is—from Jerusalem to Gaza, the angel simply indicated the particular way by which Philip was to go so as to meet the Ethiopian: “this way is desert,” and consequently little frequented. Applied to the way and identifying it, the description has direct and perfectly simple significance; whereas, understood as a reference to the state of Gaza itself, it is certainly an unnecessary display of local or historical knowledge. The majority of critics connect ἔρημος with ὁδός, and not with Gaza;<sup>1</sup> but in any case the expression has really no value for the establishment of a date, for, even supposing the words applied to Gaza, there is no limit to the time when such a reference might have been made. A writer at the middle of the second century, for instance, describing an episode supposed to occur near Gaza, and knowing of its destruction from Josephus, or possibly having it suggested by some older legend, might have inserted the detail, whether applied to Gaza or to the road to it, as a dash of local colouring.

We now arrive at the point which suggested the present discussion: the apparent indications of contact between Luke and Josephus. Holtzmann and others<sup>2</sup> have pointed out that the author of the Gospel and Acts has been very sensibly influenced by the works of Josephus, which were certainly largely circulated in Rome, where most critics conjecture that our two canonical books were written. Supposing the use of the writings of the Jewish historian to be demonstrated, it is obvious that we have a very important fact to guide us in determining an epoch beyond which the composition of the third Synoptic cannot be set. It must be borne in mind, in considering such evidence as we can afford space to quote, that indications of the use of an original historian, using his own characteristic expressions, and largely relating his own experiences, may be accepted in quite a different way from supposed indications of the use of Gospels like ours, which not only almost literally reproduce the same matter, showing their mutual dependence upon each other and upon common sources of which we positively know the earlier existence, but profess to give a historical record of sayings and doings which might have been, and in all probability were, similarly reported in a dozen different works, or handed down by common tradition.

It is recognised by almost all modern writers that the author of the third Synoptic and Acts was not a Jew, but a Gentile Christian. Where did he get such knowledge of Jewish history as he

<sup>1</sup> Some able critics are disposed to consider the words αὐτὴ ἐστὶν ἔρημος a mere gloss which has crept into the text. We need not discuss the argument that it distinguished the particular Gaza intended.

<sup>2</sup> Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 89 f.; Krenkel, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 141 f.; Hausrath, *N. T. Zeitgesch.* iii., p. 423 f.



displays? The reply is: he got it from the works of Josephus. The whole of the historical personages introduced into his two books, as well as the references to contemporary events, are found in those works, and, although sometimes erroneously employed and distorted from his pious point of view, there still remain singular coincidences of expression and of sequence, which show the effect upon the author's memory of his study of Josephus. The high priests, Annas, Caiaphas, and Ananias; Gamaliel; the two Herods; Agrippa and Philip, together with Herodias, Berenice, and Drusilla; and the Roman Procurators, Felix and Festus;<sup>1</sup> Simon the Magician,<sup>2</sup> and the Egyptian (Acts xxi. 38), Theudas, and Judas the Galilæan, as well as others, seen to be derived from this source, together with such facts as the enrolment under Cyrenius, and the great famine (Acts xi. 28).<sup>3</sup> Josephus furnishes the material for drawing the character of Ananias, who commanded those who stood by to smite (τύπτειν) Paul on the mouth, and was characterised by the apostle in such strong terms;

<sup>1</sup> The whole of the preceding personages, indeed, figure largely in the first five chapters of Book xviii. of the *Antiquities*. The condensed references in Luke iii. 1, 2, do not represent many pages of Josephus. It is curious to compare iii. 1, ἐν ἔτει δὲ πεντεκαιδεκάτῳ τῆς ἡγεμονίας Τιβερίου Καίσαρος..... καὶ τετραρχούντος τῆς Γαλιλαίας Ἡρώδου, Φιλίππου δὲ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ τετραρχούντος τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Τραχωνίτιδος χώρας, κ.τ.λ., with the following of Josephus: τότε δὲ καὶ Φίλιππος (Ἡρώδου δὲ ἦν ἀδελφός) τελευτᾷ τὸν βίον, εἰκοστῷ μὲν ἐνιαυτῷ τῆς Τιβερίου ἀρχῆς ἡγησάμενος δὲ αὐτὸς ἑπτὰ καὶ τριάκοντα τῆς Τραχωνίτιδος καὶ Γαυλανίτιδος, κ.τ.λ., *Antiq.* xviii. 4, § 6—"Now at that time also Philip, who was Herod's brother, died, in the twentieth year of the reign of Tiberius, after having for thirty-seven years governed the region of Trachonitis and Gaulonitis," etc. Lysanias of Abylene is referred to in *Antiq.* xix. 5, § 1; xx. 7, § 1; and Annas and Caiaphas in an earlier paragraph of the same chapter we have just quoted (xviii. 4, § 3; cf. 2, §§ 1, 2, etc.). The story of Herodias is told in the next chapter (xviii. 5, § 1 f.; cf. 7, § 1; cf. Luke iii. 19 f.). From *Antiq.* xx. 7, § 2, may be learnt why Felix trembled, when he came with his wife Drusilla, and Paul discoursed to him of righteousness and temperance (Acts xxiv. 24 f.). Berenice is mentioned in the very same section (*Antiq.* xx. 7, § 2, cf. Acts xxiv. 23). In Acts xxiv. 27 Festus is introduced: "But after two years Porcius Festus came in Felix' room" (διετίας δὲ πληρωθείσης ἔλαβεν διάδοχον ὁ Φῆλιξ Πόρκιον Φῆστον). He is introduced by Josephus: "But Porcius Festus having been sent by Nero in Felix' room" (Πορκίου δὲ Φῆστον διαδόχου Φήλικι πεμφθέντος ὑπὸ Νέρωνος, κ.τ.λ.). *Antiq.*, xx. 8, § 9.

<sup>2</sup> We shall not here discuss the historical reality of Simon the magician, cf. Acts viii. 9 f., but in Josephus there is likewise Simon a magician, who helps Felix to marry Drusilla. The author of Acts introduces him, viii. 9: "But a certain man named Simon (ὀνόματι Σίμων).....using sorcery (μαγεύων).....boasting himself to be some great person (λέγων εἶναί τινα ἐάντὸν μέγαν)." Josephus says: "And one of his friends, named Simon (Σίμων ὀνόματι).....who pretended to be a sorcerer (μάγον εἶναι σκηπτόμενον)," etc., *Antiq.*, xx. 7, § 2.

<sup>3</sup> The third synoptist is the only evangelist who records the excursion to Emmaus, and it may be mentioned that the name of this village, even, may have been derived from Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiii. 1, § 3; *De Bello Jud.*, v. 2, § 3.



and Josephus even states that the servants of the high priest smote (τύπτειν) those priests who would not give up their tithes (xx. 9, § 2 f.).<sup>1</sup>

The manner in which the author of Acts deals with Theudas and Judas the Galilæan is very instructive. Not only does he commit a palpable anachronism in placing the name of Theudas in the mouth of Gamaliel, as that popular leader did not appear till many years after the time when Gamaliel is represented as speaking, but he also commits a second anachronism by making Judas come after Theudas, and that he does so his *μετὰ τοῦτον*, "after this man," leaves no doubt. How did this error originate? Simply from imperfect reading or recollection of Josephus, who mentions Theudas, and then, in the next paragraph, the sons of Judas the Galilæan; and as Josephus proceeds to describe the Judas whom he means, the author of Acts has confused the father with the sons. A little examination of the passage, we think, shows beyond doubt that this is the source of the reference. The author of Acts makes Gamaliel say (v. 36): "For before those days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody (Θευδᾶς, λέγων εἶναί τινα ἑαυτόν), to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain (ὃς ἀνῆρέθη), and all, as many as were persuaded by him (καὶ πάντες ὅσοι ἐπείθοντο αὐτῷ), were dispersed (διελύθησαν), and brought to nought." Josephus says: "A certain man, a magician, named Theudas, persuades the great multitude (πείθει τὸν πλεῖστον ὄχλον)..... to follow him to the river Jordan; for he boasted that he was a prophet (προφήτης γὰρ ἔλεγεν εἶναι).....Fadus, however, attacking them unexpectedly, slew many and took many prisoners; Theudas also being taken prisoner, they cut off his head," etc.<sup>2</sup> A few lines further down Josephus continues: "But, besides these, the sons of Judas, the Galilæan, also were slain (οἱ παῖδες Ἰούδα τοῦ Γαλιλαίου ἀνῆρέθησαν), (I mean), of the (Judas) who drew away the people (τὸν λαὸν ἀποστήσαντος) from the Romans, when Cyrenius assessed," etc.<sup>3</sup> In Acts, Gamaliel, after speaking of Theudas, as quoted above, goes on to say: "After this man (*μετὰ τοῦτον*), rose up Judas the Galilæan (Ἰούδας ὁ Γαλιλαῖος) in the days of the enrolment, and drew away people (ἀπέστησεν λαὸν) after him; he also perished, and all, as many as were persuaded (ἐπείθοντο) by him, were scattered (διεσκορπίσθησαν)." This account of the fate of Judas and his followers differs from that elsewhere given by Josephus,<sup>4</sup> and to which he refers in the section above quoted; but this confirms the

<sup>1</sup> Hausrath, *N. T. Zeitgesch.* xii. p. 425 f., cf. p. 32. <sup>2</sup> *Antiq.* xx. 5, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* xx. 5, § 2; cf. xviii. 1, §§ 1, 6; *De Bello Jud.*, ii. 8, § 1; Luke ii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Antiq.* xviii. 1, §§ 1, 6.



belief that the author of Acts took it, as has been said, from this chapter, applying to Judas himself the statement made regarding his sons.<sup>1</sup>

Not only does the author of Acts know the history of Felix and Drusilla, but in saying (xxiv. 26) that Felix sent frequently for Paul, hoping that money would be given to him, he merely follows the suggestion of Josephus, who openly accuses Felix both of treachery and bribery.<sup>2</sup> From the same chapter is derived another incident. In Acts xxi. 38 the chief captain, who takes Paul prisoner at Jerusalem after the riot in the temple, says to him: "Art not thou that Egyptian who before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness (εἰς τὴν ἔρημον) the four thousand men of the *sicarii* (τῶν σικαρίων)?" Josephus relates the story of the unnamed Egyptian in two of his works. He describes<sup>3</sup> how robbers and impostors filled Jerusalem with violence, and he states that these robbers were called *sicarii* (σικάριοι), giving an explanation of the origin of the word.<sup>4</sup> These impostors persuaded the multitude to follow them into the wilderness (εἰς τὴν ἔρημίαν).<sup>5</sup> About this time, he says, there came out of Egypt one "boasting that he was a prophet" (προφήτης εἶναι λέγων), and induced a multitude to follow him. Felix attacks the Egyptian (τὸν Αἰγύπτιον), and slays four hundred, taking two hundred prisoners, but the Egyptian himself escapes. A little lower down Josephus says that Festus sent soldiers against a number of the *sicarii*, who had been induced by a certain impostor to follow him "as far as the desert" (μέχρι τῆς ἔρημίας).<sup>6</sup> In his work on the Jewish wars he gives a similar account.

The exordium of the orator Tertullus (Acts xxiv. 2, 3), who appears, with the Jews, to accuse Paul after his removal to Cæsarea, is a clear, though hyperbolic, reference to the efforts of Felix to put down these *sicarii* and impostors, described by Josephus in connection with the passage above quoted.<sup>7</sup>

The author of Acts further seems to show his use of the works of Josephus in his estimate (xiii. 20) of 450 years as the period of the Judges of Israel, which is a round statement of the data of Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiii. 3, § 1, in opposition to the reckoning of 1 Kings vi. 1; and again in the next verse, xiii. 21, the author

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 80 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiq.*, xx. 8, § 5. Cf. Hausrath, *N. T. Zeitgesch.*, iii., p. 426.

<sup>3</sup> *Antiq.*, xx. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, xx. 8, §§ 5, 6, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Τὸν ὄχλον ἐπειθον αὐτοῖς εἰς τὴν ἔρημίαν ἔπεσθαι, *ib.*, § 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Antiq.*, xx. 8, §§ 5, 6, 10; *De Bello Jud.*, ii. 13, §§ 3, 4, 5; Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 91.

<sup>7</sup> *Antiq.*, xx. 8; *De Bello Jud.*, ii. 13; Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 91.



says that Saul reigned forty years, which is nowhere else stated than by Josephus, *Antiq.*, vi. 14, § 9.<sup>1</sup>

In the prophecies of the fall of Jerusalem (Luke xix. 43, xxi. 43 f.), is it not probable that the author profits by his knowledge of the works of Josephus? His reference (xxi. 11) to the omens which are to presage that event, "and there shall be fearful sights and great signs (σημεῖα μεγάλα) from heaven," appears to us an unmistakable echo of the account given by the Jewish historian of the signs (σημεῖα), the extraordinary appearances in the heavens, and the wonderful occurrences which took place in the Temple before the siege of the Holy City.<sup>2</sup> Other reminiscences of the same writer may perhaps be traced in the same chapter, as, for instance, xxi. 5: "and as some were remarking of the Temple that it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings (ὅτι λίθοις καλοῖς καὶ ἀναθήμασιν κεκόσμηται), etc." Josephus describes the Temple as built of stones which were "white and strong," and he says that it was adorned with many-coloured veils (ποικίλοις ἑμπετάσμασι κεκόσμητο), and, giving an account of the golden vine which ornamented the pillars, he adds that none seemed to have so adorned (ἐπικεκοσμηκέναι) the Temple as Herod. After saying that round the whole were hung up the spoils taken from barbarous peoples, Josephus states: "and all these King Herod offered (ἀνέθηκε) to the Temple."<sup>3</sup>

There are many other points which might be quoted as indicating the use of Josephus; but we have already devoted too much space to this question, and must now conclude. There is one other indication, however, which seems to show that the author of our third Synoptic and Acts was acquainted with, and influenced by, the works of the Jewish historian. M. Renan has pointed out the dedication to Theophilus, which he rightly considers altogether foreign to Syrian and Palestinian habits, as recalling the dedication of the works of Josephus to Epaphroditus, and probably showing a Roman practice.<sup>4</sup> We consider that it indicates much more. The third Gospel and Acts are dedicated to the "most excellent Theophilus" (κράτιστε Θεόφιλε), for whose information they were written.<sup>5</sup> Josephus dedicates his work on the Antiquities to the "most excellent Epaphroditus" (κράτιστε Ἐπαφρόδιτε),<sup>6</sup> for whose information, also, the work was written.<sup>7</sup> He still more

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 92; Hausrath, *N. T. Zeitgesch.*, iii., p. 426, anm. 4; cf. Hales, *Analysis of Chronology*, 1830, i., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> *De Bello Jud.*, vi. 5, §§ 3, 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Antiq.*, xv. 11, § 3; Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.*, 1873, p. 92.

<sup>4</sup> *Les Évangiles, et la Seconde Génération Chrétienne*, p. 255 f.

<sup>5</sup> Luke i. 3, 4; Acts i. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Vita*, § 76. The amplification ἀνδρῶν is of no importance.

<sup>7</sup> *Antiq. Proem.*, § 2.



directly dedicates to the same "most excellent Epaphroditus" (κράτιστε Ἐπαφ.) his work against Apion, and he begins the second book: "Now in the former book, most esteemed Epaphroditus, regarding, etc. (Διὰ μὲν οὖν τοῦ προτέρου βιβλίου, τιμιώτατέ μοι Ἐπαφρόδιτε, περί κ. τ. λ.).....I also made (ἐποίησάμην) a refutation, etc."<sup>1</sup> Our author begins his second work (Acts i. 1): "The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, regarding all, etc. (Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποίησάμην περί πάντων, ὦ Θεόφιλε, κ. τ. λ.)." It is, we think, impossible to examine carefully the commencement of the first book against Apion, and the statement of the reasons which induced him to write his history, without perceiving the influence which Josephus had exercised over the mind and language of our canonical writer, and how closely that introduction is imitated in the prologue to the Gospel and Acts, in which the author speaks in the first person, and probably displays himself more directly than elsewhere. It is much too long to quote, and only a very inadequate idea of the similarity of tone and expression in many parts can be conveyed by the few words which can be extracted here. Speaking of Greek literature he says: "Certainly those taking in hand (ἐπιχειρήσαντες) to write histories," etc. A few lines lower down he refers to the boasting of the Greeks that they are the only people versed in ancient times, and accurately delivering the truth regarding them (ὥς μόνους ἐπισταμένους τὰ ἀρχαῖα καὶ ἀλήθειαν περί αὐτῶν ἀκριβῶς παραδιδόντας).<sup>2</sup> He speaks of writing history from the beginning of most distant times (ἐκ μακροτάτων ἄνωθεν χρόνων) amongst the Egyptians and Babylonians, and he says it was undertaken (ἐγκεχειρισμένοι) by the priests; the records of the Jews, also, were written with great accuracy (μετὰ πολλῆς ἀκριβείας).<sup>3</sup> Going on to speak more particularly of himself, Josephus says:—

"But certain worthless men have taken in hand (ἐπικεχειρήκασιν) to calumniate my history.....he who undertakes the delivery (παράδοσιν) of facts to others ought himself in the first place to know them accurately (ἀκριβῶς), either from having followed the events (παρηκολουθηκότα τοῖς γεγονόσιν), or from having ascertained them by inquiry of those who knew them.....But I write the history of the war, as an actor in many of the occurrences, and eye-witness of most (πλείστων δ' αὐτόπτης γενόμενος).....Must they not, therefore, be considered audacious who have taken in hand (ἐπικεχειρηκότας) to contend with me regarding the truth of my history?"<sup>4</sup>

If we linguistically examine the prologue to the Gospel, addressed to the "most excellent Theophilus," we find some instructive peculiarities. In the first verse, we have the verb ἐπιχειρεῖν, which is nowhere else used in the Gospel, only twice in Acts (ix. 29; xix. 13), and not at all in the rest of

<sup>1</sup> *Contra Apionem*, ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, i., § 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, § 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, i. 10.



the New Testament. In the introduction to his work against Apion, however, addressed by Josephus to the "most excellent Epaphroditus," it is employed four times in the first eleven paragraphs,<sup>1</sup> and we do not here refer to any other part. *Αὐτόπτης* is not met with anywhere in the New Testament except in Luke i. 2, but it is likewise found in close connection with the other parallels in the work against Apion.<sup>2</sup> Except in Luke i. 3, *παρακολουθεῖν* does not occur in any part of that Gospel or of Acts, and only in three other places of the New Testament.<sup>3</sup> It is found in the same section as the above, and further in two other passages just quoted.<sup>4</sup> *Ἀκριβῶς* occurs in Luke i. 3 and Acts xviii. 25, but nowhere else in the two books, and, besides, only once in the rest of the New Testament;<sup>5</sup> but it also is met with twice in the sections against Apion referred to,<sup>6</sup> which probably suggested the whole prologue.

We have left very many important analogies unmentioned which merit examination; but those which have been pointed out, we think, leave little doubt that the author of the third Synoptic and Acts was acquainted with, and made use of, the works of Josephus. Now, the history of the Jewish war was written about A.D. 75, the *Antiquities* about A.D. 93, the *Life* at a still later period, and last of all the work against Apion, probably at the very end of the first century. If, then, it be admitted, as we think it must be, that the author of the third Gospel made use of these works of Josephus, we have at once the beginning of the second century as the very earliest date at which the third Synoptic could have been written, and the Acts of the Apostles must necessarily be assigned to a still later date. At what precise period of the second century they were composed we cannot here pause to consider, even if the materials for determining the point exist; but the reasons now given, and many other considerations, point surely to a date when it is scarcely possible that the Acts of the Apostles could have been written by a companion of the Apostle Paul, and much less the third Gospel of our canon.<sup>7</sup>

We have said enough to enable the reader to understand the

<sup>1</sup> § 2, 10 twice, 11; *ἐγχειρεῖν* is also used in § 6.

<sup>2</sup> i., § 10.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xvi. 17; 1 Tim. iv. 6; 2 Tim. iii. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Contra Apion.*, i., §§ 10, 23; ii. 1; *κατακολουθεῖν* also occurs, § 3, and in Luke xxiii. 55, Acts xvi. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. ii. 8; *ἀκριβέστερον* is found once, in Acts xviii. 26.

<sup>6</sup> *Contra Apion.*, §§ 3, 10.

<sup>7</sup> The argument from page 600 to this point is extracted from an article by the author which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, October 1st, 1877, p. 496 f. An able work has since appeared, *Josephus und Lucas*, by Max Krenkel (Leipzig, 1894), in which the influence of the Jewish historian upon the author of the third Gospel and Acts of the Apostles is exhaustively examined and, we consider, fully established.



nature of the problem regarding the author of the third Synoptic and of the Acts of the Apostles; and whilst for our purpose much less would have sufficed, it is evident that the materials do not exist for identifying him. The stupendous miracles related in these two works, therefore, rest upon the evidence of an unknown writer, who from internal evidence must have composed them very long after the events recorded. Externally, there is no proof even of the existence of the Acts until towards the end of the second century, when also for the first time we hear of a vague theory as to the name and identity of the supposed author—a theory which declares Luke not to have himself been an eye-witness of the occurrences related in the Gospel, and which reduces his participation even in the events narrated in the Acts to a very small and modest compass, leaving the great mass of the miracles described in the work without even his personal attestation. The theory we have seen to be not only unsupported by evidence, but to be contradicted by many potent circumstances. We propose now, without exhaustively examining the contents of the Acts, which would itself require a separate treatise, at least to consider some of its main points sufficiently to form a fair judgment of the historical value of the work, although the facts which we have already ascertained are clearly fatal to the document as adequate testimony for miracles, and the reality of Divine Revelation.



## CHAPTER III.

### HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE WORK : DESIGN AND COMPOSITION

THE historical value of the Acts of the Apostles has very long been the subject of vehement discussion, and the course of the controversy has certainly not been favourable to the position of the work. For a considerable time the traditional view continued to prevail, and little or no doubt of the absolute credibility of the narrative was ever expressed. When the spirit of independent and enlightened criticism was finally aroused, it had to contend with opinions which habit had rendered stereotype, and prejudices which took the form of hereditary belief. A large body of eminent critics, after an exhaustive investigation of the Acts, have now declared that the work is not historically accurate, and cannot be accepted as a true account of the Acts and teaching of the Apostles.

The author of the Acts has been charged with having written the work with a distinct design to which he subordinated historical truth, and in this view many critics have joined who ultimately do not accuse him absolutely of falsifying history, but merely of making a deliberate selection of his materials with the view of placing events in the light most suitable for his purpose. Most of those who make this charge maintain that, in carrying out the original purpose of the Acts, the writer so freely manipulated whatever materials he had before him, and so dealt with facts whether by omission, transformation, or invention, that the historical value of his narrative has been destroyed or at least seriously affected. On the other hand, many apologetic writers altogether deny the existence of any design on the part of the author such as is here indicated, which could have led him to suppress or distort facts ; and whilst some of them advance very varied and fanciful theories as to the historical plan upon which the writer proceeds, and in accordance with which the peculiarities of his narrative are explained, they generally accept the work as the genuine history of the Acts of the Apostles so far as the author possessed certain information. The design most generally ascribed to the writer of the Acts may, with many minor variations, be said to be apologetic and conciliatory : an attempt



to reconcile the two parties in the early Church by representing the difference between the views of Peter and Paul as slight and unimportant, Pauline sentiments being freely placed in the mouth of Peter, and the Apostle of the Gentiles being represented as an orthodox adherent of the Church of Jerusalem, with scarcely such advanced views of Christian universality as Peter; or else, an effort of Gentile Christianity to bring itself into closer union with the primitive Church, surrendering, in so doing, all its distinctive features and its Pauline origin, and representing the universalism by which it existed, as a principle adopted and promulgated from the very first by Peter and the Twelve. It is not necessary for us to enter upon any minute discussion of this point, nor is it requisite, for the purposes of our inquiry, to determine whether the peculiar character of the writing which we are examining is the result of a perfectly definite purpose controlling the whole narrative and modifying every detail, or naturally arises from the fact that it is the work of a pious member of the Church writing long after the events related, and imbuing his materials, whether of legend or ecclesiastical tradition, with his own thoroughly orthodox views: history freely composed for Christian edification. We shall not endeavour to construct any theory to account for the phenomena before us, nor to discover the secret motives or intentions of the writer, but, taking them as they are, we shall simply examine some of the more important portions of the narrative, with a view to determine whether the work can in any serious sense be regarded as credible history.

No one can examine the contents of the Acts without perceiving that some secret motive or influence did certainly govern the writer's mind, and guide him in the selection of topics, and this is betrayed by many peculiarities in his narrative. Quite apart from any attempt to discover precisely what that motive was, it is desirable that we should briefly point out some of these peculiarities. It is evident that every man who writes a history must commence with a distinct plan, and that the choice of subjects to be introduced or omitted must proceed upon a certain principle. This is, of course, an invariable rule wherever there is order and arrangement. No one has ever questioned that in the Acts of the Apostles both order and arrangement have been deliberately adopted, and the question naturally arises, What was the plan of the author? and upon what principle did he select, from the mass of facts which might have been related regarding the Church in the Apostolic ages, precisely those which he has inserted, to the exclusion of the rest? What title will adequately represent the contents of the book? for it is admitted by almost all critics that the actual name which the book bears neither was given to it by its author nor properly describes its intention and



subject.<sup>1</sup> The extreme difficulty which has been felt in answering these questions, and in constructing any hypothesis which may fairly correspond with the actual contents of the Acts, constitutes one of the most striking commentaries on the work, and, although we cannot here detail the extremely varied views of critics upon the subject, they are well worthy of study. No one now advances the theory which was anciently current that the author simply narrated that of which he was an eye-witness.<sup>2</sup> Its present title, *πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων*, would lead us to expect an account of the doings of the Apostles in general, but we have nothing like this in the book. Peter and Paul occupy the principal parts of the narrative, and the other Apostles are scarcely mentioned. James is introduced as an actor in the famous Council, and represented as head of the Church in Jerusalem; but it is much disputed that he was either an Apostle, or one of the Twelve. The death of James the brother of John is just mentioned. John is represented on several occasions during the earlier part of the narrative as the companion of Peter, without being prominently brought forward; and the rest of the Twelve are left in complete obscurity. It is not a history of the labours of Peter and Paul, for not only is considerable importance given to the episodes of Stephen and Philip the Evangelist, but the account of the two great Apostles is singularly fragmentary. After a brief chronicle of the labours of Peter, he suddenly disappears from the scene, and we hear of him no more. Paul then becomes the prominent figure in the drama; but we have already pointed out how defective is the information given regarding him, and he is also abandoned as soon as he is brought to Rome: of his subsequent career and martyrdom nothing whatever is said. The work is not, as Luther suggested, a gloss on the Epistles of Paul and the inculcation of his doctrine of righteousness through faith, for the narrative of the Acts, so far as we can compare it with the Epistles, which are nowhere named in it, is generally in contradiction to them, and the doctrine of justification by faith is conspicuous by its absence. It is not a history of the first Christian missions, for it ignores entirely the labours of most of the Apostles, omits all mention of some of the most interesting missionary journeys, and does not even give a report of the introduction of Christianity into Rome. It is not in any sense a Paulinian history of the Church, for if, on the one side, it describes the Apostles of the Circumcision as promulgating the

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the perfectly vague designation of the book, "Acts," *Πράξεις*, in the *Cod. Sinaiticus*, may be taken as the closest—because most vague—description of its contents.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hieron., *De vir. ill.*, 7; Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii. 4; *Can. Murat*, ed. Tregelles, p. 18 f.



universalism which Paul preached, it robs him of his originality, dwarfs his influence upon the development of Christianity, and is, on the other hand, too defective to represent Church history, whether from a Paulinian or any other standpoint. The favourite theory, that the writer designed to relate the story of the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome, can scarcely be maintained, although it certainly has the advantage of a vagueness of proportions equally suitable to the largest and most limited treatment of history. But, in such a case, we have a drama with the main incident omitted; for the introduction of the Gospel into Rome is not described at all, and, whilst the author could not consider the personal arrival at Rome of the Apostle Paul the climax of his history, he at once closes his account where the final episode ought to have commenced.

From all points of view, and upon any hypothesis, the Acts of the Apostles is so obviously incomplete as a history, so fragmentary and defective as biography, that critics have to the present day failed in framing any theory which could satisfactorily account for its anomalies, and have almost been forced to explain them by supposing a partial, apologetic or conciliatory, design, which removes the work from the region of veritable history. The whole interest of the narrative, of course, centres in the two representative Apostles, Peter and Paul, who alternately fill the scene. It is difficult to say, however, whether the account of the Apostle of the Circumcision or of Paul is the more capriciously partial and incomplete. After his miraculous liberation from the prison into which he had been cast by Herod, the doings of Peter are left unchronicled, and, although he is reintroduced for a moment to plead the cause of the Gentiles at the Council in Jerusalem, he then finally retires from the scene, to give place to Paul. The omissions from the history of Paul are very remarkable, and all the more so from the extreme and unnecessary detail of the itinerary of some of his journeys, and neither the blanks on the one hand, nor the excessive minuteness on the other, are to be explained by any theory connected with personal knowledge on the part of Theophilus. Of the general history of the primitive Church, and the life and labours of the Twelve, we are told little or nothing. According to the author, the propagation of the Gospel was carried on more by angelic agency than apostolic enthusiasm. There is a liberal infusion of miraculous episodes in the story, but a surprising scarcity of facts. Even where the author is best informed, as in the second part of the Acts, the narrative of Paul's labours and missionary journeys, while presenting striking omissions, is really minute and detailed only in regard to points of no practical interest, leaving both the distinctive teaching of the Apostle and the internal economy of the Church almost entirely



unrepresented. Does this defective narrative of the Acts of the Apostles proceed from poverty of information or from the arbitrary selection of materials for a special purpose? As we proceed it will become increasingly evident that, limited although the writer's materials are, the form into which they have been moulded has undoubtedly been determined either by a dominant theory or a deliberate design, neither of which is consistent with the composition of sober history.

This is particularly apparent in the representation which is given of the two principal personages of the narrative. Critics have long clearly recognised that the author of the Acts has carefully arranged his materials so as to present as close a parallelism as possible between the Apostles Peter and Paul. We shall presently see how closely he assimilates their teaching, ascribing the views of Paul to Peter, and putting Petrine sentiments in the mouth of Paul; but here we shall merely refer to points of general history. If Peter has a certain pre-eminence as a distinguished member of the original Apostolic body, the equal claim of Paul to the honours of the Apostolate, whilst never directly advanced, is prominently suggested by the narration, no less than three times, of the circumstances of his conversion and direct call to the office by the glorified Jesus. The first miracle ascribed to Peter is the healing of "a certain man lame from his mother's womb" (*τις ἀνὴρ χωλὸς ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ*) at the Beautiful gate of the Temple,<sup>1</sup> and the first wonder performed by Paul is also the healing of "a certain man lame from his mother's womb" (*τις ἀνὴρ χωλὸς ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ*) at Lystra;<sup>2</sup> Ananias and Sapphira are punished through the instrumentality of Peter,<sup>3</sup> and Elymas is smitten with blindness at the word of Paul;<sup>4</sup> the sick are laid in the streets that the shadow of Peter may fall upon them, and they are healed, as are also those vexed with unclean spirits;<sup>5</sup> handkerchiefs or aprons are taken to the sick from the body of Paul, and they are healed, and the evil spirits go out of them;<sup>6</sup> Peter withstands Simon the sorcerer,<sup>7</sup> as Paul does the sorcerer Elymas and the exorcists at Ephesus;<sup>8</sup> if Peter heals the paralytic Æneas at Lydda,<sup>9</sup> Paul restores to health the fever-stricken father of Publius at Melita;<sup>10</sup> Peter raises from the dead Tabitha, a disciple at Joppa,<sup>11</sup> and Paul restores to life the disciple Eutychus at Troas;<sup>12</sup> Cornelius falls at the feet of Peter, and worships him, Peter preventing him, and saying: "Rise up! I myself also am a man";<sup>13</sup> and in like manner the people of Lystra would have done sacrifice to Paul, and he prevents them, crying out: "We also are

<sup>1</sup> iii. 2 f.<sup>2</sup> xiv. 8 f.<sup>3</sup> v. 1 f.<sup>4</sup> xiii. 11 f.<sup>5</sup> v. 12, 15 f.<sup>6</sup> xix. 11, 12.<sup>7</sup> viii. 20 f.<sup>8</sup> xiii. 11 f., xix. 13 f.<sup>9</sup> ix. 33 f.<sup>10</sup> xxviii. 8.<sup>11</sup> ix. 36 f.<sup>12</sup> xx. 9 f.<sup>13</sup> x. 25, 26.



men of like passions with you";<sup>1</sup> Peter lays his hands on the people of Samaria, and they receive the Holy Ghost and the gift of tongues,<sup>2</sup> and Paul does the same for believers at Ephesus;<sup>3</sup> Peter is brought before the council,<sup>4</sup> and so is Paul;<sup>5</sup> the one is imprisoned and twice released by an angel,<sup>6</sup> and the other is delivered from his bonds by a great earthquake;<sup>7</sup> if Peter be scourged by order of the council,<sup>8</sup> Paul is beaten with many stripes at the command of the magistrates of Philippi.<sup>9</sup> It is maintained that the desire to equalise the sufferings of the two Apostles in the cause of the Gospel, as he has equalised their miraculous displays, probably led the author to omit all mention of those perils and persecutions to which the Apostle Paul refers in support of his protest that he had laboured and suffered more than all the rest.<sup>10</sup> If Paul was called by a vision to the ministry of the Gentiles,<sup>11</sup> so Peter is represented as having been equally directed by a vision to baptise the Gentile Cornelius;<sup>12</sup> the double vision of Peter and Cornelius has its parallel in the double vision of Paul and Ananias. It is impossible to deny the measured equality thus preserved between the two Apostles, or to ignore the fact that parallelism like this is the result of premeditation, and cannot claim the character of impartial history.

The speeches form an important element in the Acts of the Apostles, and we shall now briefly examine them, reserving, however, for future consideration their dogmatic aspect. Few if any writers, however apologetic, maintain that these discourses can possibly have been spoken exactly as they are recorded in the Acts. The utmost that is asserted is that they are substantially historical, and fairly represent the original speeches. They were derived, it is alleged, either from written sources or oral tradition, and many, especially in the second part, are supposed to have been delivered in the presence of the author of the work. This view is held, of course, with a greater or less degree of assurance as to the closeness of the relation which our record bears to the original addresses; but, without here very closely scrutinising hesitation or reticence, our statement fairly renders the apologetic position. A large body of able critics deny the historical character of these speeches, and consider them merely free compositions by the author of the Acts, at the best being on a par with the speeches which many ancient writers place in the mouths of their historical personages, and giving only what the writer supposed that the speaker would say under the

<sup>1</sup> xiv. 13 f., cf. xxviii. 6.

<sup>4</sup> v. 21 f.

<sup>7</sup> xvi. 26.

<sup>10</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 23 f., 1 Cor. xv. 10; Stap, *Études sur les Origines*, etc., p. 124 f.

<sup>11</sup> ix. 6, 15 f.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 14 f., x. 44 f., etc.

<sup>5</sup> xxii. 30, xxiii. 1 f.

<sup>8</sup> v. 40.

<sup>12</sup> x. 9 f., xi. 1 f., xv. 7.

<sup>3</sup> xix. 1 f.

<sup>6</sup> v. 19, xii. 6 f.

<sup>9</sup> xvi. 22 f.



circumstances. That the writer may have made use of such materials as were within his reach, or endeavoured to embody the ideas which tradition may broadly have preserved, is admitted as possible; but that these discourses can seriously be accepted as conveying a correct report of anything actually spoken by the persons in whose mouths they are put is, of course, denied. It is, obviously, extremely improbable that any of these speeches could have been written down at the time. Taking even the supposed case that the author of the Acts was Luke, and was present when some of the speeches of Paul were delivered, it is difficult to imagine that he immediately recorded his recollection of them, and more than this he could not have done. He must continually have been in the habit of hearing the preaching of Paul, and therefore could not have had the inducement of novelty to make him write down what he heard. The idea of recording them for posterity could not have occurred to such a person, with the belief in the approaching end of all things then prevalent. The author of the Acts was not the companion of Paul, however, and the contents of the speeches, as we shall presently see, are not of a character to make it in the least degree likely that they could have been written down for separate circulation. Many of the speeches in the Acts, moreover, were delivered under circumstances which render it specially unlikely that they could have been reported with any accuracy. At no time an easy task correctly to record a discourse of any length, it is doubly difficult when those speeches, like many in Acts, were spoken under circumstances of great danger or excitement. The experience of modern times, before the application of systems of shorthand, may show how imperfectly speeches were taken down, even where there was deliberate preparation and set purpose to do so; and if it be suggested that some celebrated orations of the last century have so been preserved, it is undeniable that what has been handed down to us is either a mere copy of the previously written speech, or does not represent the original, but is almost a subsequent composition, preserving little more than some faint echoes of the real utterance. The probability that a correct record of speeches made under such circumstances in the middle of the first century could have been kept seems exceedingly small. Even if it could be shown that the author of the Acts took these speeches substantially from earlier documents, it would not materially tend to establish their authenticity; for the question would still remain perfectly open as to the closeness of those documents to the original discourses; but in the absence of all evidence, whether as to the existence or origin of any such records, the conjecture of their possible existence can have no weight. We have nothing but internal testimony to



examine, and that, we shall see, is totally opposed to the claim to historical value made for those discourses.

Apologists scarcely maintain that we have in the Acts a record of the original speeches in their completeness, but in claiming substantial accuracy most of them include the supposition at least of careful condensation. The longest discourse in the Acts would not have taken more than six or seven minutes to deliver, and it is impossible to suppose that what is there given can have been the whole speech delivered on many of the occasions described. For instance, is it probable that King Agrippa, who desires to hear Paul, and who comes "with great pomp" with Berenice to do so, should only have been favoured with a speech lasting five minutes? The author himself tells us that Paul was not always so brief in his addresses as one might suppose from the specimens here presented.<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable, however, that not the slightest intimation is given that the speeches are only substantially reported or are abridged, and their form and character are evidently designed to convey the impression of complete discourses. If the reader examine any of these speeches, it will be clear that they are concise compositions, betraying no marks of abridgment, and having no fragmentary looseness, but, on the contrary, that they are highly artificial and finished productions, with a continuous argument. Many of them are singularly inadequate to produce the impressions described; but at least it is not possible to discover that material omissions have been made, or that their periods were originally expanded by large, or even any, amplification. If these speeches be regarded as complete, and with little or no condensation, another strong element is added to the suspicion as to their authenticity, for such extreme baldness and brevity in the declaration of a new religion, requiring both explanation and argument, cannot be conceived, and in the case of Paul, with whose system of teaching and doctrine we are well acquainted through his Epistles, it is impossible to accept such meagre and one-sided addresses as representations of his manner. The statement that the discourses are abridged, and a mere *résumé* of those originally delivered, rests upon no authority, is a mere conjecture to account for an existing difficulty, and is in contradiction to the actual form of the speeches in Acts. Regarded as complete, their incongruity is intensified; but, considered as abridged, they have lost in the process all representative character and historical fitness.

It has been argued, indeed, that the different speeches bear evidence to their genuineness from their suitability to the speakers, and to the circumstances under which they are said to have been

<sup>1</sup> xx. 7-9.



delivered ; but the existence of anything but the most superficial semblance of idiosyncratic character must be denied. The similarity of form, manner, and matter in all the speeches is most remarkable, as will presently be made more apparent, and the whole of the doctrine enunciated amounts to little more than the repetition, in slightly varying words, of the brief exhortation to repentance and belief in Jesus, the Christ, that salvation may be obtained, with references to the ancient history of the Jews, singularly alike in all discourses. Very little artistic skill is necessary to secure a certain suitability of the word to the action and the action to the word ; and evidence is certainly reduced to a very low ebb when such agreement as is presented in the Acts is made an argument for authenticity. Not only is the consistency of the sentiments uttered by the principal speakers, as compared with what is known of their opinions and character, utterly disputed, but it must be evident that the literary skill of the author of the Acts was quite equal to so simple a task as preserving at least such superficial fitness as he displays.

It has been freely admitted by critics of all schools that the author's own peculiarities of style and language are apparent in all the speeches of the Acts. We may point out a few general instances of this nature which are worthy of attention. The author introduces the speeches of different persons with the same expression, "he opened his mouth," or something similar. Philip "opened his mouth" (*ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ*)<sup>1</sup> and addressed the Ethiopian (viii. 35). Peter "opened his mouth (and) said" (*ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα, εἶπεν*), when he delivered his discourse before the baptism of Cornelius (x. 34). Again, he uses it of Paul : "And when Paul was about to open his mouth (*μέλλοντος ἀνοίγειν τὸ στόμα*) Gallio said," etc. (xviii. 14). The words with which the speech of Peter at Pentecost is introduced deserve more attention : "Peter lifted up his voice and said unto them" (*ἐπῆρεν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀπεφθέγγετο αὐτοῖς*) (ii. 14). The verb *ἀποφθέγγεσθαι* occurs again (ii. 4) in the account of the descent of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues, and it is put into the mouth of Paul (xxvi. 25) in his reply to Festus ; but it occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. The favourite formula with which all speeches open is, "Men (and) Brethren" (*ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί*), or *ἄνδρες* coupled with some other term, as "Men (and) Israelites" (*ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλεῖται*), or simply *ἄνδρες* without addition. *Ἀνδρες ἀδελφοί* occurs no less than thirteen times. It is used thrice by Peter,<sup>2</sup> six times by Paul,<sup>3</sup> as well as

<sup>1</sup> It is to be remarked, however, that the same expression occurs in the first Synoptic (Matt. v. 2, xiii. 35, xvii. 27), and only once in Luke i. 64. It is also quoted Acts viii. 32 from the lxx. version of Isaiah liii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> i. 16 ; ii. 29 ; xv. 7.

<sup>3</sup> xiii. 26, 38 ; xxii. 1 ; xxiii. 1, 6 ; xxviii. 17.



by Stephen,<sup>1</sup> James,<sup>2</sup> the believers at Pentecost,<sup>3</sup> and the rulers of the Synagogue.<sup>4</sup> The angels at the Ascension address the disciples as "Men (and) Galileans" (*ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι*).<sup>5</sup> Peter makes use of *ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλεῖται* twice,<sup>6</sup> and it is likewise employed by Paul,<sup>7</sup> by Gamaliel,<sup>8</sup> and by the Jews of Asia.<sup>9</sup> Peter addresses those assembled at Pentecost as *ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι*.<sup>10</sup> Paul opens his Athenian speech with *ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι*,<sup>11</sup> and the town-clerk begins his short appeal to the craftsmen of Ephesus: *ἄνδρες Ἐφεσίοι*.<sup>12</sup> Stephen begins his speech to the Council with "Men, Brethren, and Fathers, hear" (*ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατέρες, ἀκούσατε*), and Paul uses the very same words in addressing the multitude from the stairs of the Temple.<sup>13</sup>

In the speech which Peter is represented as making at Pentecost he employs in an altogether peculiar way (ii. 25-27) Psalm xvi., quoting it in order to prove that the Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah was a necessary occurrence, which had been foretold by David. This is principally based upon the tenth verse of the Psalm: "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt thou give thy Holy One (*τὸν ὁσιόν σου*) to see corruption (*διαφθοράν*)."<sup>14</sup> Peter argues that David both died and was buried, and that his sepulchre is with them to that day, but that, being a prophet, he foresaw and spake here of the Resurrection of Christ, "that neither was he left in Hades nor did his flesh see corruption (*διαφθοράν*)."<sup>15</sup> Is it not an extremely singular circumstance that Peter, addressing an audience of Jews in Jerusalem, where he might naturally be expected to make use of the vernacular language, actually quotes the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, and bases his argument upon a mistranslation of the Psalm, which, we may add, was in all probability not composed by David at all? The word translated "Holy One" should be in the plural—"holy ones," that is to say; "thy saints," and the word rendered *διαφθορά* corruption, really signifies "grave" or "pit." The poet, in fact, merely expresses his confidence that he will be preserved alive. The best critics recognise that Psalm xvi. is not a Messianic psalm at all, and many of those who, from the use which is made of it in Acts, are led to assert that it is so, recognise in the main that it can only be applied to the Messiah indirectly, by arguing that the prophecy

<sup>1</sup> vii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> xiii. 15.

<sup>7</sup> xiii. 16.

<sup>10</sup> ii. 14.

<sup>13</sup> vii. 2; xxii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> xv. 13.

<sup>5</sup> i. 11.

<sup>8</sup> v. 35.

<sup>11</sup> xvii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 37.

<sup>6</sup> ii. 22; iii. 12.

<sup>9</sup> xxi. 28.

<sup>12</sup> xix. 35.

<sup>14</sup> ὅτι οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ἀδην οὐδὲ δώσεις τὸν ὁσιόν σου ἰδεῖν διαφθοράν. Acts ii. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Acts ii. 31.



was not fulfilled in the case of the poet who speaks of himself, but was fulfilled in the Resurrection of Jesus. This reasoning, however, totally ignores the sense of the original, and is opposed to all legitimate historical interpretation of the Psalm. Not dwelling upon this point at present, we must go on to point out that, a little further on (xiii. 35-37), the Apostle Paul is represented as making use of the very same argument which Peter here employs, and quoting the same passage from Psalm xvi. to support it. This repetition of very peculiar reasoning, coupled with other similarities which we shall presently point out, leads to the inference that it is merely the author himself who puts this argument into their mouths; and this conclusion is strengthened by the circumstance that, throughout both Gospel and Acts, he always quotes from the Septuagint, even when that version departs from the sense of the original. It may be well to give both passages in juxtaposition, in order that the closeness of the analogy may be more easily realised. For this purpose we somewhat alter the order of the verses:—

## PETER IN ACTS II.

25. For David saith concerning him..... 27. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt thou give thine holy one to see corruption.

30. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God swore with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins<sup>1</sup> he would set one upon his throne,

31. He foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither left in Hades nor did his flesh see corruption (*διαφθορά*).

29. Men (and) brethren I may speak with freedom unto you of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his sepulchre is amongst us unto this day.

32. This Jesus God raised up.

## PAUL IN ACTS XIII.

35. Wherefore he (David) saith also in another (Psalm): Thou wilt not give thine holy one to see corruption.

22. ....he raised up unto them David for king.....

23. Of this man's seed God, according to promise, brought unto Israel a Saviour Jesus.

34. But that he raised him up from the dead no more to return to corruption (*διαφθορά*) he has said on this wise.....

36. For David, after he served in his own generation the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was added to his fathers and saw corruption (*διαφθορά*);

37. But he whom God raised saw not corruption (*διαφθοράν*).

Not only is this argument the same in both discourses, but the whole of Paul's speech, xiii. 16 f., is a mere reproduction of the two speeches of Peter, ii. 14 f. and iii. 12 f., with such alterations as the writer could introduce to vary the fundamental sameness of ideas and expressions. It is worth while to show this in a similar way.

<sup>1</sup> The authorised version, with *God. D*, and some other MSS., inserts here "according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit," etc.



## PAUL IN ACTS XIII.

16. And Paul having risen ..... (*ἀναστὰς δὲ Π.*).....said.....Men (and) Israelites (*ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλεῖται*) and ye that fear God.....

22 and 23. See above.

24. When John first preached<sup>1</sup> before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

26. Men (and) Brethren (*ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί*), sons (*υἱοί*) of the race of Abraham and those amongst you who fear God, to you was the word of this salvation sent (*ἀπεστάλη*).<sup>2</sup>

27. For they that dwell in Jerusalem and their rulers (*οἱ ἄρχοντες αὐτῶν*), not knowing (*ἀγνοήσαντες*) this (man) nor yet the voices of the prophets (*τὰς φωνὰς τῶν προφητῶν*), which are read every (*πᾶν*) sabbath day, fulfilled (*ἐπλήρωσαν*) them by their judgment of him ;

28. And though having found no cause of death, they desired (*ᾔτησαντο*) Pilate that he should be slain (*ἀναιρεθῆναι*) ;<sup>6</sup>

## PETER IN ACTS II. AND III.

14. And Peter stood up (*σταθεὶς δὲ Π.*)..... and spoke plainly to them ..... Men (and) Jews (*ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι*) and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem ..... (verse 22 and iii. 12) Men (and) Israelites (*ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλεῖται*).

30. See above.

iii. 19. Repent, therefore, and turn ..... 20.....that he may send Christ Jesus who before was appointed<sup>1</sup> for you.

ii. 29. Men (and) Brethren (*ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί*).

iii. 25.<sup>3</sup> Ye are the sons (*υἱοί*) of the prophets and of the covenant which God made unto your fathers, saying unto Abraham..... 26..... unto you first God, having raised up his servant (*τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ*),<sup>4</sup> sent (*ἀπέστειλεν*) him to bless you.

iii. 17.<sup>5</sup> And now brethren (*ἀδελφοί*) I know that ye did (it) in ignorance (*ἄγνοιαν*), as did also your rulers (*οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν*) ; 18. but the things which God before announced by the mouth of all the prophets (*διὰ στόματος πάντων τῶν προφητῶν*) he thus fulfilled (*ἐπλήρωσεν*) ;

iii. 13. .... whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate when he decided to release him ;

(ii. 23. This (man) delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, by the hand of lawless (men) crucifying (him) ye slew (*ἀνείλατε*),<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The authorised version of iii. 20 reads "preached," adopting the same verb *προκηρύττειν* as in xiii. 24, which is nowhere else used in the N. T. It is fair to say, however, that the evidence is greatly in favour of the reading "*προκεχειρισμένον*" in iii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *ἐξαπεστάλη* is the reading of A, B, C, D, **N**, etc. ; the reading given is that of E, G, H, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ii. 39 : For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, whomsoever the Lord God shall have called unto him.

<sup>4</sup> Rendered "son" in the authorised version.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Acts xvii. 30.

<sup>6</sup> This verb *ἀναιρεῖν* is used twice in Luke, only thrice in the rest of the N. T., but nineteen times in Acts, and it is freely put into the mouths of Peter, Paul, Stephen, and Gamaliel, as well as used in the narrative portions.



## PAUL IN ACTS XIII.

29. But when they finished all the things written regarding him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulchre.

30. But God raised him from the dead; (ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν).

31. ....who are now his witnesses (μάρτυρες).

32. And we declare unto you the promise made unto the fathers (πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας),

33. That God has perfectly fulfilled the same unto our children, having raised up (ἀναστήσας) Jesus, as it is written.....

34, 35, 36, 37. See above.

38. Be it known unto you, therefore, men (and) brethren (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί), that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν).

39. And from all things from which ye could not be justified in the law of Moses, every one who believes in this man is justified;

40. Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets;

41. Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish.

## PETER IN ACTS II. AND III.

iii. 14. But ye denied the holy and just one, and desired (ῥτήσασθε) a murderer to be granted to you,

15. And killed the Prince of life whom God raised from the dead (ὃν ὁ θεὸς ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν), whose witnesses (μάρτυρες) we are.

iii. 25. Ye are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant made unto your fathers (πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ὑμῶν) saying.....

26. Unto you first God, having raised up (ἀναστήσας) his servant (παῖδα) Jesus, sent him to bless you, etc.

ii. 31, 27, 29, 32. See above.

ii. 37. Men (and) Brethren (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί).

38. ....Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for remission of your sins (ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν), etc.

iii. 22. Moses indeed said<sup>1</sup>: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23. And it shall be that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.

24. And all the prophets also from Samuel and from those that follow after, as many as spake, also foretold these days.

Paul's address likewise bears close analogy with the speech of Stephen, vii. 2 f., commencing with a historical survey of the earlier traditions of the people of Israel, and leading up to the same accusation that, as their fathers disregarded the prophets, so they had persecuted and slain the Christ. The whole treatment of the subject betrays the work of the same mind in both discourses. Bleek, who admits the similarity between these and other speeches in Acts, argues that "it does not absolutely follow from this that these speeches are composed by one and the same

<sup>1</sup> This reference is also put into the mouth of Stephen, Acts vii. 37.



person, and are altogether unhistorical"; for it is natural, he thinks, that in the Apostolical circle, and in the first Christian Church, there should have existed a certain uniform type in the application of messianic passages of the Old Testament, and in quotations generally, to which different teachers might conform without being dependent on each other.<sup>1</sup> He thinks that, along with the close analogy, there is also much which is characteristic in the different speeches. Not only is this typical system of quotation, however, a mere conjecture to explain an actual difficulty, but it is totally inadequate to account for the phenomena. If we suppose, for instance, that Paul had adopted the unhistorical application of the sixteenth Psalm to the Messiah, is it not a very extraordinary thing that in all the arguments in his Epistles he does not once refer to it? Even if this be waived, and it be assumed that he had adopted this interpretation of the Psalm, it will scarcely be asserted that Paul, whose independence and originality of mind are so undeniable, and whose intercourse with the Apostolical circle at any time, and most certainly up to the period when this speech was delivered, was very limited,<sup>2</sup> could so completely have caught the style and copied the manner of Peter that, on an important occasion like this, his address should be a mere reproduction of Peter's two speeches delivered so long before, and when Paul certainly was not present. The similarity of these discourses does not consist in the mere application of the same Psalm, but the whole argument, on each occasion, is repeated with merely sufficient transposition of its various parts to give a superficial appearance of variety. Words and expressions, rare or unknown elsewhere, are found in both, and the characteristic differences which Bleek finds exist only in his own apologetic imagination. Let it be remembered that the form of the speeches and the language are generally ascribed to the author of the Acts. Can any unprejudiced critic deny that the ideas in the speeches we are considering are also substantially the same? Is there any appreciable trace of the originality of Paul in his discourses? There is no ground whatever, apart from the antecedent belief that the various speeches were actually delivered by the men to whom they are ascribed, for asserting that we have here the independent utterances of Peter and Paul. It is internal evidence alone, and no avowal on the part of the author, which leads to the conclusion that the form of the speeches is the author's; and there is no internal evidence which requires us to stop at the mere form, and not equally ascribe the substance to the same source. The speeches in the Acts, generally, have altogether the character of being the composition of one mind

<sup>1</sup> Bleek, *Eintl. N. T.*, p. 346; Trip, *Paulus*, p. 195. <sup>2</sup> Cf. Gal. i. 11 f., ii. 6.



endeavouring to impart variety of thought and expression to various speakers, but failing signally either from poverty of invention or from the purpose of instituting a close parallel in views, as well as actions, between the two representative Apostles.

Further to illustrate this, let us take another speech of Peter which he delivers on the occasion of the conversion of Cornelius, and it will be apparent that it also contains all the elements, so far as it goes, of Paul's discourse :—

PETER IN ACTS X.

35. But in every nation he that fears him (ὁ φοβούμενος).....is acceptable to him—

36. The word (τὸν λόγον) which he (God) sent (ἀπέστειλεν) unto the sons (υἱοῖς) of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ ;<sup>1</sup> he is Lord of all.

37. Ye know the word spoken throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism (βάπτισμα) which John preached,

38. Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and power ; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

39. And we are witnesses (μάρτυρες) of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem ; whom also they slew (ἀνέκλιναν), hanging him upon a tree (ξύλου).

40. Him God raised (ὁ θεὸς ἤγειρεν) the third day, and gave him to become manifest ;

41. Not to all the people, but to witnesses (μάρτυσιν) chosen before by God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν).

42. And he commanded (παρήγγειλεν) us to preach unto the people and to testify that it is he who has been appointed (ὁ ὠρισμένος)<sup>3</sup> by God judge (κριτὴς) of quick and dead.

PAUL IN ACTS XIII.

26. Sons (υἱοὶ) of the race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God (οἱ φοβούμενοι), to you was the word (ὁ λόγος) of this salvation sent (ἀπεστάλη).<sup>2</sup>

24. When John first proclaimed before his coming the baptism (βάπτισμα) of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25. And as John was fulfilling his course, he said : Whom think ye that I am ? I am not he ; but behold there comes one after me the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.

27. For they that dwell in Jerusalem and their rulers..... 28. Though having found no cause of death, desired Pilate that he should be slain (ἀναιρεθῆναι) ; 29. But when they had finished all the things written regarding him they took him down from the tree (ξύλου).

30. But God raised (ὁ θεὸς ἤγειρεν) him from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν) ;

31. And he appeared for many days to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses (μάρτυρες) unto the people.

xvii. 30.....but now commands (παραγγέλλει) all men everywhere to repent ; 31. Because he fixed a day in the which he is about to judge (κρίνειν) the world in righteousness by the man whom he appointed (ὥρισεν),<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. xiii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Except by the author of Luke (xxii. 22) and Acts, the verb ὀρίζειν is only twice used in the O. T. In Acts it is twice put into the mouth of Peter (ii. 23, x. 42) and twice into that of Paul (xvii. 26, 31), as well as used in narrative (xi. 29).

<sup>2</sup> P. 624, note 2.



## PETER IN ACTS X.

43. To him bear all the prophets witness that through his name all who believe in him shall receive remission of sins (*ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*).

## PAUL IN ACTS XIII.

having given assurance to all by having raised him up from the dead.

xiii. 27.....not knowing the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day.....38. Be it known to you, therefore,.....that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins (*ἀφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν*).

Again, to take an example from another speaker, we find James represented as using an expression which had just before been put into the mouth of Paul, and it is not one in the least degree likely to occur independently to each. The two passages are as follows :—

## JAMES IN ACTS XV. 21.

Moses.....being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

(*κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος.*)

## PAUL IN ACTS XIII. 27.

.....the prophets being read every Sabbath day.

(*κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος.*)

The fundamental similarity between these different speeches cannot possibly be denied ; and it cannot be reasonably explained in any other way than by the fact that they were composed by the author himself, who had the earlier speeches ascribed to Peter still in his memory when he wrote those of Paul, and who, in short, had not sufficient dramatic power to create altogether distinct characters, but simply made his different personages use his own vocabulary to express his own somewhat limited range of ideas. Setting his special design aside, his inventive faculty only permitted him to represent Peter speaking like Paul, and Paul like Peter.

It is argued by some, however, that in the speeches of Peter, for instance, there are peculiarities of language and expression which show analogy with the first Epistle bearing his name in the New Testament Canon, and, on the other hand, traces of translation in some of them which indicate that these speeches were delivered originally in Aramaic, and that we have only a version of them by the author of the Acts, or by some one from whom he derived them. As regards the first of these suppositions, a few phrases only have been pointed out, but they are of no force under any circumstances, and the whole theory is quite groundless. We do not consider it worth while to enter upon the discussion.<sup>1</sup> There are two potent reasons which render such an argument of no force, even if the supposed analogies were in themselves both numerous and

<sup>1</sup> Those who desire to do so may refer to the complete edition, 1879, vol. iii., p. 22, notes 2, 3, and 4.



striking, which actually they are not. The authenticity of the Epistles bearing the name of Peter is not only not established, but is by very many eminent critics absolutely denied; and there is no certainty that any of the speeches of Peter were delivered in Greek, while the probability is that most, if not all, of that Apostle's genuine discourses must have been spoken in Aramaic. It is, in fact, asserted by apologists that part or all of the speeches ascribed to him in the Acts must have been originally Aramaic, although opinion may differ as to the language in which some of them were spoken. Whether they were delivered in Aramaic, or whether there be uncertainty on the point, any conclusion from linguistic analogies with the Epistles is obviously excluded. One thing is quite undeniable: the supposed analogies are few, and the peculiarities distinguishing the author of Acts in these speeches are extremely numerous and general. Even so thorough an apologist as Tholuck candidly acknowledges that the attempt to prove the authenticity of the speeches from linguistic analogies is hopeless. He says: "Nevertheless, a comparison of the language of the Apostles in their Epistles and in these speeches must in many respects be less admissible than that of the *character* and *historical circumstances*, for indeed, if the language and their peculiarities be compared, it must first be established that all the reported speeches were delivered in the Greek language, which is improbable, and of one of which (xxii. 1, 2) the contrary is expressly stated. Willingly admitting that upon this point difference of opinion is allowable, we express as the view which we have hitherto held that, from ch. xx. onwards, the speeches delivered by Paul are reported more in the language of Luke than in that of Paul."<sup>1</sup> This applies with double force to Peter, whose speeches, there is still greater reason to believe, were delivered in Aramaic, and there is difference of opinion amongst the critics we have referred to even as to whether these speeches were translated by the author of the Acts, or were already before him in a translated form, and were subsequently re-edited by him. We have already shown cause for believing that the whole discussion is groundless, from the fact that the speeches in Acts were simply composed by the author himself, and are not in any sense historical; and this we shall hereafter further illustrate.

It may be worth while to consider briefly the arguments advanced for the theory that some of the speeches show marks of translation. It is asserted that the speech of Peter at Pentecost, ii. 14 f., was delivered in Aramaic. Of course it will be understood that we might be quite prepared to agree to this statement as applied to a speech actually delivered by Peter; but the asser-

<sup>1</sup> *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1839, p. 306.



tion, so far as the speeches in Acts are concerned, is based upon what we believe to be the erroneous supposition that they are genuine reports of discourses. On the contrary, we maintain that these speeches are mere compositions by the author of the work. The contention is, however, that the speech attributed to Peter is the translation of a speech originally delivered in Aramaic. In ii. 24 Peter is represented as saying: "Whom God raised up having loosed the pains of death (λύσας τὰς ὠδίνας τοῦ θανάτου), because it is not possible that he should be held (κρατεῖσθαι) by it." It is argued by Bleek and others<sup>1</sup> that, as the context proves, the image intended here was evidently the "snares" or "cords" of death, a meaning which is not rendered by the Greek word ὠδίνες. The confusion is explained, they contend, when it is supposed that, in his Aramaic speech, Peter made use of a Hebrew expression, equally found in Aramaic, which means as well "snares" or "cords" as "pains" of death. The Greek translator, probably misled by the Septuagint,<sup>2</sup> adopted the latter signification of the Hebrew word in question, and rendered it ὠδίνες, "pains," which is absolutely inappropriate, for, they argue, it is very unnatural to say of one who had already suffered death, like Christ, that he had been held prisoner by the "*pains*" of death, and loosed from them by the resurrection. There is, however, very little unanimity amongst Apologists about this passage. Ebrard<sup>3</sup> asserts that ὠδίνες, "pains," is the correct translation of the Hebrew expression, as in Psalm xviii. 5, and that the Hebrew word used always expresses pains of birth, the plural of the similar word for "cord" or "snare" being different. Ebrard, therefore, contends that the Psalm (xviii. 5) does not mean bonds or snares of death, but literally "birth-pains of death," by which the soul is freed from the natural earthly existence as by a second birth to a glorified spiritual life. We need not enter further into the discussion of the passage, but it is obvious that it is mere assumption to assert, on the one hand, that Peter made use of any specific expression, and, on the other, that there was any error of translation on the part of the author of Acts. But agreeing that the Hebrew is erroneously rendered, the only pertinent question is: By whom was the error in question committed? and the reply beyond any doubt is: By the LXX. who translate the Hebrew expression in this very way. It is therefore inadmissible to assert from this phrase the existence of an Aramaic original of the speech, for the phrase itself is nothing but a quotation from the Septuagint.

<sup>1</sup> Bleek, *Einl.*, p. 348; *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1836, p. 1038 f. Cf. Meyer, *Apog.*, p. 72 f.; Neander, *Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 22, anm. 1; Humphrey, *Acts*, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xvii. 5 (A. V., xviii. 5).

<sup>3</sup> Ebrard, *zu Olshausen, Apog.*, p. 63.



The expression ὡδίνες θανάτου occurs no less than three times in that version: Ps. xvii. 5 (A. V., xviii.), cxiv. 3 (A. V., cxvi.), and 2 Sam. xxii. 6; and in Job xxxii. 2 we have λύειν used with ὡδίνες: ὡδίνας δὲ αὐτῶν ἔλυσας. When it is remembered that the author of Acts always quotes the Septuagint version, even when it departs from the sense of the Hebrew original, and in all probability was only acquainted with the Old Testament through it, nothing is more natural than the use of this expression taken from that version; but, with the error already existing there, to ascribe it afresh and independently to the author of Acts, upon no other grounds than the assumption that Peter may have spoken in Aramaic and used an expression which the author misunderstood or wrongly rendered, is not permissible. Indeed, we have already pointed out that, in this very speech, there are quotations of the Old Testament according to the LXX. put into the mouth of Peter, in which that version does not accurately render the original.<sup>1</sup>

The next trace of translation advanced by Bleek<sup>2</sup> is found in ii. 33,<sup>3</sup> where Peter speaks of Christ as exalted: “τῇ δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ.” There can be no doubt, Bleek argues, that there is here a reference to Psalm cx. 1, and that the apostle intends to speak of Christ’s elevation “to the right (hand) of God”; whereas the Greek expression rather conveys the interpretation, “by the right (hand) of God.” This expression certainly comes, he asserts, from a not altogether suitable translation of the Hebrew. To this, on the other hand, much may be objected. Winer,<sup>4</sup> followed by others, defends the construction, and affirms that the passage may, without hesitation, be translated, “to the right (hand) of God.”<sup>5</sup> In which case there is no error at all, and the argument falls to the ground. If it be taken, however, either that the rendering should be, or was intended to be, “by the right (hand) of God”<sup>6</sup>—i.e., by the power of God—that would not involve the necessity of admitting an Aramaic original,<sup>7</sup> because there is no error at all,

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 16 f., 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Einl. N. T.*, p. 348; *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1836, p. 1038; De Wette, *Apg.*, p. 42; Weiss, *Petr. Lehrb.*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Acts v. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Grammat. N. T. Sprachid.*, 1867, § 31, 5, p. 201.

<sup>5</sup> Winer, *l. c.*; Fritzsche, *Conject.*, i., p. 42; Hackett, *Acts*, p. 51; Kähler, *Stud. u. Kr.*, 1873, p. 511 f.; Lekebusch, *Apostelgesch.*, p. 405; Olshausen, *Apg.*, p. 66; Wordsworth, *Greek Test.*, *Acts*, p. 49.

<sup>6</sup> Alford, *Greek Test.*, ii., p. 26; Bengel, *Gnom. N. T.*, p. 511; Lechler, *Das ap. u. nachap. Zeit.*, p. 21, anm. 1; Zeller, *Apg.*, p. 502, anm. 2; Meyer, *Apg.*, p. 77 f.; Overbeck, *zu de W. Apg.*, p. 42. “By” is adopted by the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and English (authorised) versions.

<sup>7</sup> Alford, *Greek Test.*, ii., p. 26; Lekebusch, *Apg.*, p. 405; Meyer, *Apg.*, p. 77 f.; Overbeck, *zu de W. Apg.*, p. 42; Zeller, *Apg.*, p. 502 f., anm. 2; cf. Kähler, *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1873, p. 511 f.



and the argument simply is that, being exalted by the right hand of God, Jesus had poured forth the Holy Spirit; and in the next verse the passage in Psalm cx. 1 (Sept. cix.) is accurately quoted from the Septuagint version: "Sit thou on my right (hand)" (ἐκ δεξιῶν μου). In fact, after giving an account of the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the speaker ascribes his subsequent exaltation to the power of God.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that at least the form of the speeches in Acts is undoubtedly due to the author of the book, and that he has not been able to make the speeches of the different personages in his drama differ materially from each other. We shall hereafter have occasion to examine further the contents of some of these speeches, and the circumstances under which it is alleged that they were spoken, and to inquire whether these do not confirm the conclusion hitherto arrived at, that they are not historical, but merely the free composition of the author of Acts, and never delivered at all. Before passing on, however, it may be well to glance for a moment at one of these speeches, to which we may not have another opportunity of referring, in order that we may see whether it presents any traces of inauthenticity and of merely ideal composition.

In the first chapter an account is given of a meeting of the brethren in order to elect a successor to the traitor Judas. Peter addresses the assembly, i. 16 f., and it may be well to quote the opening portion of his speech: 16. "Men (and) brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, who became guide to them that took Jesus, 17. because he was numbered with us and obtained the lot of this ministry. 18. Now (μὲν οὖν) this man purchased a field with the wages of the iniquity (ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας), and falling headlong he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out; 19. and (καὶ) it became known<sup>2</sup> unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem, so that that field was called in their own tongue (τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ) Acheldamach, that is: field of blood. 20. For (γὰρ) it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein,' and 'his office let another take,' etc. Now, let it be remembered that Peter is supposed to be addressing an audience of Jews in Jerusalem, in the Hebrew or

<sup>1</sup> The expression τῇ δεξιᾷ is used in this sense in the Septuagint version of Isaiah lxiii. 12; cf. Acts v. 31. The "right hand of God," as symbolising his power, is constantly employed in the Old Testament.

<sup>2</sup> The peculiar and favourite expression, γνωστὸν ἐγένετο (or ἔστω) ὑμῖν, which only occurs in Acts, is placed in the mouth of Peter, Paul, and others, and itself betrays the hand of the author. Cf. ii. 14, iv. 10, ix. 42, xiii. 38, xix. 17, xxviii. 22, 28.