

have just mentioned, it is combined with *σημεῖον*.¹ On the other hand, Paul uses *δύναμις* no less than 34 times,² and, leaving for the present out of the question the passages cited, upon every occasion, except one, perhaps, the word has the simple signification of "power." The one exception is Rom. viii. 38, where it occurs in the plural: *δυνάμεις*, "powers," the Apostle expressing his persuasion that nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God, "nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers (*δυνάμεις*), nor height, nor depth," etc. In 1 Cor. xiv. 11, where the authorised version renders the original, "Therefore, if I know not the meaning (*δύναμιν*) of the voice," it has still the same sense.

Before discussing the passages before us we must point out that there is so much doubt, at least, regarding the authenticity of the last two chapters of the Epistle to the Romans that the passage (Rom. xv. 18, 19) can scarcely be presented as evidence on such a point as the reality of miracles. We do not intend to debate the matter closely, but shall merely state a few of the facts of the case and pass on, for it would not materially affect our argument if the passage were altogether beyond suspicion. The Epistle, in our authorised text, ends with a long and somewhat involved doxology (xvi. 25-27); and we may point out here that it had already seemed to be brought to a close not only at the end of chap. xv. (33), but also at xvi. 20. The doxology (xvi. 25-27), which more particularly demands our attention, is stated by Origen³ to be placed in some MSS. at the end of chapter xiv.; and a similar statement is made by Cyril, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, and others. We find these verses actually so placed in L, and in upwards of 220 out of 250 cursive MSS. of Byzantine origin, in an account of ancient MSS. in Cod. 66, in most of the Greek Lectionaries, in the Slavonic and later Syriac versions as also in the Gothic, Arabic (in the polyglot and triglot text), and some MSS. of the Armenian. They are inserted both at the end of xiv. and at the end of the Epistle by the Alexandrian Codex,⁴ one of the most

¹ *τέρας* is only met with elsewhere in the New Testament five times: Matt. xxiv. 24, Mark xiii. 22, John iv. 48, 2 Thess. ii. 9, Heb. ii. 4.

² Rom. i. 4, 16, 20, viii. 38, ix. 17, xv. 13, xv. 19 (twice), 1 Cor. i. 18, 24, ii. 4, 5, iv. 19, 20, v. 4, vi. 14, xii. 10, 28, 29, xiv. 11, xv. 24, 43, 56, 2 Cor. i. 8, iv. 7, vi. 7, viii. 3 (twice), xii. 9 (twice), 12, xiii. 4 (twice), and Gal. iii. 5.

³ ".....*In aliis vero exemplaribus, id est, in his quæ non sunt a Marcione temerata, hoc ipsum caput (xvi. 25-27) diverse positum invenimus. In nonnullis etenim codicibus post eum locum, quem supra diximus, hoc est 'omne quod non est ex fide peccatum est' (xiv. 23) statim cohærens habetur: 'ei autem, qui potens est vos confirmare' (xvi. 25-27). Alii vero codices in fine id, ut nunc est positum continent*" (*Comment. ad Rom.*, xvi. 25). This passage is only extant in the Latin version of Rufinus.

⁴ xvi. 24 is wholly omitted by the Alexandrian, Vatican, and Sinaitic codices, and also by C and some other MSS.

ancient manuscripts extant, and by some other MSS.¹ Now, how came this doxology to be placed at all at the end of chapter xiv.? The natural inference is that it was so placed because that was the end of the Epistle. Subsequently, chapters xv. and xvi. being added, it is supposed that the closing doxology was removed from the former position and placed at the end of the appended matter. This inference is supported by the important fact that, as we learn from Origen,² the last two chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, including the doxology (xvi. 25-27), did not exist in Marcion's text, the most ancient form of it of which we have any knowledge. Tertullian, who makes no reference to these two chapters, speaks of the passage (Rom. xiv. 10) as at the close (in clausula) of the Epistle,³ and he does not call any attention to their absence from Marcion's Epistle. Is it not reasonable to suppose that they did not form part of his copy? In like manner Irenæus, who very frequently quotes from the rest of the Epistle, nowhere shows acquaintance with these chapters. The first writer who distinctly makes use of any part of them is Clement of Alexandria. It has been argued that Marcion omitted the two chapters because they contain what was opposed to his views, and because they had no dogmatic matter to induce him to retain them; but, whilst the two explanations destroy each other, neither of them is more than a supposition to account for the absence of what, it may with equal propriety be conjectured, never formed part of his text.

The external testimony does not stand alone, but is supported by very strong internal evidence. We shall only indicate one or two points, leaving those who desire to go more deeply into the discussion to refer to works more particularly concerned with it, which we shall sufficiently indicate. It is a very singular thing that Paul, who, when he wrote this Epistle, had never been in Rome, should be intimately acquainted with so many persons

¹ It is unnecessary for us to state that other codices, as B, C, D, E, &, and some cursive MSS., have the verses only at the end of xvi.; nor that they are omitted altogether by F, G, D***, and by MSS. referred to by Jerome.

² "*Caput hoc (xvi. 25-27) Marcion, a quo Scripturæ evangelicæ atque apostolicæ interpolatæ sunt, de hac epistola penitus abstulit. Et non solum hoc, sed et ab eo loco, ubi scriptum est: Omne autem quod non ex fide, peccatum est (xiv. 23), usque ad finem cuncta dissecuit*" (*Comment. ad Rom.*, xvi. 25). We shall not discuss the difference between "*abstulit*" and "*dissecuit*," nor the interpretation given by Nitzsch (*Zeitschr. hist. Theol.*, 1860, p. 285 f.) to the latter word. Most critics agree that Marcion altogether omitted the chapters.

³ *Adv. Marc.*, v. 14; Rönsch, *Das N. T. Tertullian's*, 1871, p. 349. The passages from Tertullian's writings in which reference is supposed to be made to these chapters which are quoted by Rönsch (p. 350) do not show any acquaintance with them.

there. The fact that there was much intercourse between Rome and other countries by no means accounts for the simultaneous presence there of so many of the Apostle's personal friends. Aquila and Priscilla, who are saluted (xvi. 3), were a short time before (1 Cor. xvi. 19) in Ephesus.¹ It may, moreover, be remarked as a suggestive fact that when, according to the Acts (xxviii. 14 f.), Paul very soon afterwards arrived in Rome, most of these friends seem to have disappeared, and the chief men of the Jews called together by Paul do not seem to be aware of the existence of a Christian body at Rome.² Another point is connected with the very passage which has led to this discussion. In Rom. xv. 18, 19, we read: 18. "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, in order to (εἰς) the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19. in the power of signs and wonders (ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων) in the power of the Spirit (ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος); so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ," etc. The statement that "from Jerusalem" he had "fully preached" the Gospel is scarcely in agreement with the statement in the Epistle to the Galatians, i. 17-23, ii. 1 f. Moreover, there is no confirmation anywhere that the Apostle preached as far as Illyricum, which was then almost beyond the limits of civilisation. Baur suggests that in making his ministry commence at Jerusalem there is too evident a concession made to the Jewish Christians, according to whom every preacher of the Gospel must naturally commence his career at the holy city. It would detain us much too long to enter upon an analysis of these two chapters, and to show the repetition in them of what has already been said in the earlier part of the Epistle; the singular analogies with the Epistles to the Corinthians, not of the nature of uniformity of style, but of imitation; the peculiarity of the mention of a journey to Spain as the justification of a passing visit to Rome, and perhaps a further apology for even writing a letter to the Church there which another had founded; the suspicious character of the names which are mentioned in the various clauses of salutation; and to state many other still more important objections which various critics have advanced, but which would require more elaborate explanation than can possibly be given here. It will suffice for us to mention that the phenomena presented by the two chapters are so marked and curious that, for a century, they have largely occupied the attention of writers of all shades of opinion, and called forth very elaborate theories to account for them; the apparent necessity for

¹ The writer of 2 Tim. iv. 19 represents them as in Ephesus.

² Acts xxviii. 21, 22.

which in itself shows the insecure position of the passage.¹ Semler, without denying the Pauline authorship of the two chapters, considered they did not properly belong to the Epistle to the Romans. He supposed xvi. 3-16 to have been intended merely for the messenger who carried the Epistle, as a list of the persons to whom salutations were to be given, and to these chapter xv. was to be specially delivered. Paulus² considered chapter xv. to be a separate letter, addressed specially to the leaders of the Roman Church, chapters i.-xiv. being the Epistle to the community in general. The Epistle then being sealed up and ready for any opportunity of transmission, but none presenting itself before his arrival in Corinth, the apostle there, upon an additional sheet, wrote xvi. and entrusted it with the letter to Phœbe. Eichhorn³ supposed that the parchment upon which the Epistle was written was finished at xiv. 23; and, as Paul and his scribe had only a small sheet at hand, the doxology only, xvi. 25-27, was written upon the one side of it, and on the other the greetings and the apostolic benediction, xvi. 21-24, and thus the letter was completed; but, as it could not immediately be forwarded, the apostle added a fly-leaf with chapter xv. Bertholdt,⁴ Guericke,⁵ and others, adopted similar views more or less modified, representing the close of the Epistle to have been formed by successive postscripts. Renan⁶ has affirmed the Epistle to be a circular letter addressed to churches in Rome, Ephesus, and other places, to each of which only certain portions were transmitted with appropriate salutations and endings, which have all been collected into the one Epistle in the form in which we have it. David Schulz conjectured that xvi. 1-20 was an Epistle written from Rome to the church at Ephesus; and this theory was substantially adopted by Ewald—who held that xvi. 3-20 was part of a lost Epistle to Ephesus—and by many other critics.⁷ Of course the virtual authenticity of the xv.-xvi. chapters, nearly or exactly as they are, is affirmed by many writers. Baur, however, after careful investigation, pronounced the two chapters inauthentic, and in this he is followed by able critics.⁸ Under all these circumstances it is obvious that we need not occupy

¹ *Diss. de duplici apend. ep. P. ad Rom.* 1767; *Paraphr. epist. ad Rom.*, 1769, p. 290 f. ² *Uebers. u. Erkl. des Römer. u. Galaterbr.*, 1831, *Einl.*

³ *Einl.*, iii. 232 f.

⁴ *Einl.*, viii., p. 3303 f.

⁵ *Gesamtgesch. N. T.*, p. 327 f.

⁶ *St. Paul*, 1869, p. lxiii f.

⁷ Schulz, *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1829, p. 609 f.; Ewald, *Sendschr. d. Paulus*, p. 345, *anm.*, p. 428 f.; Laurent, *N. T. Stud.*, 1866, p. 32 f.; Mangold, *Römerbr.*, 1866, p. 38, 62; Ritschl, *Jahrb. deutsche Th.*, 1866, p. 352; Reuss, *Gesch. N. T.*, p. 98; Schott, *Isagoge*, p. 249 f.; Weisse, *Philos. Dogmatik*, 1855, i., p. 146.

⁸ Baur, *Tüb. Zeitschr.*, 1836, iii., p. 97 f.; Paulus, i., p. 393 f.; Lucht, *Ueb. die beid. letzt. Cap. des Römerbr.*, 1871; Scholten, *Theol. Tijdschr.*, 1876, p. 3 f.; Schwegler, *Das nachap. Z.*, i., p. 296; ii. 123 f.; Volkmar, *Römerbr.*,

ourselves much with the passage in Rom. xv. 18, 19, but our argument will equally apply to it. In order to complete this view of the materials, we may simply mention, as we pass on, that the authenticity of 2 Cor. xii. 12 has likewise been impugned by a few critics, and the verse, or at least the words *σημείους καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν*, as well as Rom. xv. 19, declared an interpolation. This cannot, however, so far as existing evidence goes, be demonstrated; and, beyond the mere record of the fact, this conjecture does not here require further notice.

It may be well, before proceeding to the Epistles to the Corinthians, which furnish the real matter for discussion, first to deal with the passage cited from Gal. iii. 5, which is as follows: "He then that supplieth to you the Spirit and worketh powers (*δυνάμεις*) within you (*ἐν ὑμῖν*), (doeth he it) from works of law or from hearing of faith?"¹ The authorised version reads, "and worketh miracles among you"; but this cannot be maintained, and *ἐν ὑμῖν* must be rendered "within you," the *ἐν* certainly retaining its natural signification when used with *ἐνεργεῖν*, the primary meaning of which is itself to in-work. The vast majority of critics of all schools agree in this view.² There is an evident reference to iii. 2, and to the reception of the Spirit, here further characterised as producing such effects within the minds of those who receive it,³ the worker who gives the Spirit being God. The opinion most commonly held is that reference is here made to the "gifts" (*χαρίσματα*), regarding which the Apostle elsewhere speaks,⁴ and

1875, p. 15 f., 129 f.; cf. Holtzmann, *Zeitschr. wiss. Theol.*, 1874, p. 511 f.; Lipsius, *Protestanten-Bibel*, 1872, p. 488, 612, 629; Rovers, *Heeft Paulus zich op wond. beroep.*, 1870, p. 15 f.; Zeller, *Apog.*, p. 488. Some consider ch. xvi. alone inauthentic, as Davidson, *Int. N. T.*, ii., p. 137; Weiss, *Das Marcus-evang.*, 1872, p. 495, anm. 1.

¹ ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως: Gal. iii. 5.

² So Alford, Bisping, Ellicott, Ewald, Grotius, Hoffmann, Holtzmann, Lightfoot, Matthies, Meyer, Olshausen, Schott, Schrader, Usteri, De Wette, Wieseler, Wordsworth, etc., in 1.

³ Olshausen, for instance, says: "*Das ἐν ὑμῖν ist nicht zu fassen: unter euch, sondern = ἐν καρδίαις ὑμῶν, in dem die Geisteswirkung als eine innerliche gedacht ist*" (*Bibl. Comm.*, iv., p. 58).

⁴ Dr. Lightfoot says on the words "*ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν* (Comp. 1 Cor. xii. 10), *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων* (with vv. 28, 29), Matt. xiv. 2, *αἱ δυνάμεις ἐνεργοῦσιν ἐν αὐτῷ* (comp. Mark vi. 14). These passages favour the sense 'worketh miraculous powers *in* you,' rather than 'worketh miracles *among* you'; and this meaning also accords better with the context: (comp. 1 Cor. xii. 6), ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεὸς ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πάσιν. What was the exact nature of these 'powers,' whether they were exerted over the physical or the moral world, it is impossible to determine. The limitations implied in 1 Cor. xii. 10, and the general use of *δυνάμεις*, point rather to the former. It is important to notice how here, as in the Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul assumes the possession of these extraordinary powers by his converts

which we shall presently discuss ; but this is by no means certain, and cannot be determined. It is equally probable that he may refer to the spiritual effect produced upon the souls of the Galatians by the Gospel which he so frequently represents as a "power" of God. In any case, it is clear that there is no external miracle referred to, and even if allusion to Charismata be understood we have yet to ascertain precisely what these were. We shall endeavour to discover whether there was anything in the least degree miraculous in these "gifts," but there is no affirmation in this passage which demands special attention, and whatever general significance it may have will be met when considering the others which are indicated.

The first passage in the Epistles to the Corinthians, which is pointed out as containing the testimony of Paul both to the reality of miracles in general and to the fact that he himself performed them, is the following (2 Cor. xii. 12) : " Truly the signs (σημεῖα) of the Apostle were wrought in you (κατεργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν) in all patience, both in signs and wonders and powers (ἐν σημείοις τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν)."¹ We have to justify two departures in this rendering from that generally received. The first of these is the adoption of "wrought in you," instead of "wrought among you"; and the second, the simple use of "powers" for δυνάμεις, instead of "mighty works." We shall take the second first. We have referred to every passage except 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29, in which Paul makes use of the word δυνάμεις, and, fortunately, they are sufficiently numerous to afford us a good insight into his practice. It need not be said that the natural sense of δυνάμεις is in no case "mighty works" or miracles, and that such an application of the Greek word is peculiar to the New Testament and, subsequently, to Patristic literature. There is, however, no ground for attributing this use of the word to Paul. It is not so used in the *Septuagint*, and it is quite evident that the Apostle does not employ it to express external effects or works, but spiritual phenomena or potentiality. In the passage (Gal. iii. 5) which we have just discussed, where the word occurs in the plural, as here, it is understood to express "powers." We may quote the rendering of that passage by the Bishop of Gloucester : " He then, *I say*, that ministereth to you the Spirit and worketh *mighty* powers within you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law or by the report of faith?"² Why "mighty"

as an acknowledged fact" (*Ep. to the Gal.*, p. 135) ; cf. Wordsworth, *Gk. Test.*, *St. Paul's Epistles*, p. 57, and especially p. 128, where, on 1 Cor. xii. 11, Dr. Wordsworth notes : "ἐνεργεῖ] *in-worketh*," and quotes Cyril, ".....and the Holy Spirit *works in every member of Christ's body*," etc.

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 12.

² Ellicott, *St. Paul's Ep. to the Galatians*, 4th ed., 1867, p. 154 f.

should be inserted it is difficult to understand; but the word is rightly printed in italics to show that it is not actually expressed in the Greek. "What was the exact nature of these 'powers'..... it is impossible to determine," observes another scholar quoted above,¹ on the same passage.² In 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29, where the plural *δυνάμεις* again occurs, the intention to express "powers"³ and not external results—miracles—is perfectly clear, the word being in the last two verses used alone to represent the "gifts." In all of these passages the word is the representative of the "powers" and not of the "effects."⁴ This interpretation is rendered more clear by, and at the same time confirms, the preceding phrase, "were wrought in you" (*κατεργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν*). "Powers" (*δυνάμεις*), as in Gal. iii. 5, are worked "within you," and, the rendering of that passage being so settled, it becomes authoritative for this. If direct confirmation of Paul's meaning be required, we have it in Rom. vii. 8, where we find the same verb used with *ἐν* in this sense: "But sin.....wrought in me (*κατεργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ*) all manner of coveting," etc.; and with this may also be compared 2 Cor. vii. 11....."what earnestness it wrought in you" (*κατεργάσατο ἐν⁵ ὑμῖν*). It was thus Paul's habit to speak of spiritual effects wrought "within," and, as he referred to the "powers" (*δυνάμεις*) worked "within" the souls of the Galatians, so he speaks of them here as "wrought in" the Corinthians. It will become clear as we proceed that the addition to *δυνάμεις* of "signs and wonders" does not in the least affect this interpretation. In 1 Cor. xiv. 22 the Apostle speaks of the gift of "tongues" as "a sign" (*σημεῖον*).

Upon the supposition that Paul was affirming the actual performance of miracles by himself, how extraordinary becomes the statement that they "were wrought in all patience," for it is manifest that "in all patience" (*ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ*) does not form part of the signs, as some have argued, but must be joined to the verb (*κατεργάσθη*).⁶ It may be instructive to quote a few words of Olshausen upon the point: "The *ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ* is not altogether easy. It certainly cannot be doubtful that it is to be joined to *κατεργάσθη*, and not to what follows; but for what reason does Paul here make it directly

¹ Dr. Lightfoot, see note 2, p. 337.

² It is rendered "vertues" in Wyclif's version.

³ "*δυνάμεις*] powers. From *persons* he passes to *things*," etc. Wordsworth, on 1 Cor. xii. 28, *Gk. Test., St. Paul's Epistles*, p. 129.

⁴ Grotius renders *δυνάμεις* = *virtutibus* ad 2 Cor. xii. 12 (*Annot. in N. T.*, vi. 539).

⁵ *ἐν* is found in C, F, G, and other MSS., although it is omitted in the other great codices; this, however, does not affect the argument.

⁶ So Alford, Billroth, Ewald, Maier, Meyer, Neander, Olshausen, Osiander, de Wette, etc., l. c.

prominent that he wrought his signs in all patience? It seems to me probable that in this there may be a reproof to the Corinthians, who, in spite of such signs, still showed themselves wavering regarding the authority of the Apostle. In such a position, Paul would say, he had, patiently waiting, allowed his light to shine amongst them, certain of ultimate triumph."¹ This will hardly be accepted by anyone as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, which is a real one if it be assumed that Paul, claiming to have performed miracles, wrought them "in all patience." Besides, the matter is complicated, and the claim to have himself performed a miracle still more completely vanishes, when we consider the fact that the passive construction of the sentence does not actually represent Paul as the active agent by whom the signs were wrought. "Truly the signs of the apostle were wrought," but how wrought? Clearly he means by the Spirit, as he distinctly states to the Galatians. To them "Jesus Christ (the Messiah) was fully set forth crucified," and he asks them: Was it from works of the law, or from hearing in faith the Gospel thus preached to them, that they "received the Spirit"? and that he who supplies the Spirit "and worketh powers" in them does so? From faith, of course.² The meaning of Paul, therefore, was this: His Gospel was preached among them "in all patience," which being received by the hearing of faith, the Spirit was given to them, and the signs of the apostle were thus wrought among them. The representation is made throughout the Acts that the apostles lay their hands on those who believe, and they receive the Holy Spirit and speak with tongues. If any special "sign of the apostle" can be indicated at all, it is this; and in illustration we may point to one statement made in the Acts. Philip, the evangelist, who was not an apostle, is represented as going into Samaria and preaching the Messiah to the Samaritans, who give heed to the things spoken by him, and multitudes are baptised (viii. 5, 6, 12), but there was not the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which usually accompanied the apostolic baptism. "And the Apostles in Jerusalem, having heard that Samaria had received the word of God, sent unto them Peter and John; who when they came down prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit—for as yet he had fallen upon none of them, but they had only been baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they (the Apostles) their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."³ We may further refer to the episode at Ephesus (Acts xix. 1 f.) where Paul finds certain disciples who, having only been baptised into John's baptism, had not received the Holy Spirit,

¹ Olshausen, *Bibl. Com.*, iii., p. 879 f.

² Gal. iii. 1 f.

³ Acts viii. 14-17.

nor even heard whether there was a Holy Spirit. (xix. 6.) "And Paul having laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they were speaking with tongues and prophesying."

When we examine Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, we find ample assurance that the interpretation here given of this passage is correct, and that he does not refer, as Apologists have maintained, to miracles wrought by himself, but to the Charismata, which were supposed to have been bestowed upon the Corinthians who believed, and which thus were the signs of his apostleship. The very next verse to that which is before us shows this: "Truly the signs of the Apostle were wrought in you in all patience..... 13. For (γάρ) what is there wherein ye were inferior to the other Churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you?" The mere performance of signs and wonders did not constitute their equality; but in the possession of the Charismata—regarding which so much is said in the first epistle, and which were the result of his preaching—they were not inferior to the other Churches, and only inferior, Paul says with his fine irony, in not having, like the other Churches with their apostles, been called upon to acquire the merit of bearing his charges. What could be more distinct than the Apostle's opening address in the first Epistle: "I thank my God always, on your behalf, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus; that in everything ye were enriched by him (at the time of their conversion¹), in all utterance and in all knowledge—even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you—*so that ye come behind in no gift (χαρίσματος)*," etc.? For this reason they were not inferior to the other Churches, and those were the signs of the Apostle which were wrought in them. Paul very distinctly declares the nature of his ministry amongst the Corinthians and the absence of other "signs": 1 Cor. i. 22 f. "Since both Jews demand signs (σημεία) and Greeks seek after wisdom, but *we (ἡμεῖς δὲ)* preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto Gentiles foolishness, but unto those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power (δύναμιν) of God and the wisdom of God." The contrast is here clearly drawn between the requirement of Jews (signs) and of Greeks (wisdom) and Paul's actual ministry; no signs, but a scandal (σκάνδαλον) to the Jew, and no wisdom, but foolishness to the Greek, but this word of the cross (λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ) "to us who are being saved is the power (δύναμις) of God" (i. 18).² The Apostle tells us what he considers the "sign of the Apostle," when, more directly defending himself against the opponents who evidently denied his Apostolic claims, he says vehemently: 1 Cor. ix. 1 f. "Am I not free? Am

¹ Stanley, *Eps. to the Cor.*, p. 23.

² And again Rom. i. 16, etc.

I not an Apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord? *are not ye my work in the Lord?* If I be not an Apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: *for the seal* (σφραγίς) *of my Apostleship are ye in the Lord.*"¹ It cannot, we think, be doubted, when the passage (2 Cor. xii. 12) is attentively considered, that Paul does not refer to external miracles performed by him, but to the Charismata which he supposed to be conferred upon the Corinthian Christians on their acceptance of the Gospel which the Apostle preached. These Charismata, however, are advanced as miraculous, and the passages (1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29) are quoted in support of the statement we are discussing, and these now demand our attention.

It may be well at once to give the verses which are referred to, and in which it is said that Paul "goes somewhat elaborately into the exact place in the Christian economy that is to be assigned to the working of miracles and gifts of healing" (1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29). It is necessary for the full comprehension of the case that we should quote the context: xii. 4. "Now there are diversities of gifts (χαρισμάτων), but the same Spirit; 5. and there are diversities of ministries (διακονιών), and the same Lord; 6. and there are diversities of workings (ἐνεργημάτων), but it is the same God who worketh the all in all (ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν): 7. But to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit (φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος) for profit; 8. For to one is given by the Spirit a word of wisdom (λόγος σοφίας); to another a word of knowledge (λόγος γνώσεως) according to the same Spirit; 9. to another faith (πίστις) in the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων) in the one Spirit; 10. to another (inward) workings of powers (ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων); to another prophecy (προφητεία); to another discerning of spirits (διάκρισις πνευμάτων); to another kinds of tongues (γένη γλωσσῶν); to another interpretation of tongues (ἐρμηνεία γλωσσῶν); 11. but all these worketh (ἐνεργεῖ) the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each severally as he wills." After illustrating this by showing the mutual dependence of the different members and senses of the body, the Apostle proceeds: v. 28. "And God set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, after that powers (δυνάμεις), after that gifts of healings (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων), helpings (ἀντιλήψεις), governings (κυβερνήσεις), kinds of tongues (γένη γλωσσῶν). 29. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all powers (δυνάμεις)? 30. have all gifts of healings (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων)? do all speak with tongues (γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν)? do all interpret (διερμηνεύουσιν)?"

¹ Comp. Rom. iv. 11, "and he (Abraham) received a sign (σημεῖον) of circumcision, a seal (σφραγίδα) of the righteousness of the faith," etc.

Before we commence an examination of this interesting and important passage, it is essential that we should endeavour to disabuse our minds of preconceived ideas. Commentators are too prone to apply to the Apostle's remarks a system of interpretation based upon statements made by later and less-informed writers, and warped by belief in the reality of a miraculous element pervading all apostolic times, which have been derived mainly from post-apostolic narratives. What do we really know of the phenomena supposed to have characterised the Apostolic age, and which were later, and are now, described as miraculous? With the exception of what we glean from the writings of Paul, we know absolutely nothing from any contemporary writer and eye-witness. In the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles we have detailed accounts of many miracles said to have been performed by the Apostles and others; but these narratives were all written at a much later period, and by persons who are unknown, and most of whom are not even affirmed to have been eye-witnesses.¹ In the Acts of the Apostles we have an account of some of the very Charismata referred to by Paul in the passage above quoted, and we shall thus have the advantage of presently comparing the two accounts. We must, however, altogether resist any attempt to insert between the lines of the Apostle's writing ideas and explanations derived from the author of the Acts and from patristic literature, and endeavour to understand what it is he himself says and intends to say. It must not be supposed that we in the slightest degree question the fact that the Apostle Paul believed in the reality of supernatural intervention in mundane affairs, or that he asserted the actual occurrence of certain miracles. Our desire is as far as possible to ascertain what Paul himself has to say upon specific phenomena, now generally explained as miraculous, and thus, descending from vague generalities to more distinct statements, to ascertain the value of his opinion regarding the character of such phenomena. It cannot fail to be instructive to determine something of the nature of Charismata from an eye-witness who believed them to have been supernatural. His account, as we have seen, is the most precious evidence of the Church to the reality of the miraculous.

The first point which must be observed in connection with the Charismata referred to by Paul in the passage before us is that, whilst there are diversities amongst them, all the phenomena described are ascribed to "one and the same Spirit dividing to each severally as he wills"; and, consequently, that, although there may be differences in their form and value, a supernatural origin

¹ It is suggestive that the curious passage, Mark xvi. 17-18, is not even by the author of the second Gospel, but a later addition.

is equally assigned to all the "gifts" enumerated. What, then, are these Charismata? "A word of wisdom," "a word of knowledge," and "faith" are the first three mentioned. What the precise difference was, in Paul's meaning, between the utterance of wisdom (*σοφία*) and of knowledge (*γνώσις*) it is impossible now with certainty to say, nor is it very essential for us to inquire. The two words are combined in Rom. xi. 33: "O the depths of the riches and wisdom (*σοφίας*) and knowledge (*γνώσεως*) of God!" and in this very Epistle some varying use is made of both words. Paul tells the Corinthians (i. i. 17) that Christ did not send him "in wisdom of word" (*οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου*) or utterance: and (ii. 1) "not with excellency of word or wisdom" (*λόγου ἢ σοφίας*, cf. ii. 4); and further on he says (i. 30) that Christ Jesus "was made unto us wisdom (*σοφία*) from God." The most suggestive expressions¹ are the following, we think: i Cor. ii. 6. "But we speak wisdom (*σοφίαν*) among the perfect, yet not the wisdom (*σοφίαν*) of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, that come to nought, 7. but we speak God's wisdom (*θεοῦ σοφίαν*) in mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages unto our glory 8. which none of the rulers of this age has known, for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. 9. But as it is written, 'What eye saw not,' etc. 10. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit..... 11.even so also the things of God knoweth no one but the Spirit of God. 12. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that are freely given us by God; 13. which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to the spiritual"² (*πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες*).

It is quite clear from all the antecedent context that Paul's preaching was specially the Messiah crucified, "Christ the power of God and the wisdom (*σοφίαν*) of God," and we may conclude reasonably that the *λόγος σοφίας* of our passage was simply the eloquent utterance of this doctrine. In like manner, we may get some insight into the meaning which Paul attached to the word "knowledge" (*γνώσις*). It will be remembered that at the very opening of the first Epistle to the Corinthians Paul expresses his thankfulness that in everything they were enriched in Christ Jesus: i. 5. "in all utterance (*λόγῳ*) and in all knowledge (*γνώσει*), 6. even as the testimony of the Christ was confirmed in you"; that is to say, according to commentators, by these very Charismata. Later,

¹ The word is used in the following passages of Paul's four Epistles:—Rom. xi. 33; 1 Cor. i. 17, 19, 20, 21 (twice), 22, 24, 30, ii. 1, 4, 5, 6 (twice), 7, 13, iii. 19, xii. 8; 2 Cor. i. 12.

² There is considerable room for doubt as to the real sense of this last phrase.

speaking of "tongues," he says (1 Cor. xiv. 6): ".....What shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either in revelation or in knowledge (ἐν γνώσει), or in prophecy, or in teaching?" We obtain a clearer insight into his meaning in the second Epistle, in the passage 2 Cor. ii. 14-16, and still more in iv. 3-6 and x. 5, where he describes metaphorically his weapons as not carnal, but strong through God, "casting down reasonings and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of the Christ"; and if we ventured to offer an opinion, it would be that Paul means by λόγος γνώσεως simply Christian theology. We merely offer this as a passing suggestion. Little need be said with regard to the gift of "faith" (πίστις), which is perfectly intelligible.

Apologists argue that by these three "gifts" some supernatural form of wisdom, knowledge, and faith is expressed, and we shall have something more to say on the point presently; but here we only point out that there is no ground for such an assertion except the fact that the Apostle ascribes to them a supernatural origin, or, in fact, believes in the inspiration of such qualities. All that can be maintained is that Paul accounts for the possession of characteristics which we now know to be natural by asserting that they are the direct gift of the Holy Spirit. There is not the faintest evidence to show that these natural capabilities did not antecedently exist in the Corinthians, and were not merely stimulated into action in Christian channels by the religious enthusiasm and zeal accompanying their conversion; but, on the contrary, every reason to believe this to be the case, as we shall further see.¹ In fact, according to the Apostolic Church, every quality was a supernatural gift, and all ability or excellence in practical life directly emanated from the action of the Holy Spirit.

We may now proceed to "gifts of healings" (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων),² which it will be noted are doubly in the plural, indicating, as is supposed, a variety of special gifts, each having reference probably to special diseases. What is there to show that there was anything more miraculous in "gifts of healings" than in the possession of an utterance of wisdom, an utterance of knowledge, or faith? Nothing whatever. On the contrary, everything, from the unvarying experience of the world, to the inferences which we shall be able to draw from the whole of this information

¹ We may here say that attempts have been made to show that the Apostle classifies the Charismata in groups of threes, and even sets forth the three persons of the Trinity as the several donors. It would be useless for us to touch upon the point.

² The word ἱαμα only occurs in the N. T. in 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29. It might better be rendered "means of healing," or "remedies."

regarding the Charismata, shows that there was no miraculous power of healing either possessed or exercised. Reference is frequently made to the passage in the so-called Epistle of James as an illustration of this, v. 14: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, having anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15. And the prayer of faith shall save the afflicted, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him." The context, however, not only shows that in this there is no allusion to any gift of healing or miraculous power, but seems to ignore the existence of any such gift. The Epistle continues: v. 16. "Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray for one another that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much when it is working." And then the successful instance of the prayer of Elijah, that it might not rain, and again that it might rain, is given. The passage is merely an assertion of the efficacy of prayer, and if, as is not unfrequently done, it be argued that the gifts of healing were probably applied by means of earnest prayer for the sick, it may be said that this is the only "gift" which is supposed to have descended to our times. It does not require much argument to show that the reality of a miraculous gift cannot be demonstrated by appealing to the objective efficacy of prayer. We may, in passing, refer Apologists who hold the authenticity of the Epistles to the Philippians and to Timothy to indications which do not quite confirm the supposition that a power of miraculous healing actually existed in the Apostolic Church. In the Epistle to the Philippians, ii. 25 f., Paul is represented as sending Epaphroditus to them (v. 26), "Since he was longing after you all and was distressed because ye heard that he was sick. (27) For, indeed, he was sick nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him, therefore, the more anxiously, that, when ye see him, ye may rejoice again, and that I may be the less sorrowful." The anxiety felt by the Philippians, and the whole language of the writer, in this passage, are rather inconsistent with the knowledge that miraculous power of healing was possessed by the Church, and of course by Paul, which would naturally have been exerted for one in whom so many were keenly interested. Then, in 2 Tim. iv. 20, the writer says, "Trophimus I left at Miletus sick." If miraculous powers of healing existed, why were they not exerted in this case? If they were exerted and failed for special reasons, why are these not mentioned? It is unfortunate that there is so little evidence of the application of these gifts. On the other hand, we may suggest that medical art scarcely existed at that period in such communities, and that the remedies practised

admirably lent themselves to the theory of "gifts" of healings, rather than to any recognition of the fact that the accurate diagnosis of disease and successful treatment of it can only be the result of special study and experience.

The next gift mentioned is (v. 10) "workings of powers" (*ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*), very unwarrantably rendered in our "authorised" version "the working of miracles." We have already said enough regarding Paul's use of *δύναμις*. The phrase before us would be even better rendered in- or inward-workings of powers,¹ and the use made of *ἐνεργεῖν* by Paul throughout his Epistles would confirm this. It may be pointed out that, as the gifts just referred to are for "healings," it is difficult to imagine any class of "miracles" which could well be classed under a separate head as the special "working of miracles" contemplated by Apologists. Infinitely the greater number of miracles related in the Gospels and Acts are "healings" of disease. Is it possible to suppose that Paul really indicated by this expression a distinct order of "miracles" properly so-called? Certainly not. Neither the words themselves used by Paul, properly understood, nor the context, permit us to suppose that he referred to the working of miracles at all. We have no intention of conjecturing what these "powers" were supposed to be; it is sufficient that we show they cannot rightly be exaggerated into an assertion of the power of working miracles. It is much more probable that, in the expression, no external working by the gifted person is implied at all, and that the gift referred to "in-workings of powers" within his own mind, producing the ecstatic state, with its usual manifestations, or those visions and supposed revelations to which Paul himself was subject. Demoniacs, or persons supposed to be possessed of evil spirits, were called *ἐνεργούμενοι*, and it is easy to conceive how anyone under strong religious impressions, at that epoch of most intense religious emotion, might, when convulsed by nervous or mental excitement, be supposed the subject of inward workings of powers supernaturally imparted. Every period of religious zeal has been marked by such phenomena.² These conclusions are further corroborated by the next gifts enumerated. The first of these is "prophecy" (*προφητεία*), by which is not intended the mere foretelling of events, but speaking "unto men

¹ Dr. Wordsworth has on 1 Cor. xii. 6, "*ἐνεργημάτων* in-wrought works. *Ἐνέργημα* is more than *ἔργον*. For *ἐνέργημα* is not every work, it is an in-wrought work," etc. On v. 11: "*ἐνεργεῖ* in-worketh"; and on v. 28: "*δυνάμεις* powers" (*Greek Test. St. Paul's Eps.*, p. 127 f.).

² We may point out further instances of the use of *ἐνεργεῖν ἐν* in the New Testament, in addition to those already referred to, and which should be examined:—Ephes. i. 20, ii. 2, iii. 20; Phil. ii. 13; Col. i. 29; 1 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 7.

edification and exhortation and comfort," as the Apostle himself says (xiv. 3); and an illustration of this may be pointed out in Acts iv. 36, where the name Barnabas = "Son of prophecy," being interpreted is said to be "Son of Exhortation" (*υἱὸς παρακλήσεως*). To this follows the "discerning (or judging) of spirits" (*διάκρισις πνευμάτων*), a gift which, if we are to judge by Paul's expressions elsewhere, was simply the exercise of natural intelligence and discernment. In an earlier part of the first Epistle, rebuking the Corinthians for carrying their disputes before legal tribunals, he says: vi. 5, "Is it so that there is not even one wise man among you who shall be able to discern (*διακρίναι*) between his brethren?" Again, in xi. 31, "But if we discerned (*διεκρίνομεν*) we should not be judged (*ἐκρινόμεθα*)" (cf. v. 28, 29), and in xiv. 29, "Let Prophets speak two or three, and let the others discern" (*διακρινέτωσαν*).

We reserve the "kinds of tongues" and "interpretation of tongues" for separate treatment, and proceed to verses 28 f., in which, after illustrating his meaning by the analogy of the body, the Apostle resumes his observations upon the Charismata, and it is instructive to consider the rank he ascribes to the various gifts. He classes them: "First Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, after that powers, after that gifts of healings, helpings, governings, kinds of tongues." These so-called miraculous gifts are here placed in a lower class than those of exhortation and teaching, which is suggestive; for it is difficult to suppose that even a man like Paul could have regarded the possession of such palpable and stupendous power as the instantaneous and miraculous healing of disease, or the performance of other miracles, below the gift of teaching or exhortation. It is perfectly intelligible that the practice of medicine as it was then understood, and the skill which might have been attained in particular branches of disease by individuals, not to speak of those who may have been supposed to be performing miracles when they dealt with cases of hysteria or mental excitement, might appear to the Apostle much inferior to a gift for imparting spiritual instruction and admonition; but the actual possession of supernatural power, the actual exercise of what was believed to be the personal attribute of God, must have been considered a distinction more awful and elevated than any gift of teaching. It will be noticed also that other Charismata are here introduced, whilst "discerning of spirits" is omitted. The new gifts, "helpings" and "governings," have as little a miraculous character about them as any that have preceded them. Is it not obvious that all special ability, all official capacity, is simply represented as a divine gift, and regarded as a "manifestation of the Spirit"?

It is important in the highest degree to remember that the

supposed miraculous Charismata are not merely conferred upon a few persons, but are bestowed upon all the members of the Apostolic Church.¹ "The extraordinary Charismata which the Apostles conferred through their imposition of hands," writes Dr. von Döllinger, "were so diffused and distributed that nearly every one, or at any rate many, temporarily at least, had a share in one gift or another. This was a solitary case in history, which has never since repeated itself, and which, in default of experience, we can only approximately picture to ourselves. One might say: the metal of the Church was still glowing, molten, formless, and presented altogether another aspect than, since then, in the condition of the cold and hardened casting."² The apologetic representation of the case is certainly unique in history, and, therefore, in its departure from all experience might well have excited suspicion. Difficult as it is to picture such a state, it is worth while to endeavour to do so to a small extent. Let us imagine communities of Christians, often of considerable importance, in all the larger cities as well as in smaller towns, all or most of the members of which were endowed with supernatural gifts, and, amongst others, with power to heal diseases and to perform miracles; all the intellectual and religious qualities requisite for the guidance, edification, and government of the communities supplied abundantly and specially by the Holy Spirit; the ordinary dependence of society on the natural capacity and power of its leaders dispensed with, and every possible branch of moral culture and physical comfort provided with inspired and miraculously-gifted ministries; the utterance of wisdom and knowledge, exhortation and teaching, workings of healings, discernment of spirits, helpings, governings, kinds of tongues supernaturally diffused throughout the community by God himself. As a general rule, communities have to do as well as they can

¹ Cf. Eph. iv. 7, 11; 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. Dean Stanley says: "It is important to observe that these multiplied allusions imply a state of things in the Apostolic age which has certainly not been seen since. On particular occasions, indeed, both in the first four centuries, and afterwards in the Middle Ages, miracles are ascribed by contemporary writers to the influence of the relics of particular individuals; but there has been no occasion when they have been so emphatically ascribed to whole societies, so closely mixed up with the ordinary course of life. It is not maintained that every member of the Corinthian Church had all, or the greater part, of these gifts; but it certainly appears that everyone had some gift; and, this being the case, we are enabled to realise the total difference of the organisation of the Apostolic Church from any through which it has passed in its later stages. It was still in a state of fusion. Every part of the new society was instinct with a life of its own. The whole atmosphere which it breathed must have confirmed the belief in the importance and novelty of the crisis" (*The Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 4th ed., p. 224).

² *Christenthum und Kirche*, 2te Aufl., 1868, p. 298.

without such help, and eloquent instructors and able administrators do not generally fail them. The question, therefore, intrudes itself: Why were ordinary and natural means so completely set aside, and the qualifications which are generally found adequate for the conduct and regulation of life supplanted by divine Charismata? At least, we may suppose that communities endowed with such supernatural advantages, and guided by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, must have been distinguished in every way from the rest of humanity, and must have presented a spectacle of the noblest life, free from the weakness and inconsistency of the world, and betraying none of the moral and intellectual frailties of ordinary society. At the very least, and without exaggeration, communities in every member of which there existed some supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit might be expected to show very marked superiority and nobility of character.

When we examine the Epistles of Paul and other ancient documents, we find anything but supernatural qualities in the Churches supposed to be endowed with such miraculous gifts. On the contrary, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the intensely human character of the conduct of such communities: their fickleness; the weakness of their fidelity to the Gospel of Paul; their wavering faith, and the ease and rapidity with which they are led astray; their petty strifes and discords; their party spirit; their almost indecent abuse of some of their supposed gifts, such as "tongues," for which Paul rebukes them so severely. The very Epistles, in fact, in which we read of the supernatural endowments and organisation of the Church are full of evidence that there was nothing supernatural in them. The primary cause, apparently, for which the first letter was written to the Corinthians was the occurrence of divisions and contentions amongst them (i. 10 f.), parties of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas, of Christ, which make the Apostle give thanks (i. 14) that he had baptised but few of them, that no one might say that they were baptised into his name. Paul had not been able to speak to them as spiritual, but as carnal, mere babes in Christ (iii. 1 f.); he fed them with milk, not meat, for they were not yet able, "nor even now are ye able," he says, "for ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is among you envying and strife; are ye not carnal?" He continues in the same strain throughout the letter, admonishing them in no flattering terms. Speaking of his sending Timothy to them, he says (iv. 18 f.): "But some of you were puffed up, as though I were not coming to you; but I will come to you shortly, if it be the Lord's will, and will know, not the speech of them who are puffed up, but the power." There is serious sin amongst them, which they show no readiness to purge away. Moreover, these

Corinthians have lawsuits with each other (vi. 1 f.), and, instead of taking advantage of those supernatural Charismata, they actually take their causes for decision before the uninspired tribunals of the heathen rather than submit them to the judgment of the saints. Their own members, who have gifts of wisdom and of knowledge, discerning of spirits and governings, have apparently so little light to throw upon the regulation of social life that the Apostle has to enter into minute details for their admonition and guidance. He has even to lay down rules regarding the head-dresses of women in the Churches (xi. 3 f.). Even in their very church assemblies there are divisions of a serious character amongst them (xi. 18 f.). They misconduct themselves in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for they make it, as it were, their own supper, "and one is hungry and another is drunken." "What!" he indignantly exclaims, "have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?" To the Galatians Paul writes, marveling that they are so soon removing from him that called them in the grace of Christ unto a different Gospel (i. 6). "O foolish Galatians," he says (iii. 1), "who bewitched you?" In that community, also, opposition to Paul and denial of his authority had become powerful.

If we turn to other ancient documents, the Epistles to the seven Churches do not present us with a picture of supernatural perfection in those communities, though doubtless, like the rest, they had received these gifts. The other Epistles of the New Testament depict a state of things which by no means denotes any extraordinary or abnormal condition of the members. We may quote a short passage to show that we do not strain this representation unduly. "But, certainly," says Dr. von Döllinger, "in spite of a rich outpouring of spiritual gifts vouchsafed to it, a community could fall into wanton error. Paul had in Corinth, contemporaneously with his description of the Charismatic state of the Church there, to denounce sad abuses. In the Galatian community Judaistic seduction, and the darkening of Christian doctrine through the delusion as to the necessity of the observance of the law, had so much increased that the Apostle called them fools and senseless; but, at the same time, he appealed to the proof which was presented by the spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, in which they had participated not through the observance of the law, but through faith in Christ (Gal. iii. 2, 5). Now, at that time the Charismata of teaching and knowledge must already have been weakened or extinguished in these communities, otherwise so strong an aberration would not be explicable. Nowhere, however, in this Epistle is there any trace of an established ministry; on the contrary, at the close the "spiritual" among them are instructed to administer the office of commination.

But, generally, from that time forward, the Charismatic state in the Church more and more disappeared, though single Charismata, and individuals endowed with the same, remained. In the first Epistle to the believers in Thessalonica, Paul had made it specially prominent that his Gospel had worked there not as mere word, but with demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit (i. 5). In the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians there is no longer the slightest intimation of, or reference to, the Charismata, although in both communities the occasion for such an allusion was very appropriate—in Philippi through the Jewish opponents, and in Colossæ on account of the heretical dangers and the threatening Gnostic asceticism. On the other hand, in the Epistle to the Philippians bishops and deacons are already mentioned as ministers of the community. Then, in the Pastoral Epistles, not only is there no mention of the Charismata, but a state of the community is set forth which is wholly different from the Charismatic. The communities in Asia Minor, the Ephesian first of all, are partly threatened, partly unsettled by Gnostic heresies, strifes of words, foolish controversies, empty babbling about matters of faith, of doctrines of demons, of an advancing godlessness, corroding like a gangrene (1 Tim. iv. 1–3, vi. 3 f. 20, 2 Tim. ii. 14 f.). All the counsels which are here given to Timothy, the conduct in regard to these evils which is recommended to him, all is of a nature as though Charismata no longer existed to any extent, as though, in lieu of the first spiritual soaring and of the fulness of extraordinary powers manifesting itself in the community, the bare prose of the life of the Church had already set in.¹ Regarding this, it is not necessary for us to say more than that the representation which is everywhere made, in the Acts and elsewhere, and which seems to be confirmed by Paul, is that all the members of these Christian communities received the Holy Spirit, and the divine Charismata, but that nowhere have we evidence of any supernatural results produced by them. If, however, the view above expressed be accepted, the difficulty is increased; for, except in the allusions of the Apostle to Charismata, it is impossible to discover any difference between communities which had received miraculous spiritual “gifts” and those which had not done so. On the contrary, it might possibly be shown that a Church which had not been so endowed, perhaps, on the whole, exhibited higher spiritual qualities than another which was supposed to possess the Charismata. In none are we able to perceive any supernatural characteristics, or more than the very ordinary marks of a new religious life. It seems scarcely necessary to depart from the natural order of nature, and

¹ *Christenthum u. Kirche*, 1868, p. 300 f.

introduce the supernatural working of a Holy Spirit to produce such common-place results. We venture to say that there is nothing to justify the assertion of supernatural agency here, and that the special divine Charismata existed only in the pious imagination of the Apostle, who referred every good quality in man to divine grace.

We have reserved the gift of "tongues" for special discussion, because Paul enters into it with a fulness with which he does not treat any of the other Charismata, and a valuable opportunity is thus afforded us of ascertaining something definite with regard to the nature of the gift; and also because we have a narrative in the Acts of the Apostles of the first descent of the Holy Spirit, manifesting itself in "tongues," with which it may be instructive to compare the Apostle's remarks. We may mention that, in the opinion of many, the cause which induced the Apostle to say so much regarding Charismata in his first letter to the Corinthians was the circumstance, that many maintained the gift of tongues to be the only form of "the manifestation of the Spirit." This view is certainly favoured by the narrative in the Acts, in which not only at the first famous day of Pentecost, but on almost every occasion of the imposition of the Apostle's hands, this is the only gift mentioned as accompanying the reception of the Holy Spirit. In any case, it is apparent from the whole of the Apostle's homily on the subject that the gift of tongues was especially valued in the Church of Corinth.¹ It is difficult to conceive, on the supposition that amongst the Charismata there were comprised miraculous gifts of healings and power of working miracles, that these could have been held so cheap in comparison with the gift of tongues; but, in any case, a better comprehension of what this "gift" really

¹ Dean Stanley says: "It may easily be conceived that this new life was liable to much confusion and excitement, especially in a society where the principle of moral stability was not developed commensurably with it. Such was, we know, the state of Corinth. They had, on the one hand, been 'in everything enriched by Christ, in all utterance, and in all knowledge,' 'coming behind in no gift' (i. 5, 6, 7); but, on the other hand, the same contentious spirit which had turned the most sacred names into party watchwords, and profaned the celebration of the Supper of the Lord, was ready to avail itself of the openings for vanity and ambition afforded by the distinctions of the different gifts. Accordingly, various disorders arose; every one thought of himself, and no one of his neighbour's good; and, as a natural consequence, those gifts were most highly honoured, not which were most useful, but which were most astonishing. Amongst these the gift of tongues rose pre-eminent, as being in itself the most expressive of the new spiritual life; the very words, 'spiritual gifts,' 'spiritual man' (πνευματικά, xiv. 1; πνευματικός, xiv. 37), seem, in common parlance, to have been exclusively appropriated to it; and the other gifts, especially that of prophecy, were despised, as hardly proceeding from the same Divine source" (*The Eps. of St. P. to the Corinthians*, 1876, p. 210 f.). Imagine this state of things in a community endowed with so many supernatural gifts!

was cannot fail to assist us in understanding the true nature of the whole of the Charismata. It is evident that the Apostle Paul himself does not rank the gift of tongues very highly, and, indeed, that he seems to value prophecy more than all the other Charismata (xiv. 1 f.); but the simple yet truly noble eloquence with which (xiii. 1 f.) he elevates above all these gifts the possession of spiritual love is a subtle indication of their real character. Probably Paul would have termed Christian charity a gift of the Spirit as much as he does "gifts of healings" or "workings of powers"; but, however rare may be the virtue, it is not now recognised as miraculous, although it is here shown to be more desirable and precious than all the miraculous gifts. Even Apostolic conceptions of the Supernatural cannot soar above the range of natural morality.

The real nature of the "gift of tongues" has given rise to an almost interminable controversy, and innumerable treatises have been written upon the subject. It would have been impossible for us to have exhaustively entered upon such a discussion in this work, for which it only possesses an incidental and passing interest; but fortunately such a course is rendered unnecessary by the fact that, so far as we are concerned, the miraculous nature of the "gift" alone comes into question, and may be disposed of without any elaborate analysis of past controversy or minute reference to disputed points. Those who desire to follow the course of the voluminous discussion will find ample materials in the treatises which we shall at least indicate in the course of our remarks, and we shall adhere as closely as possible to our own point of view.

In 1 Cor. xii. 10 the Apostle mentions, amongst the other Charismata, "kinds of tongues" (γένη γλωσσῶν) and "interpretation of tongues" (ἐρμηνεία γλωσσῶν) as two distinct gifts. In verse 28 he again uses the expression γένη γλωσσῶν, and in a following verse he inquires: "Do all speak with tongues?" (γλώσσαις λαλοῦσι).¹ "Do all interpret?" (διερμηνεύουσιν). He says shortly after, xiii. 1: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels (εἰάν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων), and have not love," etc. In the following chapter the expressions used in discussing the gift vary. In xiv. 2 he says: "He that speaketh with a tongue"² (λαλῶν γλώσση),³ using the singular; and again (verse 22), of "the tongues" (αἱ γλώσσαι), being a sign; and in verse 26 each "hath a tongue" (γλώσσαν ἔχει). The word γλώσσα or γλώττα has several significations in Greek. The first and primary meaning "the tongue"—as a mere

¹ Cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 5, 6, 18, 23, 39; Acts x. 46, xix. 6.

² The rendering of the Authorised Version, "an *unknown* tongue," is wholly imaginary. The "with" which we adopt is more frequently rendered "in"; it is a mere matter of opinion, of course, but we maintain "with."

³ Cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 13, 14, 19, 27.

member of the body, the organ of speech; next, a tongue, or language; and further, an obsolete or foreign word not in ordinary use. If we inquire into the use of *γλῶσσα* in the New Testament, we find that, setting aside the passages in Acts, Mark, and 1 Cor. xii.-xiv., in which the phenomenon we are discussing is referred to, the word is invariably used in the first sense, "the tongue,"¹ except in the Apocalypse, where the word as "language" typifies different nations.² Anyone who attentively considers all the passages in which the Charisma is discussed will observe that no uniform application of any one signification throughout is possible. We may briefly say that all the attempts which have been made philologically to determine the true nature of the phenomenon which the Apostle discusses have failed to produce any really satisfactory result, or to secure the general adhesion of critics. It is, we think, obvious that Paul does not apply the word, either in the plural or in the singular, in its ordinary senses, but makes use of *γλῶσσα* to describe phenomena connected with speech, without intending strictly to apply it either to the tongue or to a definite language. We merely refer to this in passing, for it is certain that no philological discussion of the word can materially affect the case; and such an argument is of no interest for our inquiry. Each meaning has been adopted by critics and been made the basis for a different explanation of the phenomenon. Philology is incapable of finally solving such a problem.

From the time of Irenæus,³ or at least of Origen, the favourite theory of the Fathers, based chiefly upon the narrative in Acts of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was that the disciples suddenly became supernaturally endowed with power to speak other languages which they had not previously learned, and that this gift was more especially conferred to facilitate the promulgation of the Gospel throughout the world. Augustine went so far as to believe that each of the Apostles was thus enabled to speak all languages.⁴ The opinion that the "gift of tongues" consisted of the power, miraculously conferred by the Holy Ghost, to speak in a language or languages previously unknown to the speaker long continued to prevail, and it is still the popular, as well as the orthodox, view of the subject. As soon as the attention of critics was seriously directed to the question, however, this interpretation became rapidly modified, or was altogether aban-

¹ Mark vii. 33, 35; Luke i. 64, xvi. 24; Acts ii. 3, 26; Rom. iii. 13, xiv. 11; Philip. ii. 11; James, i. 26, iii. 5, 6 (twice), 8; 1 Pet. iii. 10; 1 John iii. 18; cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 1; *Apoc.*, xvi. 10.

² *Apoc.*, v. 9, vii. 9, x. 11, xi. 9, xiii. 7, xiv. 6, xvii. 15.

³ Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, v. 6, § 1, Eusebius, *H. E.*, v. 7.

⁴ *De Verb. Apost.*, clxxv. 3; *Serm.* 9: "*Loquebatur enim tunc unus homo omnibus linguis, quia locutura erat unitas ecclesie in omnibus linguis.*"

doned. It is unnecessary for us to refer in detail to the numerous explanations which have been given of the phenomenon, or to enumerate the extraordinary views which have been expressed regarding it; it will be sufficient if, without reference to minor differences of opinion respecting the exact form in which it exhibited itself, we broadly state that a great majority of critics, rejecting the theory that *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* means to speak languages previously unknown to the speakers, pronounce it to be the speech of persons in a state of ecstatic excitement, chiefly of the nature of prayer or praise, and unintelligible to ordinary hearers. Whether this speech consisted of mere inarticulate tones, of excited ejaculations, of obsolete or uncommon expressions and provincialisms, of highly poetical rhapsodies of prayer in slow, scarcely audible, accents, or of chaunted mysterious phrases, fragmentary and full of rapturous intensity, as these critics variously suppose, we shall not pause to inquire. It is clear that, whatever may have been the form of the speech, if, instead of being speech in unlearned languages supernaturally communicated, *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* was only the expression of religious excitement, however that may be supposed to have originated, the pretensions of the gift to a miraculous character shrink at once into exceedingly small proportions.

Every unprejudiced mind must admit that the representation that the gift of "tongues," of which the Apostle speaks in his Epistle to the Corinthians, conferred upon the recipient the power to speak foreign languages before unknown to him, may in great part be traced to the narrative in Acts of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Although a few Apologists advance the plea that there may have been differences in the manifestation, it is generally recognised on both sides that, however differently described by the two writers, the *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* of Paul and of the Acts is, in reality, one and the same phenomenon. The impression conveyed by the narrative has been applied to the didactic remarks of Paul, and a meaning forced upon them which they cannot possibly bear. It is not too much to say that, but for the mythical account in the Acts, no one would ever have supposed that the *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* of Paul was the gift of speaking foreign languages without previous study or practice. In the interminable controversy regarding the phenomenon, moreover, it seems to us to have been a fundamental error, on both sides too often, to have considered it necessary to the acceptance of any explanation that it should equally suit both the remarks of Paul and the account in Acts. The only right course is to test the narrative by the distinct and authoritative statements of the Apostle, but to adopt the contrary course is much the same procedure as altering the natural interpretation of an original historical document in order to make it agree with the romance of

some unknown writer of a later day. The Apostle Paul writes as a contemporary and eye-witness of phenomena which affected himself, and regarding which he gives the most valuable direct and indirect information. The unknown author of the Acts was not an eye-witness of the scene which he describes, and his narrative bears upon its very surface the clearest marks of traditional and legendary treatment. The ablest Apologists freely declare that the evidence of Paul is of infinitely greater value than that of the unknown and later writer, and must be preferred before it. The majority of those who profess to regard the narrative as historical explain away its clearest statements with startling ingenuity, or conceal them beneath a cloud of words. The references to the phenomenon in later portions of the Acts are in themselves quite inconsistent with the earlier narrative in chapter ii. The detailed criticism of Paul is the only contemporary, and it is certainly the only trustworthy, account we possess regarding the gift of "tongues."¹ We must, therefore, dismiss from our minds, if possible, the bias which the narrative in the Acts has unfortunately created, and attend solely to the words of the Apostle. If his report of the phenomenon discredit that of the unknown and later writer, so much the worse for the latter. In any case, it is the testimony of Paul which is referred to and which we are called upon to consider, and later writers must not be allowed to invest it with impossible meanings. Even if we had not such undeniable reasons for preferring the statements of Paul to the later and untrustworthy narrative of an unknown writer, the very contents of the latter, contrasted with the more sober remarks of the Apostle, would consign it to a very subordinate place.

Discussing the miracle of Pentecost in Acts, which he, of course, regards as the instantaneous communication of ability to speak in foreign languages, Zeller makes the following remarks: "The supposition of such a miracle is opposed to a right view of divine agency and the relation of God to the world, and, in this case in particular, to a right view of the constitution of the human mind. The composition and the properties of a body may be altered through external influence, but mental acquirements are attained only through personal activity, through practice; and it is just in this that spirit distinguishes itself from matter: that it is free, that there is nothing in it which it has not itself spontaneously introduced. The external and instantaneous in-pouring of a mental acquirement is a representation which refutes itself." In reply to those who object to this reasoning, he retorts: "The assertion that such a miracle actually occurred contradicts the analogy of all attested

¹ We need not here say anything of the reference in Mark xvi. 17, which is undoubtedly a later and spurious addition to the Gospel.

experience; that it is invented by an individual or by tradition corresponds with it; when, therefore, the historical writer has only the choice between these two alternatives, he must, according to the laws of historical probability, under all the circumstances, unconditionally decide for the second. He must do this even if an eye-witness of the pretended miracle stood before him; he must all the more do so if he has to do with a statement which, beyond doubt not proceeding from an eye-witness, is more possibly separated by some generations from the event in question."¹

These objections are not confined to rationalistic critics, and do not merely represent the arguments of scepticism. Neander expresses similar sentiments,² and after careful examination pronounces the narrative in Acts untrustworthy, and, adhering to the representations of Paul, rejects the theory that γλώσσαις λαλεῖν was speech in foreign languages supernaturally imparted. Meyer, who arrives at much the same result as Neander, speaks still more emphatically. He says: "*This supposed gift of tongues (all languages), however, was in the apostolic age, partly unnecessary for the preaching of the Gospel, as the preachers thereof only required to be able to speak Hebrew and Greek; partly too general, as amongst the assembly there were certainly many who were not called to be teachers. And, on the other hand, again, it would also have been premature, as, before all, Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles would have required it, in whom, nevertheless, there is as little trace of any subsequent reception of it as that he preached otherwise than in Hebrew and Greek. But now, how is the event to be historically judged?* Regarding this the following is to be observed: As the instantaneous bestowal of facility in a foreign language is neither logically possible nor psychologically and morally conceivable, and as not the slightest intimation of such a thing in the Apostles is perceptible in their Epistles and elsewhere (on the contrary, comp. xiv. 11); as, further, if it was only momentary, the impossibility increases, and as Peter himself in his speech does not once make the slightest reference to the foreign languages; therefore—whether, without any intimation in the text, one consider that Pentecost assembly as a representation of all future Christianity, or not—the occurrence, as Luke relates it, cannot be transmitted in its actual historical details."³

Let us a little examine the particulars of the narrative in Acts ii. All the brethren were assembled in one place, a house (οἶκος), on the morning of the day of Pentecost. In the preceding chapter (i. 15) we learn that the number of disciples was then about 120, and the crowd which came together when

¹ Zeller, *Die Apostelgesch.*, p. 85 f.

² *Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 16.

³ Meyer, *Kr. ex. H'buch üb. die Apostelgesch.*, 4te Aufl., 1870, p. 54 f.

the miraculous occurrence took place must have been great, seeing that it is stated that 3,000 souls were baptised and added to the Church upon the occasion (ii. 41). Passing over the statement as to the numbers of the disciples, which might well surprise us after the information given by the Gospels,¹ we may ask in what house in Jerusalem could such a multitude have assembled? Apologists have exhausted their ingenuity in replying to the question, but whether placing the scene in one of the halls or courts of the Temple, or in an imaginary house in one of the streets leading to the Temple, the explanation is equally vague and unsatisfactory. How did the multitude so rapidly know of what was passing in a private house? We shall say nothing at present of the sound of the "rushing mighty wind" which filled all the house, nor of the descent of the "tongues as of fire," nor of the various interpretations of these phenomena by apologetic writers. These incidents do not add to the historical character of the narrative, nor can it be pronounced either clear or consistent. The brethren assembled "were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις), as the Spirit gave them utterance."² Apologists, in order somewhat to save the historical credit of the account and reconcile it with the statements of Paul, have variously argued that there is no affirmation made in the narrative that speech in foreign languages previously unknown was imparted. The members of the fifteen nations who hear the Galilæans speaking "in our own language wherein we were born" (τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ ἡμῶν ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθημεν) are disposed of with painful ingenuity; but, passing over all this, it is recognised by unprejudiced critics on both sides that at least the author of Acts, in writing this account, intended to represent the brethren as instantaneously speaking those previously unknown foreign languages. A few writers represent the miracle to have been one of hearing rather than of speaking, the brethren merely praising God in their own tongue, the Aramaic, but the spectators understanding in their various languages.³ This only shifts the difficulty from the speakers to the hearers, and the explanation is generally repudiated. It is, however, freely granted by all that history does not exhibit a single instance of such a gift of tongues having ever been made useful for the purpose of preaching the Gospel. Paul, who claimed the possession of the gift of tongues in a superlative degree (1 Cor. xiv. 18), does not appear to have spoken more languages than Aramaic and Greek.

¹ John xvi. 31; Matt. xxviii. 7.

² Acts ii. 4.

³ Schneckenburger, *Beiträge*, p. 84; Svensen, *Zeitschr. luth. Th. u. Kirche*, 1859, p. 1 f. This view was anciently held by Gregory Naz. (*Orat.* 44), and some of the Fathers, and, in more recent times, it was adopted by Erasmus and others.

He writes to the Romans in the latter tongue, and not in Latin, and to the Galatians in the same language instead of their own. Peter, who appears to have addressed the assembled nations in Greek on this very occasion, does not in his speech either refer to foreign languages or claim the gift himself, for in verse 15 he speaks only of others: "For *these* (οὗτοι) are not drunken." Every one remembers the ancient tradition recorded by Papias, and generally believed by the Fathers, that Mark accompanied Peter as his "interpreter" (ἐρμηνευτής).¹ The first Epistle bearing the name of Peter, and addressed to some of the very nations mentioned in Acts, to sojourners "in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," is written in Greek; and so are the Epistle to the Hebrews and the other works of the New Testament. Few will be inclined to deny that, to take only one language for instance, the Greek of the writings of the New Testament leaves something to be desired, and that, if the writers possessed such a supernatural gift, they evidently did not speak even so important and current a language with absolute purity. "*Le style des écrivains sacrés,*" writes a modern Apologist, "*montre clairement qu'ils ont appris la langue grecque et qu'ils ne la possèdent pas de droit divin et par inspiration, car ils l'écrivent sans correction, en la surchargeant de locutions hébraïques.*"² In fact, as most critics point out, there never was a period at which a gift of foreign tongues was less necessary for intercourse with the civilised world, Greek being almost everywhere current. As regards the fifteen nations who are supposed to have been represented on this great occasion, Neander says: "It is certain that amongst the inhabitants of towns in Cappadocia, in Pontus, in Asia Minor, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Cyrene, and in the parts of Libya and Egypt peopled by Greek and Jewish colonies, the Greek language was in great part more current than the old national tongue. There remain, out of the whole catalogue of languages, at most the Persian, Syriac, Arabic, Greek, and Latin. The more rhetorical than historical stamp of the narrative is evident."³

This rhetorical character, as contradistinguished from sober history, is, indeed, painfully apparent throughout. The presence in Jerusalem of Jews, devout men "from every nation under heaven," is dramatically opportune, and thus representatives of the fifteen nations are prepared to appear in the house and hear their own languages in which they were born spoken in so supernatural,

¹ Cf. Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii. 39, v. 8; Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii. 1, § 1; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, iv. 5.

² De Pressensé, *Hist. des Trois prem. Siècles*, i., p. 356. Neander (*Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 14 f.), Reuss (*Rev. d. Théol.*, 1851, iii., p. 84 f.), and many other able writers, still more strongly enforce these arguments.

³ Neander, *Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 18.

though useless, a manner by the brethren. They are all said to have been "confounded" at the phenomenon, and the writer adds (ii. 7 f.): "And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilæans? And how hear we every man in our own language wherein we were born?" etc. Did all the multitude say this? or is not the writer merely ascribing probable sentiments to them? How, again, did they know that the hundred and twenty, or more, brethren were Galilæans? Further on the writer adds more of the same kind (verses 12, 13): "And they were all amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another, What may this mean? But others, mocking, said: They are full of sweet wine." Is it not a strange manner of accounting for such a phenomenon as (verse 11) hearing people speaking in their own tongues the great works of God to suppose that they are drunken? People speaking with tongues, in Paul's sense (1 Cor. xiv. 23, 24, 33), and creating an unintelligible tumult, might well lead strangers to say that they were either mad or drunken; but the praise of God in foreign language, understood by so many, could not convey such an impression. Peter does not, in explanation, simply state that they are speaking foreign languages which have just been supernaturally imparted to them, but argues (verse 15) that "these are not drunken, as ye suppose, for it is the third hour of the day," too early to be "full of sweet wine," and proceeds to assert that the phenomenon is, on the contrary, a fulfilment of a prophecy of Joel, in which, although the pouring out of God's Spirit upon all flesh is promised "in the last days," and, as a result, that "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams," not a single word is said of any gift of "tongues," foreign or otherwise. The miraculous phenomenon in question is not mentioned in the prophecy, of which it is supposed to be the accomplishment. It does not much help matters to argue that the miracle, although not for future use, was intended as a sign. We shall see what Paul says regarding *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* as a sign, but we may here merely point out that the effect produced in the Corinthian Church is rather an impression of madness, whilst here it leads to a mocking accusation of drunkenness. The conversion of the 3,000 is by no means referred to the speaking with tongues, but simply to the speech of Peter (ii. 37 f., 41). From no point of view is there cohesion between the different parts of the narrative; it is devoid of verisimilitude. It is not surprising that so many critics of all shades of opinion recognise unhistorical elements in the narrative in Acts, not to use a stronger term. To allow such an account to influence our interpretation of Paul's statements regarding the gift of tongues is quite out of the question; and no one who appreciates the nature of

the case, and who carefully examines the narrative of the unknown writer, can, we think, hesitate to reject his theory of a supernatural bestowal of power to speak foreign languages.

It is not difficult to trace the origin of the account in Acts, and, although we cannot here pause to do so with any minuteness, we may at least indicate the lines upon which the narrative is based. There is no doubt that then, as now, the Jews commemorated at the feast of Pentecost the giving of the law on Sinai. It seemed good to the author of Acts that the prophet like unto Moses,¹ who was to abrogate that law and replace it by a dispensation of grace, should inaugurate the new law of love and liberty² with signs equally significant and miraculous. It is related in Exodus xix. 18 that the Lord descended upon Sinai "in fire," and that the whole mount quaked greatly. The voice of God pronounced the decalogue, and, as the Septuagint version renders our Exodus xx. 18: "All the people saw the voice, and the lightnings and the voice of the trumpet and the mountain smoking." According to Rabbinical tradition when God came down to give the law to the Israelites, he appeared not to Israel alone, but to all the other nations, and the voice in which the law was given went to the ends of the earth and was heard of all peoples.³ It will be remembered that the number of the nations was supposed to be seventy, each speaking a different language, and the law was given in the one sacred Hebrew tongue. The Rabbins explained, however: "The voice from Sinai was divided into seventy voices and seventy languages, so that all nations of the earth heard (the law), and each heard it actually in its own language."⁴ And again: "Although the ten commandments were promulgated with one single tone, yet it is said (Exodus xx. 15), 'All people heard the voices' (in the plural and not the voice in the singular); 'the reason is: As the voice went forth it was divided into seven voices, and then into seventy tongues, and every people heard the Law in its own mother-tongue.'"⁵ The same explanation is given of Psalm lxviii. 11, and the separation of the voice into seven voices and seventy tongues is likened to the sparks beaten by a hammer from molten metal on the anvil.⁶ Philo expresses the same ideas in several places. We can only extract one passage in which, speaking of the giving of the law on Sinai, and discussing the manner in which God proclaimed the decalogue, he says: "For God is not like a man in need of a voice and of a tongue.....but it seems to me that at that time he performed a most holy and

¹ Acts iii. 22, vii. 37.

² Cf. Gal. iv. 21 f.

³ *Bab. Sevachim*, 116 a.; Gfrörer, *Das Jahrh. des Heils*, ii. 392 f.

⁴ *Schemoth Rabba*, 70 d.; Gfrörer, *ib.*, ii. 393.

⁵ *Midrash Tanchumah*, 26, c.; Gfrörer, *ib.*, ii. 393.

⁶ *Midrash Tillin*; *Bab. Schabbath*, 85 b.; Gfrörer, *ib.*, ii. 393 f.

beseeming wonder, commanding an invisible voice to be created in air, more wonderful than all instruments.....not lifeless, but neither a form of living creature composed of body and soul, but a reasonable soul full of clearness and distinctness, which formed and excited the air and transformed it into flaming fire, and sounded forth such an articulated voice, like breath through a trumpet, that it seemed to be equally heard by those who were near and those furthest off."¹ A little further on he says: "But from the midst of the fire streaming from heaven a most awful voice sounded forth, the flame being articulated to language familiar to the hearers, which made that which was said so vividly clear as to seem rather seeing than hearing it."² It requires no elaborate explanation to show how this grew into the miracle at Pentecost at the inauguration of the Christian dispensation, when suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind which filled all the house where the disciples were, and there appeared to them tongues as of fire parting asunder which sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, even as the Spirit gave them utterance, so that devout men from every nation under heaven heard them speaking, everyone in his own language wherein he was born, the great works of God.

When we turn to the other passages in the Acts where the gift of tongues is mentioned, we find that the interpretation of foreign languages supernaturally imparted is quite out of place. When Peter is sent to Cornelius, as he is addressing the centurion and his household, and even before they are baptised (x. 44), "the Holy Spirit fell on all them who hear the word"; and the sign of it is (v. 46) that they are heard "speaking with tongues and magnifying God" (λαλούντων γλώσσαις καὶ μεγαλυνόντων τὸν θεόν), precisely like the disciples at Pentecost (cf. ii. 11, xi. 15 f.). As this gift fell on all who heard the word (x. 44), it could not be a sign to unbelievers; and the idea that Cornelius and his house immediately began to speak in foreign languages, which, as in the case of the Corinthians, probably no one understood, instead of simply "magnifying God" in their own tongue, which everyone understood, is almost ludicrous, if without offence we may venture to say so. The same remarks apply to xix. 6. We must again allow an eminent Apologist, who will not be accused of irreverence, to characterise such a representation. "Now, in such positions and such company, speech in foreign tongues would be something altogether without object and without meaning.

¹ *De decem Oraculis*, § 9, ed. Mangey, ii. 185 f.

² *Ib.*, § 11, ed. Mangey, ii. 188; cf. *De Septenario et festis*, § 22, ed. Mangey, ii. 295 f.

Where the consciousness of the grace of salvation, and of a heavenly life springing from it, is first aroused in man, his own mother tongue verily, not a foreign language, will be the natural expression of his feelings. Or we must imagine a magical power which, taking possession of men, like instruments without volition, forces them to utter strange tones—a thing contradicting all analogy in the operations of Christianity.”¹ The good sense of the critic revolts against the natural submission of the Apologist.

We have diverged so far in order prominently to bring before the reader the nature and source of the hypothesis that the gift of “tongues” signifies instantaneous power to speak unlearned foreign languages. Such an interpretation is derived almost entirely from the mythical narrative in the Acts of the Apostles. We shall now proceed to consider the statements of the Apostle Paul, and endeavour to ascertain what the supposed miraculous Charisma really is. That it is something very different from what the unknown writer represents it in the episode of Pentecost cannot be doubted. “Whoever has, even once, read with attention what Paul writes of the speaking with tongues in the Corinthian community,” writes Thiersch, “knows that the difference between that gift of tongues and this (of Acts ii.) could scarcely be greater. There, a speech which no mortal can understand without interpretation, and also no philologist but the Holy Spirit alone can interpret; here, a speech which requires no interpretation. That gift serves only for the edification of the speaker; this clearly also for that of the hearer. The one is of no avail for the instruction of the ignorant; the other, clearly, is imparted wholly for that purpose.”²

It may be well that we should state a few reasons which show that Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, does not intend, in speaking of *γλῶσσαις λαλεῖν*, to represent speech in foreign languages. In the very outset of the dissertation on the subject, (xiv. 2), Paul very distinctly declares as the principal reason for preferring prophecy to the gift of tongues: “For he that speaketh with a tongue (*λαλῶν γλώσση*) speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no one understandeth³ (*οὐδεὶς ἀκούει*).” How could this be said if *γλώσση λαλεῖν* meant merely speaking a foreign language? The presence of a single person versed in the language spoken would, in such a case, vitiate the whole of Paul’s argument.

¹ Neander, *Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 19.

² Thiersch, *Die Kirche im apost. Zeitalter*, 2te Aufl., 1858, p. 68 f.

³ The literal meaning, of course, is “no one heareth”; but the sense is “heareth with the understanding.” Cf. Mark iv. 33 and the lxx. version of Gen. xi. 7, Isaiah xxxvi. 11, etc., where *ἀκούειν* has this meaning. The word is rightly rendered in the A. V.

The statement made is general, it will be observed, and not limited to one community; but, applied to a place like Corinth, one of the greatest commercial cities, in which merchants, seamen, and visitors of all countries were to be found, it would have been unreasonable to have characterised a foreign tongue as absolutely unintelligible. In xiv. 9, Paul says: "So likewise ye, unless ye utter by the tongue (διὰ τῆς γλώσσης) words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into air." How could Paul use the expression, "by the tongue," if he meant a foreign language in verse 2 and elsewhere? He is comparing γλώσσαις λαλεῖν in the preceding verses with the sounds of musical instruments, and the point reached in verse 9 clearly brings home the application of his argument—the γλώσσαις λαλεῖν is unintelligible, like the pipe or harp, and, unless the tongue utter words which have an understood meaning, it is mere speaking into air. Is it possible that Paul could call speech in a language foreign to him, perhaps, but which, nevertheless, was the mother tongue of some nation, "speaking into air"? In such case he must have qualified his statement by obvious explanations, of which not a word appears throughout his remarks. That he does not speak of foreign languages is made still more clear by the next two verses (verse 10), in which, continuing his argument from analogy, he actually compares γλώσσαις λαλεῖν with speech in foreign languages, and ends (verse 11): "If, therefore, I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian (foreigner) and he that speaketh a barbarian (foreigner) in my judgment."¹ Paul's logic is certainly not always beyond reproach, but he cannot be accused of perpetrating such an antithesis as contrasting a thing with itself. He, therefore, explicitly distinguishes (verse 10) γένη φωνῶν, "kinds of languages,"² from (xii. 10, 28, etc.) γένη γλωσσῶν, "kinds of tongues." In xiv. 6 Paul says: "If I come unto you speaking with tongues (γλώσσαις λαλῶν), what shall I profit you, unless I shall speak to you, either in revelation, or knowledge, or in prophecy, or in teaching?" (ἐν ἀποκαλύψει ἢ ἐν γνώσει ἢ ἐν προφητείᾳ ἢ ἐν διδαχῇ); and then he goes on to compare such unintelligible speech with musical instruments. It is obvious that revelation, knowledge, prophecy, and teaching might equally be expressed in foreign languages, and, therefore, in "speaking with tongues" it is no mere difficulty of expression which makes it unprofitable, but that general unintelligibility which is the ground of the whole of Paul's objections. Paul exclaims (verse 18): "I thank God I

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 11.

² It is unnecessary to show that φωνή is used to express language.

speak with a tongue (γλῶσση λαλῶ)¹ more than ye all (19), but in a church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue (ἐν γλῶσση).² We have already pointed out that there is no evidence that Paul could speak many languages. So far as we have any information, he only made use of Greek and Aramaic, and never even preached where those languages were not current. He always employed the former in his Epistles, whether addressed to Corinth, Galatia, or Rome, and his knowledge even of that language was not perfect. Speaking "with a tongue" cannot, for reasons previously given, mean a foreign language; and this is still more obvious from what he says in verse 19, just quoted, in which he distinguishes speaking with a tongue from speaking with his understanding. Five words so spoken are better than ten thousand in a tongue, because he speaks with the understanding in the one case, and without it in the second. It is clear that a man speaks with his understanding as much in one language as another, but it is the main characteristic of the speech we are discussing that it is throughout opposed to understanding—cf. verses 14, 15. It would be inconceivable that, if this gift really signified power to speak foreign languages, Paul could, on the one hand, use the expressions in this letter with regard to it, and, on the other, that he could have failed to add remarks consistent with such an interpretation. For instance, is it possible that the Apostle, in repressing the exercise of the Charisma, as he does, could have neglected to point out some other use for it than mere personal edification? Could he have omitted to tell some of these speakers with tongues that, instead of wasting their languages in a Church where no one understood them, it would be well for them to employ them in the instruction of the nations whose tongues had been supernaturally imparted to them? As it is, Paul checks the use of a gift bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and reduces its operation to the smallest limits, without once indicating so obvious a sphere of usefulness for the miraculous power. We need not proceed to further arguments upon this branch of the subject; although, in treating other points, additional evidence will constantly present itself. For the reasons we have stated, and many others, the great majority of critics are agreed that the gift of tongues, according to Paul, was not the power of speaking foreign languages previously unknown.³ But for the narrative

¹ This is the reading of A, D, E, F, G, **S**, and other ancient codices, and is adopted by most critics in preference to γλῶσσαις, the reading of B, K, L.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 18, 19.

³ So Bardili, Baur, Bleek, Davidson, Eichhorn, Ewald, Fritzsche, Gfrörer, Hausrath, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Keim, Meyer, Neander, Noack, Olshausen,

in Acts ii. no one would ever have thought of such an interpretation.

Coming now to consider the two Charismata, "kinds of tongues" and "the interpretation of tongues," more immediately in connection with our inquiry, as so-called miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, we shall first endeavour to ascertain some of their principal characteristics. The theory of foreign languages supernaturally imparted without previous study may be definitively laid aside. The interpretation of tongues may go with it, but requires a few observations. It is clear from Paul's words throughout this dissertation that the interpretation of tongues not only was not invariably attached to the gift of tongues¹ (1 Cor. xiv. 13, 27, 28), but was at least often a separate gift possessed without the kinds of tongues (cf. xii. 10, 28, xiv. 26, 28). Nothing can be more specific than xii. 10: ".....to another, kinds of tongues; and to another, interpretation of tongues"; and again, verse 30: "Do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" This is indeed presaged by the "diversities of gifts," etc., of xii. 4 f. Upon the hypothesis of foreign languages, this would presuppose that some spoke languages which they could not interpret, and consequently could not understand, and that others understood languages which they could not speak. The latter point is common enough in ordinary life; but, in this instance, the miracle of supernaturally receiving a perfect knowledge of languages, instantaneously and without previous study, is as great as to receive the power to speak them. The anomaly in the miracle, merely to point out a suggestive discrepancy where all is anomalous, is that the gift of tongues should ever have been separated from the gift of interpretation. If a man understand the foreign language he speaks, he can interpret it; if he cannot interpret it, he cannot understand it; and if he cannot understand it, can he possibly speak it? Certainly not, without his having been made a perfectly mechanical instrument through which, apart from the understanding and the will, sounds are involuntarily produced, which is not to be entertained. Still pursuing the same hypothesis—the one gift is to speak languages which no one understands, the other to understand languages which no one speaks. Paul never even assumes the probability that the

Overbeck, Paulus, Pfleiderer, de Pressensé, Renan, Reuss, Schaff, Schrader, Schulz, Schwegler, Stap, Steudel, De Wette, Wieseler, Weisse, Zeller, and others.

¹ Ewald maintains that "interpretation" was always separate from "tongues" (*Die Sendschr des Ap. Paul.*, p. 205, anm.). Wieseler at one time (*St. u. Krit.*, 1838, p. 720 f.) asserted that the speaker with tongues was always his own interpreter. He subsequently (*St. u. Krit.*, 1860, p. 117 f.) withdrew this extraordinary theory.

"tongue" spoken is understood by any one except the interpreter. The interpretation of such obscure tongues must have been a gift very little used—never, indeed, except as the complement to the gift of tongues. The natural and useful facility in languages is apparently divided into two supernatural and useless halves. The idea is irresistibly suggested, as apparently it was to the Apostle himself, whether it would not have been more for the good of mankind and for the honour of Christianity if, instead of these two miraculously incomplete gifts, a little natural good sense, five words even, to be spoken in the vernacular tongue and requiring no interpretation, had been imparted. If, instead of foreign languages, we substitute the utterance of ecstatic religious excitement, the anomaly of speaking a language without understanding it or being understood becomes intelligible; and equally so the interpretation, unaccompanied by the power of speaking. It is obvious in both cases that, as no one understands the tongue, no one can determine whether the interpretation of it be accurate or not. But it is easily conceivable that a sympathetic nervous listener might suppose that he understood the broken and incoherent speech of ecstasy, and might interpret it according to his own stimulated imagination. The mysterious and unknown are suggestive texts, and there is nothing more infectious than religious excitement. In all this, however, is there anything miraculous?

We need not further demonstrate that the chief and general characteristic of "kinds of tongues" was that they were unintelligible (cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 2, 6-11, 13-19). Speaking with the spirit (*πνεῦμα*) is opposed to speaking with the understanding (*νοῦς*) (cf. verses 14-16, etc.). They were not only unintelligible to others, but the speaker himself did not understand what he uttered: (verse 14) "For if I pray with a tongue (*γλῶσση*) my spirit (*πνεῦμα*) prayeth, but my understanding (*νοῦς*) is unfruitful" (cf. 15 f., 19). We have already pointed out that Paul speaks of these Charismata in general, and not as affecting the Corinthians only; and we must now add that he obviously does not even insinuate that the "kinds of tongues" possessed by that community was a spurious Charisma, or that any attempt had been made to simulate the gift; for nothing could have been more simple than for the Apostle to denounce such phenomena as false, and to distinguish the genuine from the imitated speech with tongues. The most convincing proof that his remarks refer to the genuine Charisma is that the Apostle applies to himself the very same restrictions in the use of "tongues" as he enforces upon the Corinthians (verses 18-19, 6, etc.), and characterises his own gift precisely as he does theirs (verses 6, 11, 14, 15, 19).

Now, what was the actual operation of this singular miraculous

gift, and its utility whether as regards the community or the gifted individual? Paul restricts the speaking of "tongues" in church because, being unintelligible, it is not for edification (xiv. 2 f., 18 f., 23, 27, 28). He himself does not make use of his gift for the assemblies of believers (verses 6, 18). Another ground upon which he objects to the use of "kinds of tongues" in public is that all the gifted apparently speak at once (verses 23, 27 f., 33). It will be remembered that all the Charismata and their operations are described as due to the direct agency of the Holy Spirit (xii. 4 f.); and immediately following their enumeration, ending with "kinds of tongues" and "interpretation of tongues," the Apostle resumes (verse 11), "but all these worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing to each severally as he wills"; and in Acts ii. 4 the brethren are represented as speaking with tongues "as the Spirit gave them utterance." Now, the first thought which presents itself is: How can a gift which is due to the direct working of the Holy Spirit possibly be abused? We must remember clearly that the speech is not expressive of the understanding of the speaker. The *πνευματικοί* spoke under the inspiration of the supernatural Agent, that which neither they nor others understood. Is it permissible to suppose that the Holy Spirit could inspire speech with tongues at an unfitting time? Can we imagine that this Spirit can actually have prompted many people to speak at one and the same time to the utter disturbance of order? Is not such a gift of tongues more like the confusion of tongues in Babel¹ than a christian Charisma? "And the Lord said:Go to, let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."²

In spite of his abstract belief in the divine origin of the Charisma, Paul's language unconsciously betrays practical doubt as to its character. Does not such sarcasm as the following seem extremely indecorous when criticising a result produced directly by the Holy Spirit? (xiv. 23) "If, therefore, the whole church be come into one place and all speak with tongues, and there come in unlearned and unbelieving persons, will they not say ye are mad?" At Pentecost such an assembly was supposed to be drunken.³ The whole of the counsel of the Apostle upon this occasion really amounts to an injunction to quench the Spirit. It is quite what might be expected in the case of the excitement of ecstatic religion, that the strong emotion should principally find vent in the form of prayer and praise (verse 15 f.); equally so that it should be unintelligible, and that no one should know when to say "Amen" (verse 16), and that all

¹ Cf. Schrader, *Der Ap. Paulus*, ii., p. 72 f.

² Gen. xi. 6, 7.

³ The same gift, it is generally understood, is referred to in Ephes. v. 18 f.

should speak at once ; and still more so that the practical result should be tumult (verses 23, 33). All this, it might appear, could be produced without the intervention of the Holy Spirit. So far, is there any utility in the miracle ?

But we are told that it is "for a sign." Paul argues upon this point in a highly eccentric manner. He quotes (v. 21) Isaiah xxviii. 11, 12, in a form neither agreeing with the Septuagint nor with the Hebrew—a passage which has merely a superficial and verbal analogy with the gift of tongues, but whose real historical meaning has no reference to it whatever: "In the Law it is written, that with men of other tongues and with the lips of others will I speak unto this people ; and yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the Lord." The Apostle continues with singular logic: "So that (ὥστε) the tongues are for a sign (εἰς σημεῖον) not to those who believe, but to the unbelieving ; but prophecy is not for the unbelieving, but for those who believe. If, therefore, the whole Church be come into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in unlearned or unbelieving persons, will they not say that ye are mad ? But if all prophesy and there come in an unbeliever.....he is convicted by all.....and so falling on his face he will worship God, reporting that God is indeed in you." The Apostle himself shows that the tongues cannot be considered a sign by unbelievers, upon whom, apparently, they produce no other impression than that the speakers are mad or drunken.

Under any circumstances, the "kinds of tongues" described by the Apostle are a very sorry specimen of the "signs and wonders and powers" of which we have heard so much. It is not surprising that the Apostle prefers exhortation in a familiar tongue. In an ecstatic state, men are incapable of edifying others ; we shall presently see how far they can edify themselves. Paul utters the pith of the whole matter at the very outset of his homily, when he prefers exhortation to kinds of tongues : verse 2. "For he that speaketh with a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God ; for no one understandeth, but in Spirit he speaketh mysteries" (λαλεῖ μυστήρια). It is not possible to read his words without the impression that the Apostle treats the whole subject with suppressed impatience. His mind was too prone to believe in spiritual mysteries, and his nervous nature too susceptible to religious emotion and enthusiasm, to permit him clearly to recognise the true character of the gift of "tongues" ; but his good sense asserted itself, and, after protesting that he would rather speak five words with his understanding than ten thousand words in a tongue, he breaks off with the characteristic exclamation (verse 20), "Brethren, become not children in your minds" (μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσίν). The advice is not yet out of place.

What was the private utility or advantage of the supernatural

gift? How did he who spoke with a tongue edify himself? (verse 4). Paul clearly states that he does not edify the Church (verse 2 f.). In the passage just quoted the Apostle, however, says that the speaker "with a tongue" "speaketh to God"; and further on (verses 18, 19) he implies that, although he himself does not use the gift in public, he does so in private. He admonishes (verse 28) any one gifted with tongues, if there be no interpreter present, to "keep silence in a church, but let him speak to himself and to God." But in what does the personal edification of the individual consist? In employing language, which he does not comprehend, in private prayer and praise? In addressing God in some unintelligible jargon, in the utterance of which his understanding has no part? Many strange purposes and proceedings have been attributed to the Supreme Being, but probably none has been imagined more incongruous than a gift of tongues unsuitable for the edification of others, and not intelligible to the recipient, but considered an edifying substitute in private devotion for his own language. This was certainly not the form of prayer which Jesus taught his disciples.¹ And this gift was valued more highly in the Corinthian Church than all the rest! Do we not get an instructive insight into the nature of the other Charismata from this suggestive fact? The reality of miracles does not seem to be demonstrated by these chapters.²

We have already stated that the vast majority of critics explain *γλώσσαις λαλεῖν* as speech in an ecstatic condition; and all the phenomena described by Paul closely correspond with the utterance of persons in a state of extreme religious enthusiasm and excitement, of which many illustrations might be given from other religions before and since the commencement of our era, as well as in the history of Christianity in early and recent times. Every one knows of the proceedings of the heathen oracles, the wild writhings and cries of the Pythoness and the mystic utterances of the Sibyl. In the Old Testament there is allusion to the ecstatic emotion of the prophets in the account of Saul, 1 Sam. xix. 24 (cf. Isaiah viii. 19, xxix. 4). The Montanists exhibited similar phenomena, and Tertullian has recorded several instances of such religious excitement, to which we have elsewhere referred. Chrysostom had to repress paroxysms of pious excitement closely resembling these in the fourth century;³ and even down to our own times instances have never been wanting of this form of

¹ Matt. vi. 5 f.; Luke xi. 1 f.

² It is impossible to refer to every writer by whom the arguments adopted throughout this section may have been used or suggested, but we very gladly express obligation, especially to the writings of Baur, Zeller, Meyer, Reuss, Overbeck, Holtzmann, and Neander.

³ *Hom. in Is.*, vi. 2.

hysterical religion. Into none of this can we enter here. Enough, we trust, has been said to show the true character of the supposed supernatural Charismata of Paul from his own account of them, and the information contained in his Epistles.

Although we have been forced to examine in considerable detail the passages in the writings of Paul cited by Apologists in support of miracles, the study is one of great value to our inquiry. These are the only passages which we possess in which a contemporary and eye-witness describes what he considers supernatural phenomena, and conveys to us his impression of miraculous agency. Instead of traditional reports of miracles narrated by writers who are unknown, and who did not actually see the occurrences in question, we have here a trustworthy witness dealing with matters in which he was personally interested, and writing a didactic homily upon the nature and operation of Charismata which he believed to be miraculous, and conferred upon the Church by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit. The nineteenth century here comes into direct contact with the age of miracles, but at the touch these miracles vanish, and that which, seen through the golden mist of pious tradition, seems to possess unearthly power and beauty, on closer examination dwindles into the prose of every-day life. The more minutely miracles are scanned, the more unreal they are recognised to be. The point to which we now desire to call attention, however, is the belief and the mental constitution of Paul. We have seen something of the nature and operation of the gift of tongues. That the phenomena described proceeded from an ecstatic state, into which persons of highly excitable nervous organisation are very liable to fall under the operation of strong religious impressions, can scarcely be doubted. Eminent Apologists¹ have gravely illustrated the phenomena by the analogy of mesmerism, somnambulism, and the effects of magnetism. Paul asserts that he was subject to the influence, whatever it was, more than anyone, and there is nothing which is more credible than the statement, or more characteristic of the Apostle. We desire to speak of him with the profoundest respect and admiration. We know more, from his epistles, of the intimate life and feelings of the great Apostle of the Gentiles than of any other man of the apostolic age, and it is impossible not to feel warm sympathy with his noble and generous character. The history of Christianity, after the death of its Founder, would sink almost into commonplace if the grand figure of Paul were blotted from its pages. But it is no detraction to recognise that his nervous temperament rendered him peculiarly susceptible of those religious impressions which result in conditions of ecstatic trance,

¹ Bleek, Olshausen, and others.

to which, as we actually learn from himself, he was exceptionally subject. The effects of this temperament probably first made him a Christian; and to his enthusiastic imagination we owe most of the supernatural dogmas of the religion which he adopted and transformed.

One of these trances the Apostle himself recounts,¹ always with the cautious reserve, "whether in the body or out of the body I know not, God knoweth," how he was caught up to the third heaven, and in Paradise heard unutterable words which it is not lawful for a man to speak; in immediate connection with which he continues: "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the excess of the revelations, there was given to me a stake (σκόλοψ) in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me."² This was one of the "visions (ὀπτασίας) and revelations (ἀποκαλύψεις) of the Lord" of which he speaks, and of which he had such an excess to boast. Can any one doubt that this was nearly akin to the state of ecstatic trance in which he spoke with tongues more than all the Corinthians? Does any one suppose that Paul, "whether in the body or out of the body," was ever actually caught up into "the third heaven," wherever that may be? or doubt that this was simply one of the pious hallucinations which visit those who are in such a state? If we are seriously to discuss the point—it is clear that evidence of such a thing is out of the question; that Paul himself admits that he cannot definitely describe what happened; that we have no other ground for considering the matter than the Apostle's own mysterious utterance; that it is impossible for a person subject to such visions and hallucinations to distinguish between reality and seeming; that this narrative has not only all the character of hallucination, but no feature of sober fact; and, finally, that, whilst it accords with all experiences of visionary hallucination, it contradicts all experience of practical life. We have seen that Paul believes in the genuineness and supernatural origin of the divine Charismata, and he in like manner believes in the reality of his visions and revelations. He has equal reason, or want of reason, in both cases.

What was the nature of the "stake in the flesh" which, upon the theory of the diabolical origin of disease, he calls "an angel of Satan to buffet me"? There have been many conjectures offered, but one explanation which has been advanced by able critics has special force and probability. It is suggested that this "stake in the flesh," which almost all now at least recognise to have been some physical malady, and very many

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 1 f.

² *Ib.*, xii. 7. We need not discuss the connection of καὶ τῇ ὑπερβολῇ. We have adopted that which is also the reading of the A.V.

suppose to have been headache or some other similar periodical and painful affection, was in reality a form of epilepsy.¹ It has been ably argued that the representation of the malady as "an angel of Satan" to buffet him, directly connects it with nervous disorders like epilepsy, which the Jews especially ascribed to diabolical influence; and the mention of this σκόλοψ in immediate continuation of his remarks on "visions" and "revelations," which a tendency to this very malady would so materially assist in producing, further confirms the conjecture.² No one can deny, and medical and psychological annals prove, that many men have been subject to visions and hallucinations which have never been seriously attributed to supernatural causes. There is not one single valid reason removing the ecstatic visions and trances of the Apostle Paul from this class.

We do not yet discuss the supposed vision in which he saw the risen Jesus, though it is no exception to the rest, but reserve it for the next chapter. At present, it suffices that we point out the bearing of our examination of Paul's general testimony to miracles upon our future consideration of his evidence for the Resurrection. If it be admitted that his judgment as to the miraculous character of the Charismata is fallacious, and that what he considered miraculous were simply natural phenomena, the theory of the reality of miracles becomes less tenable than ever. And if, further, it be recognised, as we think it necessarily must be, that Paul was subject to natural ecstatic trances, with all their accompanying forms of nervous excitement—"kinds of tongues," visions, and religious hallucinations—a strong and clear light will fall upon his further testimony for miraculous occurrences which we shall shortly have before us.

¹ Ewald, *Sendschr. des Ap. Paulus*, p. 307 f.; Hausrath, *Der Ap. Paulus*, p. 52 f.; Hofmann, *Die heil. Schr. N. T.*, 1866, ii. 3, p. 309; Holsten, *Zum Ev. des Paulus, u. s. w.*, p. 85 f.; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p. 186 f.; Strauss, *Das Leb. Jesu*, p. 302; Weber u. Holtzmann, *Gesch. V. Isr.*, ii., p. 542 f.

² Holsten, *Zum Ev. des Paulus u. des Petrus*, 1868, p. 85 f.

PART VI.

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

CHAPTER I.

THE RELATION OF EVIDENCE TO SUBJECT

WHEN the evidence of the Gospels regarding the great central dogmas of ecclesiastical Christianity is shown to be untrustworthy and insufficient, Apologists appeal with confidence to the testimony of the Apostle Paul. We presume that it is not necessary to show that, in fact, the main weight of the case rests upon his Epistles, as undoubted documents of the apostolic age, written some thirty or forty years after the death of the Master. The retort has frequently been made to the earlier portion of this work that, so long as the evidence of Paul remains unshaken, the apologetic position is secure. We may quote a few lines from an able work, part of a passage discussed in the preceding chapter, as a statement of the case: "In the first place, merely as a matter of historical attestation, the Gospels are not the strongest evidence for the Christian miracles. Only one of the four, in its present shape, is claimed as the work of an Apostle, and of that the genuineness is disputed. The Acts of the Apostles stand upon very much the same footing with the synoptic Gospels, and of this book we are promised a further examination. But we possess at least some undoubted writings of one who was himself a chief actor in the events which followed immediately upon those recorded in the Gospels; and in these undoubted writings St. Paul certainly shows by incidental allusions, the good faith of which cannot be questioned, that he believed himself to be endowed with the power of working miracles, and that miracles, or what were thought to be such, were actually wrought by him and by his contemporaries..... Besides these allusions, St. Paul repeatedly refers to the cardinal miracles of the Resurrection and Ascension; he refers to them as notorious and unquestionable facts at a time when such an assertion might have been easily refuted. On one occasion he gives a very circumstantial account

of the testimony on which the belief in the Resurrection rested (1 Cor. xv. 4-8). And not only does he assert the Resurrection as a fact, but he builds upon it a whole scheme of doctrine: 'If Christ be not risen,' he says, 'then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.' We do not stay now to consider the exact philosophical weight of this evidence. It will be time enough to do this when it has received the critical discussion that may be presumed to be in store for it. But as external evidence, in the legal sense, it is probably the best that can be produced, and it has been entirely untouched so far."¹ We have already disposed of the "allusions" above referred to. We shall in due time deal with the rest of the statements in this passage, but at present it is sufficient to agree at least with the remark that, "as external evidence," the testimony of Paul "is probably the best that can be produced." We know at least who the witness really is, which is an advantage denied us in the case of the Gospels. It would be premature to express surprise that we find the case of miracles, and more especially of such stupendous miracles as the Resurrection and Ascension, practically resting upon the testimony of a single witness. This thought will intrude itself, but cannot at present be pursued.

The allegation which we have to examine is that the Founder of Christianity, after being dead and buried, rose from the dead and did not again die, but, after remaining some time with his disciples, ascended with his body into heaven.² It is unnecessary to complicate the question by adding the other doctrines regarding the miraculous birth and divine origin and personality of Jesus. In the problem before us certain objective facts are asserted which admit of being judicially tested. We have nothing to do here with the vague modern representation of these events, by means of which the objective facts vanish, and are replaced by subjective impressions and tricks of consciousness or symbols of spiritual life. Those who adopt such views have, of course, abandoned all that is real and supernatural in the supposed events. The Resurrection and Ascension with which we have to deal are events precisely as objective and real as the death and burial—no ideal process figured by the imagination or embodiments of Christian hope, but tangible realities, historical occurrences in the sense of

¹ Sanday, *The Gospels in the Second Century*, 1876, p. 10 f.

² In the Articles of the Church of England this is expressed as follows: Art. ii. "who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, etc." Art. iii. "As Christ died for us, and was buried; so also it is to be believed that He went down into Hell." Art. iv. "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His Body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended unto Heaven, and there sitteth, until He return to judge all men at the last day."

ordinary life. If Jesus, after being crucified, dead, and buried, did not physically rise again from the dead, and in the flesh,¹ without again dying, "ascend into Heaven," the whole case falls to the ground. These incidents, although stupendous miracles, must have been actual occurrences. If they did not take place, our task is at an end. If it be asserted that they really did take place, their occurrence must be attested by adequate evidence. Apologists, whilst protesting that the occurrences in question are believed upon ordinary historical evidence, and that Christianity requires no indulgence, but submits itself to the same tests as any other affirmation, do not practically act upon this principle, but, as soon as it is enunciated, introduce a variety of special pleas which remove the case from the domain of history into that of theology, and proceed upon one assumption after another, until the fundamental facts become enveloped and, so to say, protected from judicial criticism by a cloud of religious dogmas and hypotheses.² By confining our attention to the simple facts which form the basis of the whole superstructure of ecclesiastical Christianity, we may avoid much confusion of ideas, and restrict the field of inquiry to reasonable limits. We propose, therefore, to limit our investigation to the evidence for the reality of the Resurrection and Ascension.

What evidence could be regarded as sufficient to establish the reality of such supposed occurrences? The question is one which demands the serious attention and consideration of every thoughtful man. It is obvious that the amount of evidence requisite to satisfy our minds as to the truth of any statement should be measured by the nature of that statement and, we may as well add, by its practical importance to ourselves. The news that a man was married or a child born last week is received without doubt, because men are married and children are born every day; and, although such pieces of gossip are frequently untrue, nothing appears more natural or more in accordance with our experience. If we take more distant and less familiar events, we have no doubt that a certain monarch was crowned, and that he subsequently died some centuries ago. If we ask for proof of the statement, nothing may be forthcoming of a very minute

¹ The disappearance of the body from the sepulchre, a point much insisted upon, could have had no significance or reality if the body did not rise and afterwards ascend.

² A work of this kind may be mentioned in illustration: Dr. Westcott's *Gospel of the Resurrection*. The argument of this work is of unquestionable ability, but it is chiefly remarkable, we think, for the manner in which the direct evidence is hurried over, and a mass of assertions and assumptions, the greater part of which is utterly untenable and inadmissible, is woven into specious and eloquent pleading, and does duty for substantial testimony.

or indubitable nature. No absolute eye-witness of the coronation may have left a clear and detailed narrative of the ceremony; and possibly there may no longer be extant a sufficiently attested document proving with certainty the death of the monarch. There are several considerations, however, which make us perfectly satisfied with the evidence incomplete as it may be. Monarchs are generally crowned and invariably die; and the statement that any one particular monarch was crowned and died is so completely in conformity with experience that we have no hesitation in believing it in the specific case. We are satisfied to believe such ordinary statements upon very slight evidence, both because our experience prepares us to believe that they are true and because we do not much care whether they are true or not. If life, or even succession to an estate, depended upon either event, the demand for evidence, even in such simple matters, would be immensely intensified. The converse of the statement would not meet with the same reception. Would anyone believe the affirmation that Alfred the Great, for instance, did not die at all? What amount of evidence would be required before such a statement could be pronounced sufficiently attested? Universal experience would be so uniformly opposed to the assertion that such a phenomenon had taken place, that probably no evidence readily conceivable could ensure the belief of more than a credulous few. The assertion that a man actually died and was buried, and yet afterwards rose from the dead, is still more at variance with human experience. The prolongation of life to long periods is comparatively consistent with experience; and if a life extending to several centuries be incredible, it is only so in degree, and is not absolutely contrary to the order of nature, which certainly under present conditions does not favour the supposition of such lengthened existence, but still does not fix hard-and-fast limits to the life of man. The resurrection of a man who has once been absolutely dead, however, is contrary to all human experience. If to this we add the assertion that the person so raised from the dead never again died, but, after continuing some time longer on earth, ascended bodily to some invisible and inconceivable place called Heaven, there to "sit at the right hand of God," the shock to reason and common-sense becomes so extreme that it is difficult even to realise the nature of the affirmation. It would be hopeless to endeavour to define the evidence which could establish the reality of the alleged occurrences.

As the central doctrines of a religion upon which the salvation of the human race is said to depend, we are too deeply interested to be satisfied with slight evidence or no evidence at all. It has not unfrequently been made a reproach that forensic evidence is

required of the reality of Divine Revelation. Such a course is regarded as perfectly preposterous, whether the test be applied to the primary assertion that a revelation has been made at all, or to its contents. What kind of evidence, then, are we permitted decorously to require upon so momentous a subject? Apparently, just so much as Apologists can conveniently set before us, and no more. The evidence deemed necessary for the settlement of a Scotch peerage case, or a disputed will, is, we do not hesitate to say, infinitely more complete than that which it is thought either pious or right to expect in the case of religion. The actual occurrence of the Resurrection and Ascension is certainly a matter of evidence, and it is scarcely decent that any man should be required to believe what is so opposed to human experience, upon more imperfect evidence than is required for the transfer of land or the right to a title, simply because ecclesiastical dogmas are founded upon them, and it is represented that, unless they be true, "our hope is vain." The testimony requisite to establish the reality of such stupendous miracles can scarcely be realised. Proportionately, it should be as unparalleled in its force as those events are in fact. Evidence of the actual death of the person requires to be as complete as evidence of his resurrection. One point, moreover, must never be forgotten. Human testimony is exceedingly fallible at its best. It is liable to error from innumerable causes, and most of all, probably, when religious excitement is present, and disturbing elements of sorrow, fear, doubt, or enthusiasm interfere with the calmness of judgment. When any assertion is made which contradicts unvarying experience, upon evidence which experience knows to be universally liable to error, there cannot be much hesitation in disbelieving the assertion and preferring belief in the order of nature. And when evidence proceeds from an age exceptionally exposed to error, from ignorance of natural laws, and the prevalence of superstition, and religious excitement, it cannot be received without the gravest suspicion. We make these brief remarks, in anticipation, as nothing is more essential in the discussion upon which we are about to enter than a proper appreciation of the allegations which are to be tested, and of the nature of the testimony required for belief in them.

We shall not limit our inquiry to the testimony of Paul, but shall review the whole of the evidence adduced for the Resurrection and Ascension. Hitherto, our examination of the historical books of the New Testament has been mainly for the purpose of ascertaining their character, and the value of their evidence for miracles and the reality of Divine Revelation. It is unnecessary for us here minutely to recapitulate the results. The Acts of the Apostles, we have shown, cannot be received as testimony of the

slightest weight upon any of the points before us. Briefly to state the case of the Gospels in other words than our own, we repeat the honest statement of the able writer quoted at the beginning of this chapter: "In the first place, merely as a matter of historical attestation, the Gospels are not the strongest evidence for the Christian miracles. Only one of the four, in its present shape, is claimed as the work of an Apostle, and of that the genuineness is disputed."¹ We may add that the third Synoptic does not, in the estimation of any one who has examined the Acts of the Apostles, gain additional credibility by being composed by the same author as the latter work. The writers of the four Gospels are absolutely unknown to us, and in the case of three of them it is not even affirmed that they were eye-witnesses of the Resurrection and Ascension and other miracles narrated. The undeniably doubtful authorship of the fourth Gospel, not to make a more positive statement here, renders this work, which was not written until upwards of half a century, at the very least, after the death of Jesus, incapable of proving anything in regard to the Resurrection and Ascension. A much stronger statement might be made, but we refer readers to our preceding arguments, and we shall learn something more of the character of the Gospel narratives as we proceed.

Although we cannot attach any value to the Gospels as evidence, we propose, before taking the testimony of Paul, to survey the various statements made by them regarding the astounding miracles we are discussing. Enough has been said to show that we cannot accept any statement as true simply because it is made by a Gospel or Gospels. When it is related in the first Synoptic, for instance, that Pilate took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood: see ye to it"²—an incident to which no reference, be it said in passing, is made by the other Evangelists, although it is sufficiently remarkable to have deserved notice—we cannot of course assume that Pilate actually said or did anything of the kind. A comparison of the various accounts of the Resurrection and Ascension, however, and careful examination of their details, will be of very great use, by enabling us to appreciate the position of the case apart from the evidence of Paul. The indefinite impression fostered by Apologists, that the evidence of the Gospels supplements and completes the evidence of the Apostle, and forms an aggregate body of testimony of remarkable force and volume, must be examined, and a clear conception formed of the whole case.

One point may at once be mentioned before we enter upon our examination of the Gospels. The Evangelists narrate such

¹ Sanday, *The Gospels in the Second Century*, p. 10.

² Matt. xxvii. 24.

astonishing occurrences as the Resurrection and Ascension with perfect composure and absence of surprise. This characteristic is even made an argument for the truth of their narrative. The impression made upon our minds, however, is the very reverse of that which Apologists desire us to receive. The writers do not in the least degree seem to have realised the exceptional character of the occurrences they relate, and betray the assurance of persons writing in an ignorant and superstitious age, whose minds have become too familiar with the supernatural to be at all surprised either by a resurrection from the dead or a bodily ascension. Miracles in their eyes have lost their strangeness and seem quite commonplace. It will be seen, as we examine the narratives, that a stupendous miracle, or a convulsion of nature, is thrown in by one or omitted by another as a mere matter of detail. An earthquake and the resurrection of many bodies of saints are mere trifles which can be inserted without wonder, or omitted without regret. The casual and momentary expression of hesitation to believe, which is introduced, is evidently nothing more than a rhetorical device to heighten the reality of the scene. It would have been infinitely more satisfactory had we been able to perceive that these witnesses, instead of being genuine denizens of the age of miracles, had really understood the astounding nature of the occurrences they report, and did not consider a miracle the most natural thing in the world.

cf. John
on
blood &
water;
different
ways of
writing;
different
hands.

CHAPTER II.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE GOSPELS

IN order more fully to appreciate the nature of the narratives which the four Evangelists give of the last hours of the life of Jesus, we may take them up at the point where, mocked and buffeted by the Roman soldiers, he is finally led away to be crucified.¹

According to the Synoptics, the Roman guard entrusted with the duty of executing the cruel sentence find a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, and compel him to carry the cross.² It was customary for those condemned to crucifixion to carry the cross, or at least the main portion of it, themselves to the place of execution, and no explanation is given by the Synoptists for the deviation from this practice which they relate. The fourth Gospel, however, does not appear to know anything of this incident, or of Simon of Cyrene, but distinctly states that Jesus bore his own cross.³ On the way to Golgotha, according to the third Gospel, Jesus is followed by a great multitude of the people, and of women who were bewailing and lamenting him, and he addresses to them a few prophetic sentences.⁴ We might be surprised at the singular fact

¹ Let no one suppose that, in freely criticising the Gospels, we regard without emotion the actual incidents which lie at the bottom of these narratives, supposing them to be genuine. No one can, without pain, form to himself any adequate conception of the terrible sufferings of the Master, maltreated and insulted by a base and brutal multitude, too degraded to understand his noble character, and too ignorant to appreciate his elevated teaching; and to follow his course from the tribunal which sacrificed him to Jewish popular clamour to the spot where he ended a brief but self-sacrificing life by the shameful death of a slave may well make sympathy take the place of criticism. Profound veneration for the great Teacher, however, and earnest interest in all that concerns his history, rather command serious and unhesitating examination of the statements made with regard to him, than discourage an attempt to ascertain the truth; and it would be anything but respect for his memory to accept without question the Gospel accounts of his life simply because they were composed with the desire to glorify him.

² Matt. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26.

³ βασιτάζων ἑαυτῷ τὸν σταυρόν, John xix. 17. If, instead of this reading, which is that of the Sinaitic and Alexandrian codices and other authorities, adopted by Tischendorf and others, the τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ of the received text and Lachmann, or αὐτῷ τ. στ., of B, X, etc., be preferred, the result is the same. We may mention, in passing, that the fourth Gospel has no reference to a saying ascribed by the Synoptics to Jesus, in which bearing his cross is used typically: Matt. x. 38, xvi. 24; Mark viii. 34, x. 21; Luke ix. 23, xiv. 27.

⁴ Luke xxiii. 27 f.; cf. xxi. 23; Matt. xxiv. 19.

that there is no reference to this incident in any other Gospel, and that words of Jesus, so weighty in themselves and spoken at so supreme a moment, should not elsewhere have been recorded, but for the fact that, from internal evidence, the address must be assigned to a period subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem. The other Evangelists may, therefore, well ignore it.

It was the custom to give those about to be crucified a draught of wine containing a strong opiate, which in some degree alleviated the intense suffering of that mode of death. Mark¹ probably refers to this (xv. 23) when he states that, on reaching the place of execution, "they gave him wine (*οἶνον*) mingled with myrrh." The fourth Gospel has nothing of this. Matthew says (xxvii. 34): "They gave him vinegar (*ὄξος*) to drink mingled with gall"² (*μετὰ χολῆς*). Even if, instead of *ὄξος* with the Alexandrian and a majority of MSS., we read *οἶνος*, "wine," with the Sinaitic, Vatican, and some other ancient codices, this is a curious statement, and is well worthy of a moment's notice as suggestive of the way in which these narratives were written. The conception of a suffering Messiah, it is well known, was more particularly supported, by New Testament writers, by attributing a Messianic character to Psalm xxii., lxix., and Isaiah liii., and throughout the narrative of the Passion we are perpetually referred to these and other Scriptures, as finding their fulfilment in the sufferings of Jesus. The first Synoptist found in Psalm lxix. 21 (Sept. lxviii. 21): "They gave me also gall (*χολήν*) for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar (*ὄξος*) to drink"; and apparently, in order to make the supposed fulfilment correspond as closely as possible, he combined the "gall" of the food with the vinegar or wine in strangely literal fashion,³ very characteristic, however, of the whole of the Evangelists. Luke, who seems not to have understood the custom known perhaps to Mark, represents (xxiii. 36) the soldiers as mocking Jesus by "offering him vinegar"⁴ (*ὄξος*); he omits the gall, but probably refers to the same Psalm without being so falsely literal as Matthew.

¹ We shall, for the sake of brevity, call the Gospels by the names assigned to them in the Canon.

² There have been many attempts to explain away *χολή*, and to make it mean either a species of Vermuth, or any bitter substance (Olshausen, *Leidens-gesch.*, 168); but the great mass of critics rightly retain its meaning—"gall." So Ewald, Meyer, Bleek, Strauss, Weisse, Schenkel, Volkmar, Alford, Wordsworth, etc.

³ "St. Matthew mentally refers it to Psalm lxix. 21 *ὄξος* (or possibly *οἶνον*, which Tischendorf admits from *ℵ*, B, D, K, L, etc.) *μετὰ χολῆς*" (Farrar, *Life of Christ*, ii., p. 400, note 1).

⁴ Luke omits the subsequent offer of "vinegar" (probably the *Posca* of the Roman soldiers) mentioned by the other Evangelists. We presume the reference in xxiii. 36 to be the same as the act described in Matt. xxvii. 34 and Mark xv. 23.

We need not enter into the discussion as to the chronology of the Passion week, regarding which there is so much discrepancy in the accounts of the fourth Gospel and of the Synoptics, nor shall we pause minutely to deal with the irreconcilable difference which, it is admitted, exists in their statement of the hours at which the events of the last fatal day occurred. The fourth Gospel (xix. 4) represents Pilate as bringing Jesus forth to the Jews "about the sixth hour" (noon). Mark (xv. 25), in obvious agreement with the other Synoptics as further statements prove, distinctly says: "And it was the third hour (9 o'clock a.m.), and they crucified him." At the sixth hour (noon), according to the three Synoptists, there was darkness over the earth till about the ninth hour (3 o'clock p.m.), shortly after which time Jesus expired.¹ As, according to the fourth Gospel, the sentence was not even passed before midday, and some time must be allowed for preparation and going to the place of execution, it is clear that there is a very wide discrepancy between the hours at which Jesus was crucified and died, unless, as regards the latter point, we take agreement in all as to the hour of death. In this case, commencing at the hour of the fourth Gospel and ending with that of the Synoptics, Jesus must have expired after being less than three hours on the cross. According to the Synoptics, and also, if we assign a later hour for the death, according to the fourth Gospel, he cannot have been more than six hours on the cross. We shall presently see that this remarkably rapid death has an important bearing upon the history and the views formed regarding it. It is known that crucifixion, besides being the most shameful mode of death, and indeed chiefly reserved for slaves and the lowest criminals, was one of the most lingering and atrociously cruel punishments ever invented by the malignity of man. Persons crucified, it is stated and admitted, generally lived for at least twelve hours, and sometimes even survived the excruciating tortures of the cross for three days. We shall not further anticipate remarks which must hereafter be made regarding this.

We need not do more than again point out that no two of the Gospels agree upon so simple, yet important, a point as the inscription on the cross.² It is argued that "a close examination of the narratives furnishes no sufficient reason for supposing that all proposed to give the same or the entire inscription," and, after some curious reasoning, it is concluded that "there is at least no possibility of showing any inconsistency on the strictly literal interpretation of the words of the evangelist."³ On the contrary,

¹ Matt. xxvii. 45 f. ; Mark xv. 33 f. ; Luke xxiii. 44 f.

² Cf. Matt. xxvii. 37 ; Mark xv. 26 ; Luke xxiii. 38 ; John xix. 19.

³ Westcott, *Int. to Study of the Gospels*, 4th ed., p. 328, note 10.

we had ventured to suppose that, in giving a form of words said to have been affixed to the cross, the evangelists intended to give the form actually used, and consequently "the same" and "entire inscription," which must have been short; and we consider it quite inconceivable that such was not their deliberate intention, however imperfectly fulfilled.

We pass on merely to notice a curious point in connection with an incident related by all the Gospels. It is stated that the Roman soldiers who crucified Jesus divided his garments amongst them, casting lots to determine what part each should take. The clothing of criminals executed was the perquisite of the soldiers who performed the duty, and there is nothing improbable in the story that the four soldiers decided by lot the partition of the garments—indeed, there is every reason to suppose that such was the practice. The incident is mentioned as the direct fulfilment of the Psalm xxii. 18, which is quoted literally from the Septuagint version (xxi. 18) by the author of the fourth Gospel. He did not, however, understand the passage, or disregarded its true meaning, and in order to make the incident accord better, as he supposed, with the prophetic Psalm, he represents that the soldiers amicably parted the rest of his garments amongst them without lot, but cast lots for the coat, which was without seam: (xix. 24) "They said, therefore, among themselves: Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be; that the Scripture might be fulfilled: They parted my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots. These things, therefore, the soldiers did." The Evangelist does not perceive that the two parts of the sentence in the Psalm really refer to the same action, but exhibits the partition of the garments and the lots for the vesture as separately fulfilled. The Synoptists apparently divide the whole by lot.¹ They do not expressly refer to the Psalm, except in the received text of Matthew xxvii. 35, into which and some other MSS. the quotation has been interpolated.² That the narrative of the Gospels, instead of being independent and genuine history, is constructed upon the lines of supposed Messianic Psalms and passages of the Old Testament will become increasingly evident as we proceed.

It is stated by all the Gospels that two malefactors—the first and second calling them "robbers"—were crucified with Jesus, the one on the right hand and the other on the left. The statement in Mark xv. 28, that this fulfilled Isaiah liii. 12, which is found in our received text, is omitted by all the oldest codices,

¹ Matt. xxvii. 35; Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 34.

² "Certainly an interpolation" (Westcott, *Int. to Study of Gospels*, p. 325, note 2).

and is an interpolation;¹ but we shall hereafter have to speak of this point in connection with another matter, and we now merely point out that, though the verse was thus inserted here, it is placed in the mouth of Jesus himself by the third Synoptist (xxii. 37), and the whole passage from which it was taken has evidently largely influenced the composition of the narrative before us. According to the first and second Gospels,² the robbers joined with the chief priests and the scribes and elders and those who passed by in mocking and reviling Jesus. This is directly contradicted by the third Synoptist, who states that only one of the malefactors did so (xxiii. 39 f.): "But the other answering rebuked him and said: Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man did nothing amiss. And he said: Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom. And he said unto him: Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." It requires very little examination to detect that this story is legendary, and cannot be maintained as historical. Those who dwell upon its symbolical character do nothing to establish its veracity. This exemplary robber speaks like an Apostle, and in praying Jesus as the Messiah to remember him when he came into his kingdom, he shows much more than apostolic appreciation of the claims and character of Jesus. The reply of Jesus, moreover, contains a statement not only wholly contradictory of Jewish belief as to the place of departed spirits, but of all Christian doctrine at the time as to the descent of Jesus into Hades. Into this, however, it is needless for us to go.³ Not only do the other Gospels show no knowledge of so interesting an episode, but, as we have pointed out, the first and second Synoptics positively exclude it. We shall see, moreover, that there is a serious difficulty in understanding how this conversation on the cross, which is so exclusively the property of the third Synoptist, could have been reported to him.

The Synoptics represent the passers-by and the chief priests, scribes, and elders as mocking Jesus as he hung on the cross. The fourth Gospel preserves total silence as to all this. It is curious also that the mocking is based upon that described in the Psalm xxii., to which we have already several times had to refer. In verse 7 f. we have: "All they that see me laughed me to scorn; they shot out the lip; they shook the head (saying), 8. He trusted

¹ "Certainly an interpolation" (Westcott, *ib.*, p. 326, note 5).

² Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark xv. 32.

³ It is unnecessary for us to discuss the various ideas of which this episode is supposed to be symbolical.

in the Lord, let Him deliver him, let Him save him (seeing) that he delighteth in him."¹ Compare with this Matt. xxvii. 39 f., Mark xv. 29 f., Luke xxiii. 35. Is it possible to suppose that the chief priests and elders and scribes could actually have quoted the words of this Psalm, there put into the mouth of the Psalmist's enemies, as the first Synoptist represents (xxvii. 43)? It is obvious that the speeches ascribed to the chief priests and elders can be nothing more than the expressions which the writers considered suitable to them, and the fact that they seek their inspiration in a Psalm which they suppose to be Messianic is suggestive.

We have already mentioned that the fourth Gospel says nothing of any mocking speeches. The author, however, narrates an episode (xix. 25-27) in which the dying Jesus is represented as confiding his mother to the care of "the disciple whom he loved," of which, in their turn, the Synoptists seem to be perfectly ignorant. We have already elsewhere remarked that there is no evidence that there was any disciple whom Jesus specially loved, except the repeated statement in this Gospel. No other work of the New Testament contains a hint of such an individual, and much less that he was the Apostle John. Nor is there any evidence that any one of the disciples took the mother of Jesus to his own home. There is, therefore, no external confirmation of this episode; but there is, on the contrary, much which leads to the conclusion that it is not historical. There has been some discussion as to whether four women are mentioned (xix. 25), or whether "his mother's sister" is represented as "Mary, the wife of Clopas," or was a different person. There are, we think, reasons for concluding that there were four; but, in the doubt, we shall not base any argument on the point. The Synoptics² distinctly state that "the women that followed him from Galilee," amongst whom were "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of Zebedee's sons,"³ and, as the third Synoptic says, "all his acquaintance,"⁴ were standing "afar off" (*μακρόθεν*). They are unanimous in saying this, and there is every reason for supposing that they are correct.⁵ This is, consequently, a contradiction of the account in the fourth Gospel that John and the women were standing "by the cross of Jesus." Olshausen, Lücke, and others, suggest that they subsequently came from a distance up to the cross; but the statement of the Synoptists is made at the close, and after this scene is supposed to have taken

¹ 7. Πάντες οἱ θεωροῦντές με ἐξεμυκτήρισάν με, ἐλάλησαν ἐν χείλεσιν, ἐκίνησαν κεφαλὴν, 8. Ἦλπισεν ἐπὶ Κύριον, ῥυσάσθω αὐτόν, σωσάτω αὐτόν, ὅτι θέλει αὐτόν. Ps. xxi., Sept.; cf. verses 4, 5.

² Matt. xxvii. 55 f.; Mark xv. 40; Luke xxiii. 49.

³ Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40.

⁴ Luke xxiii. 49.

⁵ Cf. Matt. xxvi. 31, 56; Mark xiv. 27.

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place. The opposite conjecture, that from standing close to the cross they removed to a distance, has little to recommend it. Both explanations are equally arbitrary and unsupported by evidence.

It may be well, in connection with this, to refer to the various sayings and cries ascribed by the different Evangelists to Jesus on the cross. We have already mentioned the conversation with the "penitent thief," which is peculiar to the third Gospel, and now that with the "beloved disciple," which is only in the fourth. The third Synoptic¹ states that, on being crucified, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"—a saying which is in the spirit of Jesus and worthy of him, but of which the other Gospels do not take any notice.² The fourth Gospel again has a cry (xix. 28): "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things are now fulfilled, that the Scripture might be accomplished, saith: I thirst." The majority of critics understand by this that "I thirst" is said in order "that the Scripture might be fulfilled" by the offer of the vinegar, related in the following verse. The Scripture referred to is of course Psalm lxix. 21: "They gave me also gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar (ὄξος) to drink"; which we have already quoted in connection with Matthew xxvii. 34. The third Synoptic (xxiii. 36) represents the vinegar as being offered in mockery at a much earlier period, and Matthew and Mark³ connect the offer of the vinegar with quite a different cry from that in the fourth Gospel. Nothing could be more natural than that, after protracted agony, the patient sufferer should cry, "I thirst"; but the dogmatic purpose, which dictates the whole narrative in the fourth Gospel, is rendered obvious by the reference of such a cry to a supposed Messianic prophecy. This is further displayed by the statement (v. 29) that the sponge with vinegar was put "upon hyssop" (ὑσσώπῳ)—the two Synoptics have "on a reed" (καλάμῳ)—which the author probably uses in association with the paschal lamb,⁴ an idea present to his mind throughout the passion. The first and second Synoptics⁵ represent the last cry of Jesus to have been a quotation from Psalm xxii. 1: "Eli (or Mark, Eloi), Eli, lema sabachthani? that is to say: My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me?" This, according to them, evidently, was the last articulate utterance of the expiring Master, for they merely add that "when he cried again with a loud voice" Jesus yielded up his spirit.⁶ Neither of the other Gospels has any

¹ xxiii. 34.

² Strauss calls attention to Isaiah liii. 12, where, of the servant of Jehovah, it is said that he "made intercession for the transgressors" (*Das Leben Jesu*, p. 584).

³ Matt. xxvii. 48 f.; Mark xv. 36.

⁵ Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34.

⁴ Exod. xii. 22; cf. Levit. xiv. 4, 6, 49.

⁶ Matt. xxvii. 50; Mark xv. 37.

mention of this cry. The third Gospel substitutes: "And when Jesus cried with a loud voice he said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, and having said this he expired."¹ This is an almost literal quotation from the Septuagint version of Psalm xxxi. 5. The fourth Gospel has a totally different cry (xix. 30), for, on receiving the vinegar, which accomplished the Scripture, he represents Jesus as saying, "It is finished" (Τετέλεσται), and immediately expiring.

It will be observed that seven sayings are attributed to Jesus on the cross, of which the first two Gospels have only one, the third Synoptic three, and the fourth Gospel three. We do not intend to express any opinion here in favour of any of these, but we merely point out the remarkable fact that, with the exception of the one cry in the first two Synoptics, each Gospel has ascribed different sayings to the dying Master, and not only no two of them agree, but in some important instances the statement of the one Evangelist seems to exclude the accounts of the others. Everyone knows the hackneyed explanation of Apologists, but in works which repeat each other so much elsewhere it certainly is a curious phenomenon that there is so little agreement here. If all the Master's disciples "forsook him and fled,"² and his few friends and acquaintances stood "afar off" regarding his sufferings, it is readily conceivable that pious tradition had unlimited play. We must return to the cry recorded in Matthew and Mark,³ the only one about which two witnesses agree. Both of them give this quotation from Psalm xxii. 1 in Aramaic: Eli (Mark: Eloi), Eli,⁴ lema sabacthani. The purpose is clearly to enable the reader to understand what follows, which we quote from the first Gospel: "And some of them that stood there, when they heard it said: This man calleth for Elijah..... The rest said: Let be, let us see whether Elijah cometh to save him."⁵ It is impossible to confuse "*Eli*" or "*Eloi*" with "*Elijahu*," and the explanations suggested by Apologists are not sufficient to remove a difficulty which seems to betray the legendary character of the statement. The mistake of supposing that Jesus called for Elijah could not possibly have been made by those who spoke Aramaic; that strangers not perfectly understanding Aramaic should be here intended cannot be maintained, for the suggestion is represented as adopted by "the rest." The Roman soldiers had probably never heard of Elijah; and there is nothing to support the allegation of mockery

¹ Luke xxiii. 46. ² Matt. xxvi. 56. ³ Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34.

⁴ The Sinaitic cod., Matt. xxvii. 46 reads: ἐλωὶ, ἐλωὶ, λεμὰ σαβαχθανεὶ; the cod. Alex., ἡλὶ, ἡλὶ, κ. τ. λ.; cod. Vat., ἐλωεὶ, ἐλωεὶ, κ. τ. λ. D has ἡλεὶ, ἡλεὶ, κ. τ. λ. We only note the variations in the first two words, which are those upon which the question turns.

⁵ Matt. xxvii. 47, 49; cf. Mark xv. 35, 36.

||| Note.

as accounting for the singular episode. The verse of the Psalm was too well known to the Jews to admit of any suggested play upon words.

The three Synoptics state that, from the sixth hour (mid-day) to the ninth (3 o'clock), "there was darkness over all the earth" (σκότος ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν).¹ The third Gospel adds, "the sun having failed" (τοῦ ἡλίου ἐκλιπόντος).² By the term "all the earth" some critics maintain that the Evangelist merely meant the Holy Land,³ whilst others hold that he uses the expression in its literal sense. The fourth Gospel takes no notice of this darkness. Such a phenomenon is not a trifle to be ignored in any account of the crucifixion, if it actually occurred. The omission of all mention of it either amounts to a denial of its occurrence, or betrays most suspicious familiarity with supernatural interference. Many efforts have been made to explain this darkness naturally, or at least to find some allusion to it in contemporary history, all of which have signally failed. As the moon was at the full, it is admitted that the darkness could not have been an eclipse. The Fathers appealed to Phlegon the Chronicler, who mentions⁴ an eclipse of the sun about this period accompanied by an earthquake, and also to a similar occurrence referred to by Eusebius,⁵ probably quoted from the historian Thallus; but, of course, modern knowledge has dispelled the illusion that these phenomena have any connection with the darkness we are discussing, and the theory that the Evangelists are confirmed in their account by this evidence is now generally abandoned. It is apart from our object to show how common it was amongst classical and other writers to represent nature as sympathising with national or social disasters;⁶ and as a poetical touch this remarkable darkness of the Synoptists, of which no one else knows anything, is quite intelligible. The statement, however, is as seriously and deliberately made as any other in their narrative, and does not add to its credibility. It is obvious that the account is mythical, and it bears a strange likeness to passages in the Old Testament, from the imagery of which the representation in all probability was derived.⁷

¹ Matt. xxvii. 45; Mark xv. 33; Luke xxiii. 44.

² Luke xxiii. 45. This is the reading of the Sinaitic and Vatican (ἐκλείπ.) codices. A reads καὶ ἐσκοτίσθη ὁ ἥλιος.

³ Dr. Farrar says: "It is quite possible that the darkness was a local gloom which hung densely over the guilty city and its immediate neighbourhood" (*Life of Christ*, 5th ed., ii., p. 414).

⁴ xiii. *Olympiad*.

⁵ *Chron. ad Olymp.*, 202.

⁶ Cf. Virgil., *Georg.*, i. 463-468; Dio Cass., 40.17, 56.29; Plin. *H. N.*, 2.30; Plutarch., *V. Rom.*, § 27, p. 34; *Cæs.*, § 69, p. 740 f.; Wetstein, Grotius, *ad h. l.*

⁷ Cf. Joel. ii. 10, 31, iii. 15; Amos viii. 9; Isaiah xiii. 10, l. 3, etc.