

## XVIII

### LUKE AND ACTS

#### SYNOPSIS

##### THE ROMAN ORIGIN OF ACTS

Acts is not so much a history of the Apostolic Age as of the march of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome.

Probably known to Clement of Rome A.D. 96.

Objections to the theory that connects Lucan writings with Antioch.

If Theophilus was a Roman noble the Gospel may have been written and addressed to him when Governor of some province. Possibly, therefore, written in Corinth, the capital of Achaëa. In that case it would be brought to Rome by the author himself.

Christianity and the Imperial House in Rome, A.D. c. 90. Acts is "the first of the Apologies," *i.e.* of defences of Christianity addressed to the educated Roman world.

##### DATE OF THE GOSPEL

Not later than A.D. 85, more likely about A.D. 80.

##### AUTHORSHIP

This important for the indirect light which it throws on the local origin of sources of the Gospels. Authorship of Third Gospel bound up with that of Acts. The Tübingen view of Acts made untenable by subsequent research and discussion. The linguistic, archaeological evidence, and that from "undesigned coincidence," cannot even be summarised here; but considerations, some of them new, are offered, bearing upon the larger issues involved in the question of the Lucan authorship.

I. Twofold error in the Tübingen view. (a) Their formula, "thesis, antithesis, and synthesis," involves an *a priori* dogmatic interpretation of history; but history is an empiric science. (b) The

actual evidence shows that Peter occupied a middle position between James and Paul—that is, the middle position was the starting-point, not the result, of the divergence. This shown by a consideration of the Cornelius incident and the dispute at Antioch.

II. The evidence of the “we sections” must be considered in connection with (a) the literary methods of the author, (b) the fact that they break off at Philippi, and recommence at this same city.

III. The antinomian language of Paul was balanced by occasional acts of an extremely conciliatory character. Paul’s relation to the “Pillar” Apostles and the Apostolic Decree of Acts xv. The Acts is firstly, “the case for the Christian Church,” secondly, an *Apologia pro vita Pauli*; as such it conforms in regard to both emphasis and omission to the traditions of ancient biography.

IV. Reply to the objection that the author of Acts could not be Luke because he shows no appreciation of the specifically Pauline theology. (a) There is no evidence, or even probability, that Luke was converted by Paul or had much to do with him until his own religious outlook was fully matured. (b) Only one brought up a Pharisee could really fathom the inner meaning of Paul’s theology, and Luke was a Gentile.

V. The Roman origin of Acts opens up a new possibility in regard to the debated question of the relation of Luke and Josephus.

VI. The Preface to the Gospel implies an intention to improve upon the work of Mark. Since Mark and Luke were read together at Rome, the names of both authors must have been used in order to distinguish the two books. Hence (against H. J. Cadbury) the name Luke could not have been arrived at as the result of conjecture in the second century as to the authorship of a previously anonymous work.

VII. It is a principle of historical criticism, in estimating the value of evidence, to make allowance for any possible bias of the witness. In the second century the bias was very strongly in the direction of attributing Apostolic authorship to documents accepted into the Canon. The burden, then, of proof lies with those who would assert the traditional authorship of Matthew and John, but on those who would deny it in the case of Mark and Luke.

## CHAPTER XVIII

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#### THE ROMAN ORIGIN OF ACTS

EVERYTHING points to Rome as the Church for which the Acts was written. Considered as a history of the foundation of Christianity, Acts is entirely out of proportion. Not a word is said of Alexandria, while Antioch, the first centre of the Gentile mission and always the capital of Eastern Christianity, drops out of sight so soon as Paul has begun his great movement of expansion north and west. But the Acts is not intended to be a history of the first thirty years of Christianity. It is rather the story of how that religion travelled from Jerusalem, the capital of Jewry, to Rome, the capital of the world. Its aim is to trace the transition of Christianity from a sect of Judaism into a world religion. The points which the author most emphasises are the crucial stages in this development. The Gospel is preached first to a Eunuch, a Jew by blood, but one who might not be a member of the Jewish congregation; then to the half-Israelitish Samaritans; then to Cornelius, a Gentile proselyte of the synagogue; lastly to the Gentile world at large; and this spiritual expansion, we are led to feel, has reached its consummation when, with the two years' preaching of Paul, the Church has been securely, and by apostolic authority, planted in the capital of the world. Lastly, the book ends with the announcement that the Jewish world has finally rejected Christ, with the unuttered implication that the capital of Christianity has been transferred from Jerusalem to

Rome. In a word, the title of the Acts might well have been "The Road to Rome."

This inference from internal evidence should be taken in connection with the probability that the Acts was known to the writer of the letter of the Roman to the Corinthian Church, c. A.D. 96, ascribed to Clement. His phrase "more glad to give than to receive" (Clem. ii. 1) seems to allude to the saying of Christ recorded Acts xx. 35 but not elsewhere. Again, Acts and Clement agree in conflating 1 Sam. xiii. 14 with Ps. lxxxviii. 21 (Clem. xviii. 1; cf. Acts xiii. 22). Either, then, Clement quotes Acts or both draw on the same collection of Messianic proof texts. If the latter, it must have been a collection used in Rome at this date. More significant is his allusion to Peter and Paul. Of Paul, Clement (v. 6-7) says, "seven times in bonds, hurried from place to place, stoned, a preacher in both the East and the West . . . having taught the whole world righteousness and reached the farthest limits of the West, and having borne testimony before the governors . . ." The concluding words depend for their rhetorical effect on the implication that the Apostle thus fulfilled the prophecy of our Lord: "Before governors and kings shall ye stand for my sake for a testimony unto them" (Mk. xiii. 9). It adds still more point to the whole passage if what goes before is regarded as being a similar allusion to the words, "Ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts i. 8), which states the "programme" of the Acts. True, only four imprisonments—at Philippi, Jerusalem, Caesarea and Rome—are expressly mentioned in Acts, but the early tradition embodied in the Latin (Marcionite) Prologues added one more in Ephesus; and there may have been two periods of imprisonment in Rome. But Clement's arithmetic must not be pressed; "seven" is a sacred number into conformity with which Jews and Christians were always trying to squeeze facts. At any rate Clement's description of Paul's labours and sufferings is very much nearer to the story in Acts than it is to Paul's own summary in 2 Cor. xi. 24 ff.

There is another feature about this passage. Clement (v. 3-5) is quite obviously trying to suggest a parallelism between the sufferings of "the two good Apostles," Peter and Paul. Peter is mentioned first; but all Clement has to say about him is that he "endured not one nor two but many labours, and having thus borne testimony<sup>1</sup> went to his appointed place of glory." Why has Clement definite details about Paul's sufferings but only vague generalities about those of Peter? This would be readily explained if Clement knew Acts—which mentions two imprisonments of Peter, but nothing comparable to the long list of sufferings endured and dangers overcome which it records of Paul—but knew nothing definite about Peter beyond what he found in Acts, except the bare fact (and possibly the time and place) of his death.

Eusebius<sup>2</sup> says that Luke was of Antiochene lineage, and the Monarchian Prologue agrees (*Syrus natione*). This may be an inference from the occurrence of a "we section" in the Western text in Acts xi. 28. But, if so, that only means that the early evidence for the Western reading is much increased; and as the reading is very likely correct, the inference may be so too. But no Church writer and no MS. "subscription" says that Luke wrote at Antioch; and the fact that the connection of Peter with Antioch—the proudest boast of that Church—is completely ignored is fatal to the theory of some modern scholars that the book was written in and for that Church.<sup>3</sup>

But though the Acts is a sequel to the Gospel, it does not necessarily follow that they were written in the same place, or

<sup>1</sup> The *οὕτω* before *μαρτυρήσας* implies that the verb refers to the labours—not to martyrdom in the strict sense.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ μὲν γένος ὦν τῶν ἀπ' Ἀντιοχείας (*H.E.* iii. 4).

<sup>3</sup> A few cursives (incl. 124, 346) and some MSS. of the Peshitta state that Luke wrote in Alexandria. This is perhaps an inference from the statement in the *Apostolic Constitutions* that the second bishop of that Church was consecrated by "Luke, who was also an evangelist." But this is a document of Syrian origin and, as there is no at all early Egyptian tradition that connected Luke with Alexandria, it merely constitutes negative evidence that Syrian tradition did *not* connect the writing of the Gospel with Antioch.

that when Luke wrote the Gospel he already anticipated a sequel. Linguistic considerations, pointed out by Hawkins,<sup>1</sup> and the discrepancy (assuming the B text to be correct) between the Gospel and Acts in regard to the day of the Ascension, would favour an interval of time between the two works; and this may have corresponded to a change of residence. And there are four considerations—though none of them is at all conclusive—which may be urged in support of the view that the Gospel was written elsewhere than Rome. (1) The possibility—it is no more (p. 175 ff.)—that Luke had only a mutilated copy of Mark. (2) The later Latin tradition, found in the Monarchian Prologue and accepted by Jerome (though Jerome assigns Acts to Rome), places the writing of the Gospel in Achaea.<sup>2</sup> In view of this it is unsafe to press the language of Irenaeus (cf. p. 488) as evidence for a Roman tradition, c. 170, that Luke wrote in that city: the Roman Church has never been in the habit of surrendering claims once made. (3) There is also, for what it is worth, the tradition connecting Luke with Boeotia (Thebes). The tomb shown there as his must have existed a sufficient number of years to make its legend respectable before the removal of his bones to Constantinople in the year 357. (4) The absence of reminiscences of the Gospel in 1 Clement would be explained if its adoption at Rome was comparatively recent, so that its phraseology had not yet had time to become part of the texture of Clement's mind. The name Theophilus in the Lucan Prefaces looks like a prudential pseudonym for some Roman of position—*κράτιστε* might be translated "your Excellence"; and if Luke had a special connection with some personage who, after a provincial

<sup>1</sup> *Hor. Syn.*<sup>2</sup> p. 177 ff.

<sup>2</sup> This may be merely an inference from the fact that "the brother whose praise is in the Gospel" (2 Cor. viii. 18), often identified with Luke, is mentioned in an epistle addressed to Corinth and "the saints which are in the whole of Achaea" (2 Cor. i. 1). Luke's connection with Achaea is assumed in an address by Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* xxxiii. 11, delivered in Constantinople, so that the belief was current in the East also. Jerome's phrase (Pref. to Commentary on Matthew) "in the parts of Achaea and Boeotia" is a rather clumsy conflation of two traditions; actually Boeotia was a part of the Roman province "Achaea."

governorship (perhaps of Achaea, resident at Corinth), subsequently returned to Rome, all the conditions would be satisfied. But in that case a copy of the Gospel would have been brought to Rome by Luke himself so soon after it was written that, from the point of view of the history of its circulation in the Church at large, it may practically be reckoned as a second Roman Gospel.

The theory that the Lucan writings were primarily written to present the case for Christianity to certain members of the Roman aristocracy is borne out by a consideration of the internal circumstances of the Church in Rome during the latter part of the first century A.D. Domitian was assassinated in September A.D. 96. Eight months before he had scandalised Rome by putting to death T. Flavius Clemens, his own first cousin, the husband of the only daughter of his only sister. Domitian himself was childless, but Clemens and his wife had two sons. These, by the express order of the Emperor, had been named Domitian and Vespasian respectively, after himself and his father, the founder of the dynasty. This, of course, constituted a public avowal of the Emperor's intention that one or other of these boys should ultimately succeed to the throne. In the year A.D. 95 Domitian had associated Flavius Clemens with himself as joint Consul; gossip would make him heir apparent.<sup>1</sup> But secretly Domitilla, the wife of Flavius Clemens, was, if not actually a baptized member, at any rate an adherent, of the Church; and Clemens himself would seem to have been at least an inquirer. The evidence, archaeological and historical, for this remarkable fact is set out at length by Lightfoot,<sup>2</sup> and more recent excavations at Rome suggest that at this particular date members of more than one aristocratic family were interesting themselves in Christianity. This is not quite so surprising as may appear. Juvenal complains of the "Orontes pouring into the Tiber"<sup>3</sup>; and not infrequently in Roman history did some oriental religion, in a more or less subterranean way, be-

<sup>1</sup> That hypothesis would account for Domitian killing him.

<sup>2</sup> *Clement*, vol. i. p. 29 ff.

<sup>3</sup> "Iam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes" (iii. 62).

come for a time the vogue in the highest society at Rome. About this date Christianity for a few short years seems to have had its turn—perhaps as a result of the general reaction against the spirit of Nero, and the effort of the Court to promote moral reformation which characterised the reign of Vespasian.

Curiously enough, however, it never seems to have occurred to Church historians to ask what is likely to have been the psychological effect, upon a community situated as was the Christian Church of Rome in the first century, of such a connexion with a possible heir to the throne of Caesar—and that at a moment when the reigning Caesar was, not only master of the world, but was claiming and receiving the title *Dominus Deus*. Had Domitian died a year before he did, it might have been, not Constantine, but Flavius Clemens, whose name would have gone down to history as the first Christian Emperor. How different in that case might have been the fate both of the Empire and the Church? For the Church it was perhaps well that its capture of the Palace was postponed from the first century to the fourth. The conversion of Constantine and the state patronage of Christianity which followed were not an unmixed blessing for a Church which had grown to maturity; to the infant Church they might have been fatal. But even in the time of Constantine no one foresaw these dangers; while in the first century the accession of a Christian Emperor would have been regarded by Christians not a few as almost the equivalent of the inauguration of the kingdom of God on earth.

A man in the position of Flavius Clemens could only have been led very gradually, step by step, to contemplate such a complete abandonment of national traditions and intellectual and social prejudice as, at that date, would have been involved in accepting Christianity. It would have been easier in Victorian England for Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, to become an avowed disciple of General Booth than for Flavius Clemens under Domitian to be even a secret sympathiser with the Christian Church. Domitilla, his wife, was sent into exile after her



husband's execution, and the Church has always reckoned her as a "confessor"; but Clemens himself, though actually put to death on a religious charge, was not reckoned as a martyr. From this we may safely infer that the husband, at least, had never been actually baptized, nor in any way publicly avowed his adhesion to Christianity. What was noted about him, say secular historians, was a marked abstention from the public duties expected of a man in his position. This abstention is attributed by Suetonius to laziness; more probably it was due to the fact that public life at Rome necessarily involved participation in pagan sacrifices and amusements like gladiatorial shows, in which any one who was at all attracted towards Christianity would have found it more and more difficult conscientiously to take part.

But we are not here concerned with the views or feelings of Clemens himself. What we have to consider is the probable effect on Christians at Rome of the fact that the wife of the heir to the throne was a member of their despised community, and of the hope that her husband might soon become one. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "not many mighty, not many noble" were members of their calling; and the letters which he writes, though to our taste vigorous and effective in style, would not altogether pass muster according to the conventional rules of writing on which at that period so much stress was laid in educated circles. Still less would the Gospel of Mark—the only account which the Roman Church possessed of the life of Christ—the Greek style of which is, next to Revelation, easily the worst in the New Testament. Once Christianity began to reach members of the high aristocracy, there would arise a new and insistent demand for a Life of Christ which would not only jar less on the literary taste of educated circles, but would also make it clearer than does Mark that Christ was, and knew Himself to be, no mere Jewish Messiah, but a World-saviour, the founder of a world-religion. The Third Gospel is an attempt, and an extraordinarily successful one, to meet this demand.

Again, to the Roman nobility the Church would appear to be a society of peculiarly sordid origin. The Roman despised the Jew, and he despised everything new-fangled. Christianity had the reputation of being both Jewish and new-fangled. Worse than that, Nero had been able to make scapegoats of the Christians precisely because there existed a popular belief that they were a society of secret criminals, who, even if not actually responsible for the burning of Rome, were at any rate quite capable of desiring or attempting such an exploit. Lastly, Nero's action had created a precedent, or at least established a presumption, associating Christianity and crime; and a Roman noble, let alone one like Flavius Clemens who was soon to be responsible for the supreme administration of the Empire and its laws, had a great respect for law and precedent. The Acts tells the story of the beginnings of the Church in a way which unobtrusively presents the answer to these objections. It shows that Christianity, though it no doubt began in Palestine, is not really a Jewish but a universal religion; nor can it be derided as "new-fangled." Though in one sense recent, it is the fulfilment of an ancient purpose of the God of the whole earth—a purpose adumbrated by an age-long series of prophecies. Precisely because it is essentially a universal religion, the Jews—who must know best what their own religion is—have rejected Christ, have persecuted His Apostles, and have opposed His religion at every stage. Peter had difficulties with Jewish Christians; Paul was bitterly persecuted by Jews; simply because those two Apostles had always by word and deed showed that they regarded Christianity, not as a Jewish, but as a world-religion. Thus Christianity is neither Jewish nor new-fangled—indeed, seen in its relation to prophecy, it is of immemorial antiquity. Nor, again, is it anti-Roman or illegal. Christ was accused before Pilate of "forbidding to give tribute to Caesar and saying that he is himself a King" (Lk. xxiii. 2). The Roman Procurator examines the case and three times declares him guiltless. Again and again Paul, brought before Roman magistrates and accused by the malice of the Jews (Acts xvii. 7)

of fomenting sedition, has been declared guiltless in Roman law.

It requires very little historical imagination to see that the Gospel of Luke and the Acts are precisely the kind of literature which would be needed by the Church in Rome if it was to make further headway in the circle in which Clemens and Domitilla were the leading figures. Indeed, it is not impossible that Theophilus was the secret name by which Flavius Clemens was known in the Roman Church. Theophilus (=devoted to God) would be a most appropriately chosen name. It has a more complimentary sound than *θεοσεβής* or "proselyte"; it just falls short of definitely asserting quite as much, and at the same time, being in actual use as a proper name, it had the advantage of being something of a disguise; and the title *κράτιστε*, "Your Excellence," implies that the person addressed was one of high position. Whether, however, "Theophilus" was Clemens himself, or some other member of the high aristocracy, the Acts is really *the first of the Apologies*. It is a forerunner of that series of "Defences of Christianity," addressed to reigning emperors and members of the Imperial House, which constitutes the larger part of the surviving Christian literature of the second century. On this view its ending, which otherwise seems so flat and pointless, is full of meaning. It is in a spirit of justifiable exultancy that its author leads up to the final words of Paul—which, now that the heir apparent was an inquirer, would seem prophecy fulfilled—"Behold, we go to the Gentiles, they *will* hear." And the calm confidence of the last two verses reflects the high hopes of what will happen under a Christian Caesar, as Luke records how, even under Nero, it had been possible for two years at Rome to proclaim Christianity *μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας ἀκωλύτως*, "with absolute freedom and without restraint."<sup>1</sup> Thus read, the end of Acts is a real climax.

<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to render in English the strong rolling rhythm of the Greek. A Greek tragedy ends thus with words of "good omen" on a note of calm.

## DATE OF THE GOSPEL

The date of the Gospel is determined as not being earlier than A.D. 70 by the alterations which Luke makes in the prophecy of the Abomination of Desolation. And here it is important to think clearly. Harnack and others have urged that there is nothing about the Fall of Jerusalem in Luke xxi. 20 ff. (or in xix. 41 ff.) which could not have been written before A.D. 70. Quite true; but the point to notice is that Luke, who in the context is closely following Mark, suddenly begins to modify the language of his source in an unusually drastic way, with the result that what in Mark xiii. is a prophecy of the appearance of the Anti-Christ in the Temple becomes, in Luke's version, a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the enslavement of its population. Now, seeing that in A.D. 70 the appearance of the Anti-Christ did *not* take place, but the things which Luke mentions *did*, the alteration is most reasonably explained as due to the author's knowledge of these facts.

On the other hand, the Gospel of Luke was, we have seen (p. 407 f.), already on the way to becoming a standard work in the Church of Ephesus when the Fourth Gospel was written. If, then, John cannot be dated later than A.D. 95, Luke cannot be much later than A.D. 85. It will appear shortly that a date later than A.D. 90 is not very likely for Acts; hence as the Gospel was written first, we arrive by another route at A.D. 85 as a probable limit. If, however, the Gospel was written some years before the Acts, before Luke returned to Rome and as soon as he came across a copy of Mark, a date like A.D. 80 seems more likely.

## AUTHORSHIP

But in the case of the Third Gospel the questions of the date and actual place of writing are of less interest than that of authorship, for two reasons. (1) The author of the Gospel also wrote the Acts, and in large portions—the so-called “we sections”

—of that work he writes in the first person, as if to imply that he was himself present on those occasions. If, then, Luke was the author of the Acts, he lived in Caesarea for two years during Paul's imprisonment there; and this—taken in connection with the nature of the material in question—would make it morally certain that the source we have called L consists largely of information he there collected. (2) If Luke came originally from Antioch, the hypothesis that Q was an Antiochene document is considerably strengthened. For Luke would naturally begin by combining the teaching source of his old Church with his Caesarean material—thus forming Proto-Luke; and he would inevitably regard Mark, when he came across it later, as a less authoritative source. And this is precisely what a critical analysis of our Third Gospel suggests. Thus the question of the authorship of Luke has in two respects an important bearing on the identification of the locality of origin of the sources embodied in the Third Gospel.

The authorship of Acts, however, cannot be discussed without raising the large issue, whether, and to what extent, inaccuracies and misconceptions of the historical development of the Apostolic Age are to be found in that book, and how far the existence of such is compatible with authorship by a companion of Paul. Such compatibility was vehemently denied by F. C. Baur, and his followers of the "Tübingen School." The first effectively to expose the brilliant fallacies of Tübingen was Renan in his book *The Apostles*, 1866. Renan the sceptic, educated for the priesthood among the Breton peasants—where miracle is a matter of everyday expectancy—gifted also with a real feeling for style and character, had the requisite combination of freedom from apologetic bias and sympathy with the atmosphere of a believing age to approach the problem from the purely literary and historical point of view. But the Tübingen School were so enmeshed in the Hegelian conception that history moves in accordance with the formula "thesis, antithesis, and synthesis"—of which I shall say something shortly—that even to the present

day their disciples have never quite succeeded in approaching the question in a purely critical and historical spirit. In the meantime, from the standpoint of linguistic analysis and archaeological research, Hawkins, Ramsay, Harnack and others have been steadily piling up an accumulation of evidence favouring the Lucan authorship. I should have thought the evidence was quite conclusive; it was, therefore, with a good deal of surprise that I read the judgement by the learned editors of *The Beginnings of Christianity* (vol. ii. p. 358) that, though ten years ago they "felt reasonably sure that the Acts was actually written by Luke, the companion of Paul," they had slowly come round to the view that only "the 'we sections' and probably the narrative adhering to them" are his work.

The evidence from language, archaeology, "undesigned coincidences," etc., for the Lucan authorship is familiar to students; but being of a cumulative character it could not possibly be presented in the space at my disposal. I propose, therefore, to confine myself to some remarks on certain of the larger issues, in particular those which, I gather, weigh most with such of the contributors to the above-mentioned work as reject the Lucan authorship.

I. The discussion is still haunted by the ghost of F. C. Baur; it is time this ghost was laid. Near the beginning of the chapter (vol. ii. p. 299) of *The Beginnings of Christianity* entitled "The Case against the Tradition" occurs the following sentence:

The element of greatness in the Tübingen criticism is to be found in the unity of the fundamental ideas by which it is dominated. We have to deal not with a rationalistic criticism of details, but with a brilliantly chosen point of view from which to examine and interpret the whole of the apostolic and post-apostolic age. In accordance with the Hegelian watchword that all which happens is determined by the sequence, *Thesis, antithesis, synthesis*, the Tübingen School constructed two periods: the first was one of embittered conflict between Paul and the Judaisers, who were at one with the original Apostles; and the second was a period of conciliation, which gradually made itself effective and marked the transition from primitive Christianity to Catholicism.

In the course of the chapter—which I may, perhaps, be allowed to characterise as able, fair-minded, and incredibly learned—Professor Windisch himself refutes one after another the actual conclusions of the Tübingen School; the one thing he thinks can be saved from the wreck is their denial of Lucan authorship. For myself I have no quarrel either with the date, “the period of the eighties or nineties of the first century,” which he suggests, or, except in some points of detail, with his general estimate of its historical value—so far, at least, as the last three-fifths of the book is concerned. It is the very merits of the Professor’s discussion of the subject which impelled me to exclaim, However did the sentence I have just quoted come to be written by anyone who had seriously reflected on the principles of criticism or on the nature of historical method?

History is the endeavour to find out what actually happened, not to force upon the evidence an *a priori* point of view—however “brilliantly chosen.” The characteristic singled out by the Professor as constituting “the element of greatness” in the Tübingen criticism is precisely the one which all but deprives it of any right to be styled *historical* criticism at all. History written “in accordance with the Hegelian watchword that all which happens is determined by the sequence ‘thesis, antithesis, synthesis,’” is not history at all. It is dogma disguised as history; it is “tendency-writing” of a far more misleading character than anything produced by the apologetic or theological bias of the writers whose view of history the critic professes to correct. One might as well say that “the element of greatness” in the editor of the books of Kings is “the brilliantly chosen point of view” which interprets the whole of the history of Israel in accordance with the Deuteronomic “watchword” that national prosperity and adversity are determined solely by obedience to the Law of the Central Sanctuary.

The Tübingen criticism was great, not because of, but in spite of, its “unity of fundamental ideas.” It created an epoch in New Testament study through its appreciation of two points.

First, the literature of early Christianity must be interpreted in relation to the practical and apologetic needs of the time; secondly, there is a development of theology within the New Testament itself, of which the Fourth Gospel is the crown. Owing, however, to the *a priori* "unity of conception," which Professor Windisch styles its greatness, this school completely misconceived the nature of those practical and apologetic needs; and it was thus led entirely to misrepresent both the causes and the course of that very evolution which it had the merit of being the first to detect.

Karl Marx was a contemporary of F. C. Baur, and he wrote the economic history of Europe on the basis of this same Hegelian triad of thesis, antithesis, synthesis. He, too, made an ideal construction of two periods. The former was a period of embittered conflict between the "thesis" of capitalism and the "antithesis" of proletarian revolt. The latter was to be the "synthesis"—a period of universal brotherhood and goodwill, automatically resultant on the success of the class war. But recent events have shown that, in real life, things do not work out quite that way.

In the science of pure logic this business about thesis and antithesis has some real meaning. As applied to history it is a pedantic way of describing that tendency to react against the fashion last in vogue which politicians call "the swing of the pendulum." But it is worse than pedantic, it is seriously misleading; it ignores the fact that the pendulum only swings because there is a relatively stable pivot upon which to oscillate. In all communities where there is vigorous life three parties are always to be found—the "die-hards," the "moderates," and the "red revolutionaries." If the society manages to hold together, it is usually because the majority hold something resembling the moderate, *i.e.* the "synthetic," view, and in the long run this in the main prevails. But I know no case in history where this has happened—except, perhaps, under the strong hand of an autocratic power—unless the synthetic party, or at least the



synthetic spirit, has, though dormant for a time, been there from the beginning. The spirit of conciliation is not a thing that is born of internecine conflict.

The Epistle to the Galatians shows that at the date when it was written there was acute division of opinion with regard to the obligation of the Mosaic Law, especially as it affected the position of Gentiles in the Church. Paul is the leader of the progressives, James of the conservatives, while the leader of the moderates is Peter.

And if the question be asked, which of these is the more primitive? the answer is contained in the simple observation that Peter was one of those who forsook all to follow Christ; while James was one of the brethren who in his lifetime did not believe in Him, and even went so far on one occasion as to endeavour to arrest Him on hearing that He was of unsound mind. It would seem, then, that in this case the tendency which Baur would style "synthesis" was earlier in date than both the "thesis" (Judaistic Christianity) and the "antithesis" (Paulinism) which, according to the Hegelian programme, it ought to have succeeded.

But among men of goodwill it is usually the case that the leaders of any party are far less intolerant than the rank and file and far more inclined to stretch a point in order to meet their opponents half-way. It was so in the early Church. James, Peter, and John—observe the order in which they are mentioned (Gal. ii. 9)—gave Paul and Barnabas "the right hands of fellowship," having "perceived the grace that was given" them. They even went so far as to urge them to collect alms from Gentiles for the poor Christians of Jerusalem. We may be pretty sure, then, that those followers of James, who in his name protested against Peter's associating with Gentiles in Antioch, went to the full limit of their instructions. Again, there is no evidence that the persons who visited the Galatian and Corinthian Churches depreciating Paul and denying his Apostleship, did so with the authorisation of the older Apostles. At Corinth there were

factions who said "I am of Peter" and "I am of Paul"; but Paul himself is emphatic in declining to recognise the difference as important.

Nothing better illustrates the *a priori* "dogmatic element," as opposed to the empirical historic, in the Tübingen School than their rejection of the story of the conversion of Cornelius at Caesarea as legendary, or to be accepted with the utmost hesitation, on the ground (a) that it attributes to Peter an attitude towards Gentiles of which at that date only Paul was capable; (b) that guidance by a Vision is a sign of legend. So far as visions are concerned, the turning points in the lives of half the saints have been accompanied by visions regarded by them as expressions of Divine direction; and in India and Africa to-day the same thing happens. These things are partly a matter of individual psychology, partly of race and training; and it so happens, as I am arguing elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> that this particular Vision conforms to the laws of dream psychology in a way which guarantees it as a reasonably accurate report of an authentic experience.

As regards the major issue, why, we ask, if Peter was incapable of the attitude implied in the story, is he found at Antioch a few years later? Why, until pressure is brought upon him by the adherents of James, is he content to be eating and drinking with Gentiles in that city—as though he shared Paul's view of the relative unimportance of the ceremonial law? Peter's visit to Antioch is not once mentioned in the Acts; it is attested by the irrefutable evidence of Galatians. But Antioch is a long way from Jerusalem, and Peter's behaviour there in regard to Gentiles is a very big step away from orthodox Jewish legalism. Geographically Caesarea is the half-way house to Antioch; psychologically the conversion of Cornelius and the need of justifying it to the Pharisaic Christians at Jerusalem is the half-way house to Peter's attitude at Antioch. So far, then, from being historically suspicious, the Cornelius incident is the missing

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, "Dream Psychology and the Mystic Vision," in my book *Reality* (Macmillan, 1926).

link without which the behaviour of Peter, as attested by Galatians, is psychologically inexplicable.

Under pressure from "certain who came from James," Peter at Antioch went back on his pro-Gentile liberalism. It was doubtless represented to him that if he continued thus openly to break the law he would ruin all possibility of converting "the circumcision" to Christ. Peter has been much abused for giving way; but in all probability those who urged this judged the situation correctly. Peter was really face to face with the alternative of, either ceasing to eat and drink with Gentiles, or wrecking that mission to the circumcised which he felt to be his primary call (Gal. ii. 9). Is he to be blamed because he declined that risk? To Paul, Peter's conduct seemed a disingenuous abandonment of the principle of the equality of Jew and Gentile before Christ—a principle which for him was involved in the religious experience of the sufficiency for salvation of Faith without the Works of the Law. But Paul's theoretical formulation of the relation between Faith and Works is, as the history of later theology and exegesis shows, a difficult and a subtle concept. It is highly improbable that, at any rate in that abstract form, it had ever entered Peter's head. But to Paul its courageous assertion seemed vital for the success of the Gentile mission—and from his point of view he was undoubtedly right. The fact is that the relations of Jew and Gentile since the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabean revolt had brought things to such a pass that to surrender the obligation of the Law meant the failure of the Jewish mission, while to retain it was to sacrifice the Gentile. It was one of those tragic situations that do sometimes occur when the best men for the best motives feel compelled to differ upon a vital issue.

II. The decisive issue in the determination of the Lucan authorship is not, primarily, the value to be attached to a traditional ascription of authorship, however ancient and well attested. It is, in the first place, the question what is the best and most natural explanation of the occurrence of the first person

plural in certain of the later chapters of the Acts. The natural and obvious explanation is that the author wishes, without unduly obtruding his own personality, to indicate that he is himself the authority for that part of the story. In view of the emphasis which he lays upon eye-witness in the preface to the Gospel, it is explicable that he should attach importance to it also in the Acts, when it could be indicated without any clumsy quotation of authorities.

An alternative explanation of the "we sections" is that the author is incorporating the diary of an eye-witness written in the first person, and has forgotten to alter the first person to the third; or rather, seeing that the "we sections" do not in themselves make a connected and coherent story but are bound together by those that intervene, it must be supposed that he has sometimes remembered and sometimes forgotten to make the necessary alterations. In an ill-educated, clumsy, and careless compiler, or one, like the editor of the book of Nehemiah, who pieced together matter from his different sources on a purely mechanical "scissors and paste" method, this would be conceivable. But the author of the Gospel and Acts, though not, as has been rashly alleged, "a great historian" in the modern sense, is a consummate literary artist.<sup>1</sup> One of the sources which he used for his Gospel was Mark. As this is still preserved, we are enabled to study his methods of using sources. Nothing could be further removed from "scissors and paste." The material derived from Mark is completely re-written in Luke's own characteristic style. The way in which, by trifling modifications of his original, he removes either faulty grammar or literary obscurities or passages which might cause disquiet of an apologetic character, shows an acute sense of the subtlest nuances of language and style. Accordingly, if in another work by the

<sup>1</sup> "A professional writer," "a skilled adapter," are phrases used of him by Prof. Windisch (*op. cit.* ii. p. 337 f.). But the Professor cannot have it both ways—if the author is a skilled workman, then the "we sections" are not due to a careless oversight, they have a meaning.

same author we find the first person occurring in a series of passages where the third might have been expected, we must conclude that it is not there by accident. It is meant to suggest a meaning. It occurs in the brief section (Acts xvi. 10-18) including the voyage from Troas to Philippi and what happened there; then it completely disappears for four chapters, to reappear again at exactly the same geographical spot when, on his return journey some years afterwards, Paul again passes through Philippi (xx. 5). It then continues, except in scenes and on occasions when Paul might naturally be supposed to have been unattended, until the end of the book. This cannot be accidental. It is done with the express purpose of suggesting that the author was in the company of Paul for the whole of the concluding period covered by the narrative, but was not in his company on any previous occasion, except for the brief voyage from Troas and the visit to Philippi years before. That an actual companion of Paul should have been with him on these occasions, and on these only, is in no way improbable. That a person, who wished to create the impression that he had been a companion of Paul in order to give weight to his story, should limit his claim to be an eye-witness in this extraordinary way is quite incredible.

III. Paul was one of those great men who are a source of anxiety to their friends. His language at times was most "impolitic." Some of the things he said about the Law were enough to make the hair of a pious Jew positively stand on end. Suppose a modern preacher were to say something like this: "The Bible had its function in the Divine economy, but the salvation it offered was always unreal. The Bible is now obsolete; there is no longer such a thing as a revealed moral code; henceforth you are free from the bonds of the old religion. Believe, and do what you will—that is the good news I bring you." Such a man would be promptly ejected from the ministry. But if for "Bible" we write "Law," and for "salvation" "justification"—and to a Jew these are the true equivalents—that is exactly what Paul did say. And to the average Jew the fact

that Paul tempered these statements with qualificatory remarks, as that "the Law is just and holy and good," or that he insistently exhorted men to a life of righteousness, did not much affect the issue. If the Law is abrogated, it *is* abrogated, it matters little how politely it is bowed out; and if in the last resort every man is free to do what is right in his own eyes, it is a small thing that Paul's personal standard happens to be high.

The wonder is, not that the affair caused trouble in the early Church, but that James, Peter, and John, after hearing him explain his position, still felt able to give Paul "the right hands of fellowship" (Gal. ii. 9). Paul must have been exceptionally conciliatory on that occasion. He was conciliatory at times. He was a man of passionate outbursts; and when conciliation was his mood, he would go to lengths—the circumcising of Timothy is an example—which principle could hardly justify. "To the Jews I became as a Jew, to those that are under the Law as under the Law, if so by any means I might save some." Some pretty big concessions must have been in his mind when he wrote this—perhaps some that he regretted. I do not think Paul ever set his hand to the food-law compromise of the Apostolic Decree (Acts xv. 29), written out in black and white. But it is quite likely that it does represent the agreement reached between him and the Three at Jerusalem, as interpreted and afterwards put in writing and circulated by them. We all know what sometimes happens when "complete agreement" is reached at an "informal conversation," and each party afterwards writes down his own interpretation. That seems to me the point of James's reference to the Decree (Acts xxi. 20-25); he delicately insinuates that Paul is reputed to be not quite loyal to the agreement, and exhorts him to do some act which will make it clear to all men that he did not wish to repudiate observance of the Law so far as Jews are concerned. Luke, we note, was present at this interview (Acts xxi. 17 ff.), and it is a natural inference that he derived his conception of events (including the Council of Acts

xv.) from what James then said—re-writing the scene in the form of a debate, after the manner of ancient historians. Luke no doubt is in error; Paul had not set his seal to any compact—the Decree had been sent out later—but he had, perhaps, in his private conversations left the Three with the impression that he had assented to its substance. And if Luke gathered this from James's speech, and Paul did not at the time vehemently repudiate it, his error is a pardonable one.

Luke is also accused of misrepresenting Peter. But does he? In the *Quo vadis* legend is crystallised the popular impression of Peter—a wobbler, but on the right side in the end. Peter, with hesitation it is true, baptizes the Gentile Cornelius. A little later he is found at Antioch eating and drinking with Gentile Christians—and thereby, of course, himself transgressing the Law of Moses. This is too much for James. If Peter is going to give up keeping the Law, the mission to the Circumcision—already jeopardised by the antinomianism of Paul—will be totally wrecked. He sends a deputation to remonstrate. Peter—realising no doubt that what they say is true, and that if he persists he *will* wreck the Jewish Mission—withdraws, to the intense indignation of Paul. About the same time a mission goes round the Pauline Churches—with the cognisance, we must suppose, if not at the prompting, of James—to try and bring them round to a sounder view of the Law; and the emissaries roundly deny the claim of Paul to the name of Apostle at all.

But there is nothing at all about this in Acts! Why? Obviously, replies one school of critics, because its author belonged to a later age when these things were forgotten. That answer is possible; but it strikes me as a little naïve. The silence of Luke is susceptible of another interpretation. In real life there are things one does not mention because they are *too well known*—things of which the proverb holds good, “The least said, the soonest mended.” The most interesting incidents in the career of a public character are often those which his

biographer is too discreet to print. And if that is so in our own age—with its tradition of realism in literature, and its conception of history as a branch of science—how much more so in an age in which the idealist tradition in art and letters reigned supreme, and in which the main purpose of history was supposed to be moral instruction.<sup>1</sup> The Acts was not written to record the things which would interest a modern critic, but, in the first place, to provide a Roman noble with the case for the Christian Church; and threatened institutions cannot afford to advertise internal “scandals.” Moreover, it looks as if the author had also to consider the feelings of some difficult brethren inside the Church. A secondary purpose of the book is quite evidently to be an *Apologia pro vita Pauli*.

The hostility of the Judaistic party had pursued Paul to Rome. They were active during his imprisonment (Phil. i. 15 ff., iii. 2). If he calls them “dogs”—not a term of endearment in the East—we may be sure he was driven to it by sore provocation. We can only guess at some of the things they had said of him—the least would have been to accuse one who maintained that the Law was abolished of wishing to abolish morality itself. And judging by the standard of veracity in what Greek and Latin orators say of one another, we may be pretty certain that they accused him of abolishing morality in practice as well as theory. If the Acts was written when this opposition had not quite died out, and when the reconciliation of the reconcilable was so recent that the situation was still delicate, a motive becomes apparent for the “dragging in” of certain trifling incidents quite irrelevant to the main course of the story. Why are we told so carefully that Paul circumcised Timothy, shaved his head in Cenchreae, was so anxious to attend the Passover, defrayed the expenses of a ceremonial purification? Because at the

<sup>1</sup> Livy, *Praef.* 7, “hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in illustri posita monumento intueri: inde tibi tuaeque reipublicae quod imitere capias, inde . . . quod vitas.” Tacitus, *Ann.* iii. 65, “quod praecipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur, utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.”



time when Acts was written it was necessary to prove to many excellent folk that Paul was not anything like so black as he was painted; he was not the antinomian his enemies made out. Not only did he keep the moral law, at times he went out of his way to keep the ceremonial as well.

Peter's position also required explanation. He had committed himself to the Gentile mission; but later on he had rather gone back on this—and no doubt the Judaisers exaggerated the extent of his withdrawal. Precisely because his later attitude was a shade ambiguous, it was necessary to emphasise the Cornelius incident for all that it was worth in order to show that after all it was Peter who, led by a Divine vision, himself in a sense initiated the Gentile mission.

The Acts reads like a vindication both of Peter and of Paul by one who realises that, up to a point, they had laid themselves open to criticism, but who nevertheless has for them that almost religious veneration which the East still has towards the teacher and the prophet.<sup>1</sup> By the time that 1 Clement was written Peter and Paul are “the good Apostles,” almost ranking with the heroes of the Old Testament. We infer that the period when Peter and Paul required defending at Rome was well over by A.D. 96. Acts—known, I suggest, to Clement—had done its work. This would favour a date earlier, rather than later, than A.D. 90.

IV. The Acts shows very little trace, the Third Gospel none at all,<sup>2</sup> of anything that we can call specifically Pauline Christianity. The question, then, arises, can Acts have been written by a pupil of Paul? But, I submit, to ask the question in this form involves a fallacy; for there is not the slightest hint in the Acts that the author of the “we sections” was in any sense a “pupil”

<sup>1</sup> It has been argued that the veneration with which the Apostles are regarded implies a late date for Acts. But Gandhi in his lifetime is a Mahatma—i.e. all but an incarnation—and Rabindranath Tagore is saluted by his admirers as *guru deva*, literally “teacher god.”

<sup>2</sup> If, that is, with Hort we reject xxii. 19b, 20 as an assimilation from 1 Cor. xi. 24 f.; om. D Old Lat. and (partly) Old Syr.

of the Apostle. The way in which the "we" suddenly appears would be far more natural if he was already a Christian when he first met Paul. If the Western text of Acts xi. 28 is original—and it is more easy to explain the excision in B & Byz. than the addition in D Lat. of "there was great rejoicing; and when we were gathered together"—he was a member of the congregation at Antioch to which Agabus prophesied the famine of A.D. 46. Five or six years later he "happens"—I use the word advisedly—to meet Paul at Troas and (Acts xvi. 10 ff.) travels in the same boat as the Apostle to Philippi, where apparently he at that time resided. Of course he would become a member of the Church founded there by the Apostle in his very brief visit. Five or six years later still (Acts xx. 6) he joins Paul on his way through Philippi to Jerusalem, most probably being chosen by that Church to accompany Paul and the delegates from other Churches to Jerusalem, in order to present their contribution toward that collection from the Gentile Churches which Paul had for some time past been organising.

So far there is nothing to suggest any specially close personal connection with the Apostle. But at Jerusalem Paul is arrested—and Paul is the greatest champion of Gentile liberty and the most successful leader in the Gentile mission. Calamity elicits new loyalties. Luke henceforth devotes himself to the service of the Apostle, and is constant to the end—"only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. iv. 11).

But it does not for a moment follow that he accepted Paul's characteristic theology. If Luke had been converted to Christianity fifteen years or so before the time when he became really intimate with Paul, we should not expect him in any fundamental way to change his own religious outlook. There is a further consideration: Luke first met Paul shortly before he wrote 1 Thessalonians, and he was in his company years later when he wrote the Epistles of the Captivity. Now if we only possessed the letters written by Paul at the time Luke knew him best we should never have heard of "justification by faith" and the

whole cycle of conceptions linked up with that phrase. Hence, if Paul's letters reflect at all adequately the oral teaching he was giving at the time he wrote them, it would not have been surprising if Luke had said nothing at all about the above-mentioned doctrine. But, as a matter of fact, in the first speech he assigns to Paul, in the synagogue at the lesser Antioch—which, of course, he means to be understood as giving, not the speech actually delivered there, but the line of argument Paul employed when addressing a Jewish audience—he makes this doctrine the climax to which the whole speech leads up. But he does not attempt to elaborate it, for two obvious reasons. (a) If Acts was written at Rome, it was written for a Church where the Epistle to the Romans was already a classic. The mention of "justification by faith" was equivalent to saying "as expounded in Romans." As Luke was compressing thirty years of Church history into a document which occupies that number of pages in a Greek Testament, he had better use for his scanty space than to attempt a "potted version" of the argument of an Epistle with which his audience were already perfectly familiar. (b) It is highly improbable that Luke had any clear appreciation of the real significance of this aspect of Paul's thought—at any rate it is a commonplace of theologians that no other church writer had it before Augustine, and he only in part. This aspect of Paulinism is, of its very nature, a reaction against a religion of Law centring round a sacrificial system related to a deeply ethical sense of guilt. Mediaeval Latin Catholicism was another such religion, and, therefore, Luther understood this side of Paul; but no Greek ever did, or ever could—so why should Luke? What Luke and the Gentile Church of his time deduced from Romans was the conclusion that the Mosaic Law was abrogated by Christ; but the more heartily people welcome a conclusion, the less need they often feel for really comprehending the argument by which it is reached.

A critical historian should, unless the contrary be proved, assume that the speeches in Acts are "Thucydidean," and are

to be understood in the same way as the speeches in any contemporary historian—that is to say, though they are written “in character,” their real purpose is to afford the historian an opportunity for inculcating ideas which he himself wishes to express. Theologians have often called attention to the primitive Christology of the speeches attributed to Peter—but doctrinally there is no essential difference between them and those attributed to Paul. How could there be? No one in those days had any notion of an “evolution of theology”; to Luke, as to all his contemporaries, that which was true was Apostolic and, therefore, also primitive. The theology underlying the speeches of Acts—and, of course, for this purpose the speeches attributed to Peter must be supplemented by that ascribed to Paul on the Areopagus—should be read as a presentation of Luke’s own theology. That is precisely their value to the historian. To the Fathers Luke is the echo of Paul, to the Tübingen School he stands for post-apostolic Christianity; but those early speeches in Acts are too primitive for that—they represent the average Gentile Christianity of Antioch.

What Acts really represents—modified a little by later experience and touched only here and there with a phrase caught up from Paul—is *pre-Pauline Gentile Christianity*. But given the life-history of its author which a natural reading of Acts suggests—that is what we should expect of the Syrian physician Luke.<sup>1</sup>

V. If the Lucan writings were first circulated in Rome it

<sup>1</sup> Since the War we have all become so much accustomed to glaring discrepancies between the accounts of the same event by persons presumably truthful and undoubtedly well-informed, that the sting has been drawn from the pet arguments of the older critics that the existence of discrepancies between Acts and the Epistles proves that Luke could not have been in personal contact with Paul. There is only one such that need concern us—the visits of Paul to Jerusalem and the Apostolic Decree of Acts xv. I mention this because I can neither follow Harnack in accepting the Western text of the Decree (by which it ceases to be a compromise relating to unclean meats), nor would I commit myself unreservedly to the theory of Ramsay—further developed by Emmet—that the visit mentioned in Galatians ii. is the famine visit in Acts. Luke appears to think Paul had assented to the food-law compromise. I have already suggested how we can explain this mistake. There remains, however, the minor discrepancy in the number of visits to Jerusalem. Of this the

becomes unnecessary to decide the vexed question whether or not Luke had read Josephus. The question arises from the fact that Luke's statements violently conflict with those of Josephus in regard to the dates of Lysanias (Lk. iii. 1-2) and Theudas (Acts v. 34 ff.). It has been maintained by distinguished scholars that Luke's statements can be accounted for on the theory that they are the result of a hasty perusal, and a consequently imperfect recollection and misunderstanding, of Josephus. Personally I am quite unconvinced that there is dependence of any kind. Schmiedel, whose statement of the case for dependence is the most elaborate in English,<sup>1</sup> finds it necessary to suppose that Luke was using, not Josephus directly, but some notes that he had made after reading him. But if a gross mistake is to be attributed to imperfect notes, it would surely be more natural to suggest that the notes in question were taken down hurriedly at some lecture, rather than in the course of a perusal of a book, especially as it was not so possible with ancient methods of writing as with modern print to make mistakes through running one's eye rapidly over the page.

Now there is not the slightest improbability in the supposition that Luke had heard Josephus lecture in Rome. Josephus was granted by Vespasian rooms in the Imperial Palace, and remained in favour with subsequent emperors. Luke also, I have suggested, had a connection with the Flavian house. The writings of Josephus were addressed to the Roman world at large, and it would appear that after A.D. 70 he for the most part lived and wrote in Rome. In that case, unless his practice was quite different from that of contemporary writers, it would have been a matter of course for him to recite large portions of his works to public audiences before they were published in written form.

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simplest solution has always seemed to me to be that propounded by Renan. The delegates who brought the famine contribution from Antioch (Acts xi. 30) were Barnabas and another; Luke erroneously imagined that other to be Barnabas's (future) colleague Paul. On Luke's representation of the phenomenon of "speaking with tongues" at Pentecost cf. p. 220 above

<sup>1</sup> *Encycl. Bib.*, arts. "Lysanias" and "Theudas."

Pliny and Juvenal constantly refer to this custom—the latter to expatiate on the boredom it induced. Plutarch tells us that while in Rome, at about this date, he was so busy lecturing, and doing minor political business, that he never had time to master the Latin language—an observation which incidentally reveals the extent to which Greek was a second language of the educated native Roman as well as of the immense city population of foreign origin. The *Antiquities* of Josephus was published c. A.D. 93. It is a long work and would have taken many years to compose—probably most of the interval since the publication of his earlier work, *The Jewish War*, between 75 and 79. Josephus was extremely conceited, not at all the man to lose any opportunity for publicity, and he would do much to be in the literary and social fashion. Moreover, his writings were largely intended for propaganda purposes; he wished to do his best to reinstate the credit of the Jewish people. He would certainly have recited parts of the *Antiquities* at intervals during the ten years before its publication. Fashionable Rome felt bound in etiquette to attend the recitations of its noble friends; but a parvenu like Josephus would have been only too glad to fill up the back seats with unimportant people like Luke.

VI. Inadequate attention has been given to the bearing of the Preface of the Gospel on the question of authorship. The other Gospels are anonymous; Luke is not. True, his name is not mentioned in the Preface, but that applies to other Roman writers—Livy and Tacitus, for example. The author's name in such cases would be indicated on a title attached to the roll. Luke's Preface would have no point at all if the original readers did not know the author's name. In effect, it is the author's apology for venturing to produce a Gospel at all. It implies that the Church for which he wrote already possessed a work of the kind, but that he claimed to be in a position to improve upon it. But unless his name was well known—one might almost say unless he was known to have had some connection with Apostles—this claim would not have been admitted. Moreover, knowing

the use he made of Mark, we cannot doubt that in his reference to previous writers, though Q and other such collections may have been also in his mind, it is of Mark that he is mainly thinking. With the materials at his disposal he might well consider that he could improve upon a Gospel which had no account of the Infancy and the Resurrection Appearances, and very little discourse; but to say this bluntly would have been tactless, for Mark was the Gospel on which many of his readers had been "brought up." By the vague and general "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand . . ." no one's feelings could be hurt.

Luke, unlike Matthew, left a considerable portion of Mark unincorporated; hence—at any rate at Rome—the new Gospel did not supersede the older and shorter work. The Roman Church was conservative; besides, its claim to possess the most reliable Apostolic tradition was strengthened by having two Gospels, one by a disciple of Peter and the other by a follower of Paul. But the concurrent use in the same Church of two versions of the story of the Life of Christ demanded a change in current nomenclature. We are so used to the idea of there being four Gospels, known always by their authors' names, that we are apt to forget the earlier period when no Church had more than one Gospel, and when this was commonly spoken of, not by its author's name, but simply as "the Gospel."<sup>1</sup> But the moment two such works began to be current side by side in the same Church it became necessary to distinguish the Gospel "according to Mark" from that "according to Luke." Indeed, it is probably to the fortunate circumstance that Mark and Luke were so early in circulation side by side that we owe the preservation of the names of the real authors of these works.

The fact that two books on the same subject cannot be in circulation together without each bearing some name to mark

<sup>1</sup> This state of things survived till the fifth century or later among the Aramaic-speaking Christians of Palestine. Burkitt shows from a Rabbinic story of R. Eliezer that the sacred book of these *Minim* was called *evangelion* (*Christian Beginnings*, p. 74 f. (London Univ., 1924)). This proves, not only dependence on a *Greek* Gospel, but the use of "Gospel" as a title of a book before A. D. 100.

their difference disposes of the suggestion of Mr. H. J. Cadbury<sup>1</sup> that the attribution of the third Gospel to Luke may be merely an inference from the "we sections" of Acts. He suggests that some acute critic of the second century, searching for the author of an anonymous document presumed to be by a companion of Paul, proceeded by rejecting the names of any whose presence would not fit the notices in Epistles and Acts combined, and thus, by a process of elimination, arrived at the name "Luke." Such a theory overlooks the fact already noted that the Preface of Luke's Gospel would be meaningless unless its author's name was known to the original readers; while if these were members of a Church which already possessed a Gospel, the necessity of distinguishing the two would *from the very first* have prevented the names of either being forgotten. The point, therefore, to which Mr. Cadbury calls attention really cuts the other way—for it would be very remarkable that the name which tradition ascribes to the Gospel should happen to be that of the only one of Paul's companions who (taking the "we sections" at their face value) could have written the Acts, unless it were the name of the actual author.

VII. But it is not only on the merits of the argument that I personally accept the Lucan authorship of the Gospel and Acts. Even if the arguments were exactly balanced, the principles of historical criticism, as I conceive them, would suffice to incline the scale in that direction. The first duty of the critical historian is to ask, in regard to every statement made in his authorities, is there any possible bias for which allowance should be made? In the present case we have not far to seek. Wherever the earlier tradition was vague or doubtful, a Catholic writer of the time of Irenæus would be tempted to favour that form of it which gave the maximum of Apostolic authority to those Four Gospels which were regarded as the pillars of the Church. Now two of these are assigned to Apostles; two are not. This distinction is, for the critic, of the first importance. The tradition which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Foakes Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 261.



assigns two of them to Apostles is one whose credentials will need most careful cross-examination; and, if there be found any features in the Gospels themselves which make it hard to believe they were the work of Apostles, the tradition will require a proportionately greater amount of evidence to justify its acceptance. On the other hand, the ascription of the other two Gospels to persons who were not Apostles appeals at once to the critic as being almost certainly authentic, just because it runs counter to the natural bias of the age.

From the point of view both of sentiment and controversial advantage, it would have been extremely convenient to assign the Gospel of Mark to Peter and that of Luke to Paul; and later writers do their best to effect this. Paul's phrase "according to my Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16) is interpreted as a direct allusion to the Gospel of Luke, which is thus assumed to have been written under his supervision. Again, the Gospel of Mark was written, according to Irenaeus (185) after the demise of Peter, according to Clement (200) during Peter's lifetime, but without his approbation, according to Eusebius (324) with his authentication, according to Jerome (397) at his dictation.<sup>1</sup> Indeed it would seem as if an attempt was made in some circles at a very early date to make

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Iren. I. i. 1 (Gk. in Eus. *H.E.* v. 8); Clem. *ap.* Eus. *H.E.* vi. 14; Peter neither forbade nor commended; Eus. *H.E.* ii. 15 (*φασί*), Peter approves for reading in Church; Jerome, *Ad Hedibiam*, xi., "Marcum, cujus evangelium, Petro narrante, et illo scribente compositum est." But Jerome knew better, for *De vir. illustr.* viii. he says the same as Eus. *H.E.* ii. 15.

I take this opportunity of suggesting an explanation of the curious "tradition" mentioned by Clement of Alexandria (*ap.* Eus. *H.E.* vi. 14) that "the Gospels containing genealogies were written first." This, I think, is not a tradition of fact but a traditional explanation of the lack of an account of the Infancy, Resurrection appearances, etc., in Mark, on the hypothesis that, when Mark wrote, the Roman Church already possessed an account of these things in Luke. Matthew, it was inferred from Papias, was originally in Hebrew, and the Greek translation would not yet have reached Rome when Mark wrote. The Gospel of Mark could conceivably be regarded as a supplement to Luke, for it contains much that is not in Luke; it could not be intended as a supplement to Matthew *plus* Luke. The idea that Luke wrote before Mark would naturally be suggested by the common Western order of the Gospels—Matthew, John, Luke, Mark—(Clement has a Western text), or by the order of Tertullian (*Contra Marcionem*, iv. 2), a contemporary of Clement—John, Matthew, Luke, Mark.

the Apostle directly responsible for the Gospel; for Justin Martyr (155) quotes a statement that occurs in Mark as from the "Memoirs of Peter." Irenaeus had read Justin; and he must in any case have known that some people spoke of the second Gospel as Peter's. If, then, he does not accept it as Peter's work, we can only conclude that the tradition assigning the second and third Gospels to Mark and Luke was so definite, so widespread, and, by the time of Irenaeus, already so ancient, that it could not be displaced.

The attribution of one of the four canonical Gospels to Luke is even more remarkable. Mark at least was known to have lived in Jerusalem; he may have witnessed some of the events he describes, and he had some special connection with Peter, the leader of the Twelve. Luke was not only not himself a witness, he was a follower of an Apostle who was not himself a witness, and he was only that during the last years of that Apostle's life. With a very little "doctoring" of the text—merely changing "we" to "they" in a few passages—the Acts could have been made to read as the *Commentarii* of Paul, writing of himself, like Caesar or Xenophon, in the third person. The Gospel then could have been assigned to Paul himself. But this was not done.

A critic, then, who knows his business—that is, who recognises that his function is analogous to that of the judge (*κριτής*) and not of the counsel, whether for the defence or the prosecution—before giving a verdict in favour of a tradition which ascribes a Gospel to an Apostle, will require an attestation stronger than a classical scholar would think necessary for a work attributed to Xenophon or Plato. On the other hand, only if overwhelming evidence is forthcoming that the internal characteristics of Mark and Luke cannot be reconciled with their traditional authorship will he decide that the tradition is open to serious question.

We thus arrive at the quite simple conclusion: the burden of proof is on those who would assert the traditional authorship of Matthew and John and on those who would deny it in the case of Mark and Luke.