GALATIAN PROBLEMS

1. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DATA[1]

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I

BY "Galatian problems" I mean problems raised by the study of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

Some forty years ago an American scholar, James Hardy Ropes, published a monograph entitled *The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians.*[2] The "singular problem" in this title may be defined as Paul's problem: what was the problem with which the situation in the churches of Galatia confronted Paul? This problem is so central for the interpretation of the epistle that it may rightly be called its "singular" problem. But there are several other Galatian problems, and the solutions which have been offered for them are interconnected. It is therefore not altogether satisfactory to isolate one problem or one group of problems from the others and deal with it separately, but there is no other convenient way of approaching such a complex subject. Provisional solutions offered to the first group of problems tackled may have to be revised in the light of solutions proposed for others.

We may ask, for example: "Which are the 'churches of Galatia' to which this letter is addressed?" Are they the churches of South Galatia whose foundation is recorded in Acts xiii. 14-xiv. 23 (those in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe) or are they churches in Central or North Galatia, founded by Paul on some subsequent occasion?

We may ask, again, at what point in Paul's apostolic career this letter was composed. Has it affinities with any other of his letters which might make it possible to bracket it chronologically with one or more of these?

Yet again, we may ask if it is possible to fit this letter into the

[1] A lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library on Wednesday, the 13th of November 1968.

[2] Harvard Theological Studies, xiv (Cambridge, Mass., 1929).

narrative framework of the Acts of the Apostles: does it, for example, reflect the situation before or after the issue of the apostolic decree from Jerusalem, described in Acts xv? There are a number of scholars who almost deprecate this kind of question, because it tempts us to interpret our primary source of information about Paul's ministry—his undoubted letters—in terms of what is at best a secondary source—the narrative of Acts—with the result that the direct evidence of the letters is distorted to fit the problematic evidence of Acts. To this let me say three things:

(i) Granted, the letters show us Paul from the inside, while Acts shows us Paul from the outside, as seen through another's eyes—even if that other be, as tradition affirms, a sympathetic friend and fellow-traveller, not to say a hero-worshipper, of Paul. But since when has a man's account of himself been regarded as so objective that it need not be checked by reference to someone else's assessment of him?

(ii) It is begging the question to suppose that the letters, occasional as they are, and perhaps only a part of Paul's original correspondence, can supply a consecutive and comprehensive picture of the course of his ministry to the Gentiles. They do enable us to write *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (to quote the title of Professor John Knox's book),[1] but they leave room for other chapters, some of which might be written on the basis provided by Acts.

(iii) As one whose initiation into New Testament scholarship took the form of a prolonged and detailed study of Acts against the background of a classical education, I stand convinced that in Luke-Acts we have a history of Christian origins compiled by an heir of the tradition of Greek historiography, based on the best sources of information that were available to him—written, oral or otherwise.[2] The work of such a man must receive respect

[1] New York, 1950.

[2] Cf. A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Oxford, 1963), p. 189: "For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming. Yet Acts is, in simple terms and judged externally, no less of a propaganda narrative than the Gospels, liable to similar distortions. But any attempt to reject its basic historicity even in matters of detail must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted."

in any historical inquiry into persons or events falling within his scope. If he is described as "the theologian of salvation history",[1] I do not quarrel with this description. I see no incompatibility between theology and history: in fact I am tempted, in face of a strong contemporary trend, to say that—within the Jewish and Christian tradition, at least—a man cannot be a good theologian unless he is a good historian.

Historians of Greek and Roman antiquity do not despise Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* as a source of information. They know that Plutarch was a moralist rather than a historiographer, and that the very parallelism of his biographical exercise frequently necessitated a proportion and emphasis which did not correspond entirely with historical reality. Yet, when all due allowances are made for Plutarch's perspective and purpose, his *Lives* provide the historian with some of the material for (say) a life of Caesar, even when we have Caesar's own account of an important phase of his career. Much more so does Luke, who wrote with historical intention, provide the historian of early Christianity with source material of very great value. Even if he does not enable us to see Paul from within, he certainly supplies us with a framework within which Paul's career can be arranged—a framework fixed in history by two or three fairly certainly datable events, such as the famine in Palestine under Claudius (*c.* A.D. 46),[2] Gallio's proconsulship of Achaia (*c.* A.D. 51-52),[3] the replacement of Felix by Festus as procurator of Judaea, for which numismatic evidence points to A.D. 59.[4] Luke gives us a framework such as Paul's extant letters by their nature do not give us, and to plot Paul's letters within the Lukan framework is not to

[1] Cf. E. Lohse, "Lukas als Theologe der Heilsgeschichte", *Evangelische Theologie*, xiv (1954-5), 254 ff.; H. Flender, *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History*, E.T. (London, 1967).

[2] Acts xi. 28; at the end of Cuspius Fadus's procuratorship of Judaea and the beginning of Tiberius Alexander's procuratorship (Josephus, *Ant.*, xx. 100 f.).

[3] Acts xviii. 12; Gallio was proconsul during the period of Claudius's 26th acclamation as *imperator* (W. Dessau, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* ii.[3] 801), which appears to have covered the first seven months of A.D. 52 (*CIL*, iii. 476, vi. 1256). See now the discussion in G. Ogg, *The Chronology of the Life of Paul* (London, 1968), pp. 104 ff.

[4] Acts xxiv. 27; cf. F. W. Madden, *History of Jewish Coins* (London, 1864), p. 153, for a change of Judaean coinage in that year.

stretch them on a Procrustean bed. In fact, they fit the bed without pushing or pulling, when regard is had (*a*) to the fact that Paul mentions several phases or incidents of his career which Luke passes over in silence,[1] and (*b*) to the wide difference in purpose and perspective between Luke's writing and Paul's.

Naturally, where the two authors give what can only be regarded as irreconcilable accounts of one and the same event in Paul's career, we shall consider that Paul is more likely to be accurate on the point of fact, while we shall bear in mind his viewpoint and intention over against Luke's. Examples of this are not lacking in a comparison of the autobiographical data in Galatians with the narrative of Acts.

II

From Galatians i. 12 to ii. 14 there is a sustained autobiographical section in which Paul surveys certain aspects of his career from the period preceding his conversion to his controversy with Peter at Syrian Antioch. We shall not be able to do justice to this section unless we pay attention to Paul's purpose in dictating it. He is concerned in this part of the letter to make two assertions, both in reply to criticisms which his opponents had voiced against him among his converts in Galatia: (*a*) that he received his apostolic authority and commission direct from Christ, by a special revelation, not through any human intermediary, and least of all through the apostles or other leaders of the Jerusalem church; (*b*) that at no time from his conversion onwards did he preach, practise or countenance any deviation from the gospel of free grace, apart from the works of the law—the gospel which he proclaimed to the Galatians at the first and is now defending in his letter.

As part of his argument to establish the former of these assertions he enumerates the visits he had paid to Jerusalem after his conversion and undertakes to show that during none of these was there opportunity for the Jerusalem leaders to confer any authority on him. As for the latter assertion, he maintains that neither at Jerusalem nor anywhere else did he make the slightest

[1] Cf. the summary of his hardships in 2 Cor. xi. 23 ff.

concession, even temporarily, to anyone who tried to impose legal observance (especially circumcision) on Gentile Christians or to treat them as being on an inferior level to Jewish Christians.

It is these Jerusalem visits which particularly challenge comparative study of Galatians and Acts and have thus occasioned a long debate of which we have not yet heard the end. The apologetic thrust of Paul's account here demands that he should include every visit he paid to Jerusalem between his conversion and the moment of writing: had he omitted any, for any reason, the omission would inevitably have aroused suspicion.

Since Paul is concerned to reply to critics who are tolerably well versed in the highlights of his career, especially his contacts with Jerusalem, it would be futile for him to make statements which could easily be exposed as false. Whether Paul was the kind of person whose evidence in his own behalf cannot be accepted without independent corroboration let readers of his letters and students of his character judge. One recent study, indeed, solves the problem of reconciling his statements in Galatians with the evidence of Acts by the over-simple expedient of not taking the former seriously.[1] How seriously Paul himself took them, and intended them to be taken, is clear from his solemn assurance: "The things I am telling you, behold, before God I am telling no lie" (Gal. i. 20). The truth of the gospel as Paul understood it was at stake in the truth of his narrative, and the ease with which false or loaded statements could be refuted would have given pause to a much less scrupulous conscience than Paul's and dictated a cautious adherence to facts.

This autobiographical section covers:

(i) His pre-conversion days (Gal. i. 13 f.)
(ii) His conversion, call and prompt obedience (Gal. i. 15-17)
(iii) His first Jerusalem visit (Gal. i. 18-20)
(iv) His sojourn in Syria-Cilicia (Gal. i. 21-24)
(v) His second Jerusalem visit (Gal. ii. 1-10)
(vi) His dispute with Peter at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11-14).

[1] Cf. J. T. Sanders, "Paul's 'Autobiographical' Statements in Galatians 1-2", *JBL*, lxxxv (1966), 335 ff. The subordination of historical fact to theological aims in this situation would have defeated Paul's purpose in writing.

(i) *His pre-conversion days (Gal. i. 13 f.)*

You have heard about my former career when I practised the Jewish religion. Beyond all measure I persecuted the church of God and laid it waste. I made more progress in the Jewish religion than many of my fellow-nationals who belonged to the same age-group, and was a more thorough-going zealot for my ancestral traditions.

This agrees well enough with the picture in Acts of Saul, the disciple of Gamaliel, at whose feet he was trained according to the strict letter of the ancestral law, a zealot for God (xxii. 3), engaged in deadly persecution of "The Way" (xxii. 4), making havoc of the church (viii. 3), "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (ix. 1). The objection that Galatians is silent about his doing this *in Jerusalem* is not to be taken seriously: where else than in Jerusalem was "the church of God"[1] to be found at that early date, before Paul's conversion? Besides, a few years later, when he began to carry out his apostolic work in Syria and Cilicia, it was the churches of *Judaea* that heard how "*our* former persecutor is now proclaiming the faith which once he laid waste" (Gal. i. 23).[2]

(ii) *His conversion, call and prompt obedience (Gal. i. 15-17)*

In some quarters Paul's former career as a persecutor was perhaps used to discredit him in the eyes of Christians; he himself refers to it in order to magnify the grace of God which turned a persecutor into an apostle.[3]

When God, who had set me apart from my birth, was pleased to call me by his grace and reveal his Son in me, so that I might proclaim the good news about him among the Gentiles, this was the immediate sequel: I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went off into Arabia, and came back again to Damascus.

Paul's concern, let us remember, is to emphasize his independence of Jerusalem, as regards both the gospel he preached and his commission to preach it. The part played by Ananias of Damascus in the Acts narrative (ix. 10-17, xxii. 12-16) does not conflict with this emphasis: a "private" Christian like Ananias could have been at best but the mouthpiece of the risen Lord to

[1] Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 9; Phil. iii. 6.
[2] "Judaea" here must include Jerusalem; see p. 300 below.
[3] Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 9 f.

Paul—and that is what he is in the narrative of Acts. The revelation of God's Son " in me "—or " to me "[1] (Paul would have assented to either rendering or to both together)—is to be interpreted in the light of other statements of his (e.g. 1 Cor. ix. 1), as a reference to his seeing the risen Lord when he appeared to him " last of all, as to one untimely born " (1 Cor. xv. 8). That this revelation came to him at Damascus is indicated by his statement that, after going off to Arabia, he " came back again to Damascus ". Of Arabia the Acts narrative has nothing to say, but it agrees with Galatians (*a*) in locating Paul's conversion and call *near and in Damascus* (ix. 3-19, xxii. 6-16, xxvi. 12-18) and (*b*) in making him pay his first post-conversion visit to Jerusalem *from Damascus* (ix. 23-27, xxii. 17, xxvi. 20).

Revelation of Jesus Christ and call to proclaim his good news among the Gentiles coincided in time, and the Paul who in Acts " was not disobedient to the heavenly vision " (xxvi. 19) is the Paul who in Galatians did not stay to confer with flesh and blood, still less to receive " orders " (in any sense of the word) from flesh and blood, but went off into Arabia. Why did he go there? To proclaim the good news among the Gentiles of Arabia: this is the implication of the context. No need to spend months in retreat in Arabia, thinking through the new situation; three days in Damascus sufficed for his life and thought to be reorientated around a new centre—Christ now instead of Torah—and then, forthwith, the discharge of his commission. By " Arabia " we are to understand the Nabataean kingdom, which stretched from the very walls of Damascus south to the Gulf of Akaba, with its capital at Petra. And that Paul's time in the Nabataean kingdom was not devoted entirely to quiet contemplation is suggested by the hostile interest which the king's representative manifested in him on his return to Damascus, according to his own testimony in 2 Corinthians xi. 32 f.

Before ever I visited Jerusalem as a Christian, he stresses, before I had my first contact with any apostle, I began my apostolic ministry among the Gentiles in response to the divine call, and I had been engaged thus for three years before I went up to Jerusalem.

[1] Lit. " in me " (ἐν ἐμοί).

(*iii*) *His first Jerusalem visit* (*Gal. i.* 18-20)

Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to interview Cephas, and stayed with him for fifteen days. Of the other apostles I saw none, except James the brother of the Lord. Please note: in all that I am writing to you now, I am telling no lie; God is my witness.

What precisely is meant by the phrase which I have translated " to interview Cephas " (ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν)?[1] In RSV it is rendered " to visit Cephas "; in NEB, " to get to know Cephas ". But if we give the verb ἱστορέω its normal force, it might well be rendered " to inquire of Cephas ". Paul recognized Peter as a primary informant on matters regarding which it was now important that he should be well informed—the details of Jesus' ministry and the " tradition " of teaching which derived from him.[2] Peter could impart to Paul much information of this kind (more than James could), but there was one thing, Paul insists, which Peter could not and did not impart to him, and that was apostolic authority. If he went to Jerusalem, he did so in order to establish bonds of fellowship with the mother church and its leaders and to obtain there information which could be obtained nowhere else.

Paul, we suppose, must have distinguished in his own mind between his receiving the gospel " through revelation of Jesus Christ " without human mediation (Gal. i. 11 f.) and his receiving it by tradition as others in due course received it from him (1 Cor. xv. 3).[3] The respective contexts make it fairly clear that what he received without mediation was the revelation of a person—Jesus Christ, the risen Lord—while what he received by tradition was factual information about that person.[4] But the apologetic requirements of the moment might cause him at times to emphasize one side to the apparent exclusion of the other, and there is

[1] Cf., among other discussions of this expression, G. D. Kilpatrick, " Galatians 1 : 18 ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν ", in *New Testament Essays . . . in Memory of T. W. Manson*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Manchester, 1959), pp. 144 ff.; W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 453 ff.

[2] Cf. 1 Cor. xi. 23 ff.; xv. 3 ff.

[3] His receiving it by revelation (Gal. 1. 12) and his receiving it by tradition (1 Cor. xv. 3) are both expressed by παραλαμβάνω.

[4] Cf. O. Cullmann, *The Early Church* (London, 1956), for another explanation.

no doubt what the apologetic requirements of the moment were when the letter to the Galatians was being written. Yet even here the account of his staying with Peter and meeting James is closely linked with his account in 1 Corinthians xv. 1-11 of the message which he proclaimed in common with them, for it is more than a coincidence that the two individuals who are named in that passage as having seen the risen Lord by themselves are these very two—Peter and James.[1]

This Jerusalem visit, described in Galatians i. 18-20, may certainly be identified with that of Acts ix. 26-30, although the correlation of Paul's description with the details of Luke's account is beset by well-known difficulties. Barnabas's using his good offices to introduce Paul to " the apostles" (Acts ix. 27) is entirely probable, but one would not have gathered from Luke's generalizing reference to " the apostles " that Paul in fact met only Peter and James, and Luke's picture of Paul's " going in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord " (Acts ix. 28) is not easy to square with Paul's own solemn assertion that he remained unknown by face to the Judaean churches (Gal. i. 22). To define these Judaean churches as excluding the church of Jerusalem is an unsatisfactory and fruitless expedient : it is his independence of *Jerusalem* throughout this formative phase of his apostleship that Paul is at pains to emphasize. Luke's account of this Jerusalem visit follows fairly closely the pattern of Paul's experience in Damascus, as he relates it : in Damascus " the Jews " plotted to kill him and " his disciples " procured his escape ; in Jerusalem " the Hellenists " sought to kill him and " the brethren " got him down to Caesarea and shipped him off to Tarsus.

The most ingenious (I wish I could say the most convincing) attempt to reconcile the two accounts which I have come across is that of L. E. Browne (a former Professor of Comparative Religion in our University). In his volume on Acts in the Indian Church Commentaries series he extrudes " at Jerusalem " from Acts ix. 28 (against all textual evidence) ; verses 28 and 29 in that case do not record what happened to Paul at Jerusalem

[1] Cf. BULLETIN, xlv (1962-63), 329 f.

but are the contination of Barnabas's relation to the apostles of what had happened to him at Damascus.[1]

On the other hand, Professor Pierson Parker in a recent paper cuts the Gordian knot by reaching the drastic conclusion that the Jerusalem visit of Acts ix. 26-30 did not in fact occur—that the visit of Galatians i. 18-20 is the famine-relief visit of Acts xi. 30.[2] But the famine-relief visit cannot be dated within such a short space of time as the three years of Galatians i. 18, whether they are reckoned from Paul's conversion or from his return from Arabia to Damascus. Besides, the famine-relief visit was paid from Syrian Antioch to Jerusalem, whereas the Jerusalem visit of Galatians i. 18 ff. *preceded* Paul's departure for " the regions of Syria and Cilicia ". Luke may have had very little information about Paul's first post-conversion visit to Jerusalem, but the visit he records in Acts ix. 26-30 did take place, and is to be identified with that of Galatians i. 18-20 ; according to both accounts it was from Damascus that Paul came to Jerusalem on this occasion and according to both accounts it was to Syria-Cilicia (the province in which Tarsus was situated) that he departed when he left Jerusalem.

(*iv*) *His sojourn in Syria-Cilicia* (*Gal. i.* 21-24)

Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. I remained unknown by face to the Christian churches of Judaea. They simply kept on hearing people say, " Our former persecutor is now proclaiming the faith which once he laid waste " ; and they glorified God on my account.

The regions to which Paul went from Palestine belonged to an area which at that time was one Roman province. From about 38 B.C. to A.D. 72 Syria and Cilicia Pedias (eastern Cilicia) were administered as a single province under a *legatus pro praetore*. Whether the time Paul spent in these regions amounted to eleven years or fourteen (depending on whether the fourteen years of Galatians ii. 1 are reckoned from his conversion or from his Jerusalem visit of Galatians i. 18), he was busily engaged, he tells us, in preaching the gospel, for news of his activity percolated south to the churches of Judaea. Two cities in " the regions of

[1] L. E. Browne, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1925), pp. 160 ff.
[2] " Once More, Acts and Galatians ", *JBL*, lxxxvi (1967), 175 ff.

Syria and Cilicia " are mentioned in this part of the Acts narrative—his native Tarsus, to which he was sent by sea from Caesarea (Acts ix. 30), and Syrian Antioch, to which, some years later, Barnabas fetched him from Tarsus to co-operate with him in the direction of the flourishing Gentile mission and church of the provincial capital (Acts xi. 25 f.).

It was from Antioch, according to Acts xi. 30, that Paul paid his next visit to Jerusalem, in company with Barnabas. It was with Barnabas, according to Galatians ii. 1, that he went up to Jerusalem on the occasion of his second post-conversion to that city, and the context indicates that it was from " the regions of Syria and Cilicia " (of which Antioch was the chief city) that he went up.

(*v*) *His second Jerusalem visit* (*Gal. ii.* 1-10)

Then after the lapse of fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem again, together with Barnabas, and took Titus along too. I went up in accordance with revelation, and I communicated to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles—privately, I mean, to the " men of repute ", lest perchance I should prove to be running, or to have run, in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, Greek though he was, was compelled to be circumcised. (It was because of the false brethren who had been smuggled in [that this question later arose]. They infiltrated into our company to spy out the freedom which we have in Christ, in order to bring us into bondage. But to them we never submitted for a moment; our purpose was that the truth of the gospel should remain steadfast with you.) As for the " men of high repute "—it makes no difference to me what sort of men they were, for God has no favourites—these " men of repute ", I say, conferred nothing on me in addition to what was already mine. On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcision as Peter had been entrusted with it for the circumcision; for the same Lord who had empowered Peter for his apostleship among the circumcised had also empowered me for my apostleship to the Gentiles. So then, James, Cephas and John, the men of repute as " pillars " among them, recognized the grace that had been bestowed on me, and shook hands with Barnabas and me as a token of fellowship, agreeing that we should concentrate on the Gentiles and they themselves on the circumcision. " Only ", they urged us, " please continue to remember the poor "; and in fact I had made a special point of attending to this very matter.

Like the two previous sections of Paul's autobiographical sketch, this is introduced by ἔπειτα, " next "; he is leaving out no material phase of his relations with Jerusalem. The " revelation " in accordance with which this second visit was paid cannot be certainly identified; it has been equated with the prophecy of Agabus (Acts xi. 28) or (as by Professor Manson[1]) with the utterance of the Spirit at Antioch directing that Barnabas and Saul be set apart for special service (Acts xiii. 2), but it may quite well have been a special revelation to Paul. On this occasion, Paul says, he set before the Jerusalem " pillars ",[2] James, Peter and John (and it is noteworthy that James is named first of the three) the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, and his stated reason for so doing gives us pause: it was " lest perchance I should prove to be running, or to have run, in vain ".

This appears to amount to a recognition that, in default of the approval or fellowship of the Jerusalem leaders, Paul's apostolic ministry would be futile. But why, if he was called to that ministry by unmediated commission from the risen Lord? It is not the validity of his service, but its practicability, that Paul is concerned about here: while he did not receive his commission from Jerusalem, it could not be effectively discharged except in fellowship with Jerusalem. A cleavage between the Jerusalem church and the Gentile mission would be disastrous for the cause of the gospel: Christ would be divided, and all the devotion with which Paul had thus far prosecuted, and hoped to prosecute, his apostolate to the Gentiles would be frustrated.

As it was, everything apparently turned out well at these conversations held by Paul and Barnabas with the Jerusalem leaders. The demarcation of the two mission fields was agreed upon amicably. But the agreement may have concealed some ambiguities, which came to light later and caused some tension between Paul and Jerusalem. It would be interesting if the Jerusalem leaders had kept minutes of the conversations and these had been preserved for us along with Paul's record; we should then see if their interpretation of the agreement was identical with his.

[1] T. W. Manson, " The Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians ", BULLETIN xxiv (1940), 68, reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (Manchester, 1962), p. 177.

[2] Cf. C. K. Barrett, " Paul and the ' Pillar ' Apostles ", in *Studia Paulina in honorem J. de Zwaan*, ed. J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik (Haarlem, 1953), pp. 1 ff.

(*a*) Was the demarcation quite unambiguous? Was it to be interpreted geographically or communally? In either case, it must have been difficult to define the boundaries of the two mission fields. Jews and Gentiles were to be found in practically every city in the eastern Mediterranean world. Were the Jerusalem leaders debarred from evangelizing the Jews of Ephesus, of Corinth, of Rome? Almost certainly this was not envisaged. But since the churches founded in due course in these cities comprised Jewish and Gentile converts alike, some dovetailing of the two spheres of missionary action was inevitable. Again, was Paul debarred from visiting synagogues in Gentile cities? Probably not. According to the narrative of Acts, it was in synagogues that he regularly found the nucleus of his churches—mainly in the companies of God-fearing Gentiles who habitually attended the services there. But here was another fruitful source of misunderstanding, unless entire mutual confidence was maintained between the two sides to the agreement.

(*b*) On hearing Paul's account of these conversations, some might have said to him, "So you did receive the recognition of the Jerusalem leaders!" To which his reply would probably have been: "I did not receive their recognition as though my commission was previously defective without it; they recognized that I had already been called to this ministry, but they did not in any sense confer on me the right to exercise it." Paul and Barnabas had been energetically engaged for several years in Gentile evangelization, but whereas Barnabas (according to Acts xi. 22) undertook this work in Antioch as commissioner of the Jerusalem church, Paul had been engaged in it long before Barnabas brought him to Antioch as his colleague in the work there. The nature of the recognition which Paul received on his second post-conversion visit to Jerusalem could easily have been misunderstood or misrepresented by any one who was unable or unwilling to distinguish between various forms of recognition. Perhaps the Jerusalem leaders themselves would not have given precisely the same account of the matter as Paul does. In our more sophisticated days we are familiar with the device of deliberate ambiguity in ecclesiastical as in other agreements: what, for example, is the exact significance of the imposition of

hands in the proposed Anglican-Methodist Service of Reconciliation? Such ambiguity as inhered in the Jerusalem agreement was probably not deliberate but inadvertent; but a study of Paul's Corinthian correspondence may show us the kind of misunderstanding to which it could lead.

(*c*) As for the one condition which was pressed on Barnabas and Paul by the Jerusalem leaders, the continued remembrance[1] of "the poor"[2]—i.e. the continued provision of charitable help by the Gentile Christians for the Jerusalem church—Paul says that this was something of which he had made a special point,[3] and this remark of his is illuminated by the Acts account of the relief sent by the church in Antioch at the time of the famine in Palestine under Claudius, the relief which was brought to Jerusalem by Barnabas and himself (Acts xi. 30). How seriously Paul continued to "remember the poor" is seen from the important part which "the collection for the saints" played in his apostolic programme when the Aegean phase of his ministry was about to be completed.[4] But it is perfectly conceivable that here, too, misunderstanding arose: what Paul regarded as a voluntary gesture of Christian charity and fellowship may well have been viewed by the Jerusalem church as a tribute due to them from the Gentiles.[5]

The reference to the famine-relief visit of Acts xi. 30 prompts the question whether this may not have been the visit during which the conversations of Galatians ii. 1-10 took place.[6] To

[1] This I take to be the force of the present tense in ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν.

[2] Probably reflecting Heb. *ha'ebyonim*, the name (Ebionites) by which a considerable body of Jewish Christians continued to be known for many generations.

[3] The aorist ἐσπούδασα may have pluperfect force; cf. C. W. Emmet in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake, ii (London, 1922), 279.

[4] Cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 1-4; 2 Cor. viii. 1-ix. 15; Rom. xv. 25-28; also Acts xxiv. 17.

[5] Cf. K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ii (Tübingen, 1928), 44-67.

[6] So J. Calvin, *Commentary on Galatians* (1548), E.T. (Edinburgh, 1965), p. 24, and many commentators since. The majority opinion equates this visit with that of Acts xv. 2 ff.; an outstanding instance is J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (London, 1890), pp. 125 f. J. Knox (*Chapters in a Life of Paul*, pp. 64 ff.) equates it with the visit of Acts xviii. 22; T. W. Manson (BULLETIN, xxiv. 68; *Studies*, p. 177) thinks of a visit unrecorded in Acts, paid immediately after the call of Acts xiii. 2.

this question an affirmative answer should probably be given. In fact, I do not see how such an answer can be avoided, except on the unconvincing hypothesis that the famine-relief visit of Acts is a duplicate of the later visit of Acts xv[1] (Luke having presumably relied on two sources without realizing that the account of a Jerusalem visit by Barnabas and Paul which each contained referred to one and the same visit and not, as he thought, to two distinct visits). For if the famine-relief visit took place when Luke says it did, Paul's apologetic purpose would have forbidden its being passed over in his present narrative of events.

One major difficulty in the way of identifying the visit of Galatians ii. 1-10 with the famine-relief visit is removed when we see verses 4 and 5, where the raising of the circumcision question is mentioned, as a parenthesis, referring to a later development, and introduced here because Paul is reminded of this subsequent occasion by his reference to Titus and circumcision.[2] So far was the circumcision question from presenting any difficulty in the conversation with the Jerusalem leaders, he says, that although Titus, a Greek, was in Jerusalem with Barnabas and himself, no compulsion was brought to bear to have him circumcised. This issue, he adds in a sentence (verse 4) which lacks a principal clause (I have begged the question by supplying one within square brackets in my paraphrase on p. 302), became acute when " false brethren who had been smuggled in . . . infiltrated into our company to spy out the freedom which we have in Christ, in order to bring us into bondage ". This development is best related to the statement in Acts xv. 1 that " some people came down from Judaea [to Antioch] and were teaching the brethren, ' Unless you are circumcised according to the Mosaic custom, you cannot be saved '." " To them ", says

[1] Cf. J. Wellhausen, " Noten zur Apostelgeschichte ", *Nachrichten von der kgl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl.* (1907), pp. 1 ff.; E. Schwartz, " Zur Chronologie des Paulus ", ib. pp. 263 ff.; K. Lake in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, v (London, 1933), 199 ff. (At an earlier date Lake had accepted the identification of the visit of Galatians ii. 1-10 with the famine-relief visit; cf. *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (London, 1911), pp. 297 ff.)

[2] Cf. T. W. Manson, BULLETIN, xxiv. 66 f.; *Studies*, pp. 175 f. B. Orchard, " A New Solution of the Galatians Problem ", BULLETIN, xxviii (1944), 154 ff., adopts a similar interpretation, but includes verse 3 in the parenthesis.

Paul, " we never submitted for a moment; our purpose was that the truth of the gospel should remain steadfast with you."

The Western omission of the negative in this last sentence (Galatians ii. 5), so that it reads " we submitted for a moment ", is either accidental or else reflects the exegesis of verse 3 according to which Titus *was* circumcised, not by compulsion but by concession (on Paul's part)—on the principle of *reculer pour mieux sauter*. How the circumcision of a Gentile convert could have been imagined by any one, especially by Paul, to help towards establishing the truth of the gospel of free grace is something which passes all understanding. F. C. Burkitt might ask, " who can doubt that it was the knife which really did circumcise Titus that has cut the syntax of Galatians ii. 3-5 to pieces? "[1]—but to this question, as to many others beginning with the rhetorical gambit " Who can doubt . . . ? ", the best answer is " I can "; and so, it is evident, can many exegetes who have dealt with this passage.

That the question of circumcising Titus was not raised on the occasion of the second visit is quite consistent with the testimony of Acts: when Cornelius and his household believed the gospel they were baptized, but no one seems to have suggested that they should also be circumcised[2]; and although Peter had to defend his conduct when he returned from Caesarea to Jerusalem, his associates there, when they accepted his defence, did not say, " Well, it is all right so long as they receive circumcision ". In Acts, as in Galatians, the question of circumcising Gentile believers did not arise until later. When it did arise, those who pressed it were steadfastly resisted by Paul and those who thought as he did: they did not wish the truth of the gospel to be compromised by an infusion of legalism.

(*vi*) *The dispute with Peter at Antioch* (*Gal. ii.* 11-14)

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was manifestly condemned. He sat at table and ate with the Gentiles before some people came from James; but when they came he proceeded to draw back and

[1] *Christian Beginnings* (London, 1924), p. 118. " If he was circumcised, the fact would be well advertised in Galatia by Paul's opponents, and the involved and stumbling verbiage of these verses would be worse than useless as camouflage for that nasty fact " (T. W. Manson, BULLETIN, xxiv. 66 f.; *Studies*, pp. 175 f.).

[2] Acts x. 44-48.

separate himself, through fear of the circumcision party. The rest of the Jews who were there joined in this play-acting; matters went so far that even Barnabas was carried away into joining their play-acting. But when I saw that they were deviating from the straight path of gospel truth, I said to Cephas in front of them all: "If you, Jew as you are, live in the Gentile and not the Jewish way, how is it that you try to compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

It is difficult to decide at what point Paul's quotation of his rebuke to Peter comes to an end and passes into his general reflection on the principle involved.

The occasion of this dispute probably belongs to the period following Barnabas and Paul's return to Antioch after their missionary tour of Cyprus and South Galatia. The circumstances were so convincingly reconstructed by Professor Manson in his lecture on this epistle in the John Rylands Library in 1940 that I need add but little to his words. He preferred the singular reading of Galatians ii. 12, according to which not "some people" but "someone" came from James and did or said something which made Peter suspend his practice of table fellowship with the Gentile Christians of Antioch and eat with Jewish Christians only. What this messenger said, Professor Manson suggested, was something like this:

News has come to Jerusalem that you are eating Gentile food at Gentile tables, and this is causing great scandal to many devout brethren besides laying us open to serious criticism from the Scribes and Pharisees. Pray discontinue this practice, which will surely do great harm to our work among our fellow-countrymen.[1]

The messenger (or messengers) from James, on this showing, did not belong to the "false brethren" who tried to impose circumcision on Gentile converts. But the effect of such a policy as Peter was persuaded to adopt was not so different in practice from the cruder efforts of the "false brethren"—and this is certainly how Paul saw it. What for Peter was a temporary concession for the sake of peace, and perhaps also for the sake of avoiding offence to scrupulous brethren, was in Paul's eyes a compromise of the basic principle of the gospel. For Peter to act thus, he reckoned, was play-acting (ὑπόκρισις), because his withdrawal from table fellowship with Gentiles did not reflect his personal convictions. We do well to recall Kirsopp Lake's

[1] BULLETIN, xxiv. 69-72; *Studies*, pp. 178-81.

words: "The figure of a Judaizing St. Peter is a figment of the Tübingen critics with no basis in history."[1] True, on this occasion Paul had to say to Peter, "How is that you try to compel the Gentiles to *judaize* (ἰουδαΐζειν)?"—but Paul was the more indignant because he knew that Peter was not a judaizer by conviction or custom: rather, Jew by birth though he was, he habitually lived ἐθνικῶς and not ἰουδαϊκῶς—in the Gentile way, not the Jewish way—at least when he was in Gentile company, as Paul himself did. The Peter who in Acts eats in the house of the Gentile Cornelius in Caesarea, and is criticized by the circumcision party for so doing (Acts xi. 2), and the Peter who in Galatians eats with Gentiles in Antioch, and is criticized by the circumcision party for so doing, are not two Peters, but one.

Whatever Peter's motives may have been on this occasion, the effect of his withdrawal from table-fellowship with Gentiles must have been to make Gentile Christians think that they were regarded as at best second-class citizens in the church—that they were regarded, in fact, much as Gentile God-fearers were regarded by the synagogue. If the Gentile mission was to make progress, this situation must be cleared up. Such a situation as Paul describes in Galatians ii. 11 ff. is presupposed by the deliberations and decisions of the Jerusalem Council of Acts xv; Paul's autobiographical outline takes us to the eve of the Council.

[1] *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 116.