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THE TENDENCIES AND HISTORICITY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS.

Continued from Seventh page.

him, "the brethren brought him down to Caesarea and sent him forth to Tarsus," whence Barnabas, sent to Antioch to confirm new believers, took him as a co-worker in Antioch. After laboring together for some time, we read that "the Holy Ghost said, 'separate me Barnabas and Paul for the work whereunto I have called them.' Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Those laboring with them at Antioch, and who thus bade God-speed on their first missionary journey, were Symeon, called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, none of them apostles. His first visit to Jerusalem appears to have been purely fraternal.

In flat contradiction of the theory of the necessity of an apostolic medium for the transmission of the Holy Ghost, we have the episode of Peter preaching to Cornelius and his friends at Caesarea; "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. After the release of Peter and John from prison in Jerusalem, when they had joined their own company and offered thanks to God we read that "when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." In his sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter attributes the gift of the spirit to Jesus himself. "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath poured forth this which ye see and hear."

In these extracts can readily be noted a confusion in thought regarding the inception of the Holy Spirit, and the authority vested in the apostles. Scholars tell us that the second century idea of the early church was a conception of an apostolic college with headquarters at Jerusalem, to the rule of which all Christian organizations were subject. The first century view was essentially a purely missionary aspect of the apostolacy without regard to supremacy of one over the other, or as a body, over the disciples, except in this—that they had known and loved the Christ in the flesh and were thus more in touch with his actual teaching. It is possible that the book of acts was in writing in the early part of the second century, and that Luke, dealing with sources in which the trend would naturally present the first century idea, read into parts perhaps vague and unsatisfactory, the second century point of view. As even today eminent scholars treat great theological questions in the light of their own convictions and in line with their own sectarian tendencies, so likewise, Luke, while conscientiously using his sources, may have let in upon his narrative the light of a prevailing tendency toward ecclesiasticism.

It will be noticed that the book concludes without mention of the death of Paul which occurred at the hands of the Romans about 65 A. D. This omission is noticeable in face of the fact that "Acts" was not written before 84 A. D. and perhaps not finished until 130 A. D., and that fully one quarter of the entire book treats of his imprisonment.

Throughout Acts it is the Jews alone who are malignant toward Paul, the civil authorities often appearing as mediators. The Roman officials are never disparagingly spoken of, but quite on the contrary, and made to appear as if really in sympathy with christianity as personified in Paul; although they do not freely endorse it, or eventually free him. At Paphos, the pro-consul, Sergius Paulus, embraced the faith. At Philippi, Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned, but were shortly released with profuse apologies—here also the jailer believed and was baptized. At Corinth, the pro-consul, Gallio, refused to utter judgment against Paul in favour of the Jews. On the occasion of the tumult at Ephesus, raised by the makers of the shrines of Diana, we are told that "certain also of the chief officers of Asia, being his (Paul's) friends, sent unto him and besought him not to adventure himself into the theatre;" and again, "when the town clerk had quieted the multitude," he addressed and dismissed them. After his arrest at Jerusalem, when Paul was before the Sanhedrim, in the midst of the wrangling of the Pharisees and Sadducees, "the chief captain (Roman) fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force and bring him into the castle." This same captain, Claudius Lysias, in sending Paul to Caesarea to escape the Jewish plotters, wrote to Felix, the governor, that he (Paul) had nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. Felix, after hearing Paul, gave orders that he should be treated with indulgence, and that none of his friends should be forbidden to minister to him. Festus, the successor of Felix after two years, Paul having been a prisoner in Caesarea during this time, laid Paul's case before the visiting King Agrippa in these words:—"There is a certain man left prisoner by Felix, about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, asking for

sentence against him. To whom I answered, that it is not the custom of the Romans to give up any man before that the accused have the accusers face to face, and have had opportunity to make his defence concerning the matter laid against him; concerning whom when the accusers stood up, they brought no charge of such evil things as I supposed; but had certain questions against him of their own religion, and of one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive."

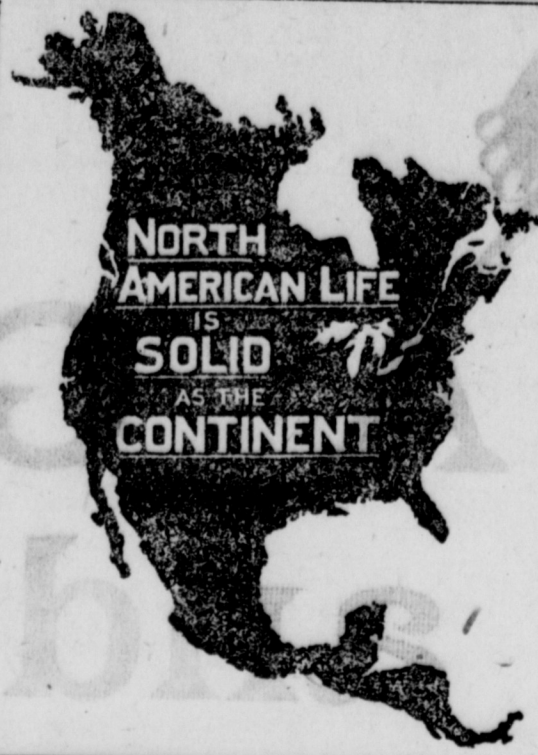
From another passage we understand that as Paul himself had appealed to Caesar, Festus had determined to send him to Rome; but, having no charge to lay against him, he brought him before Agrippa for examination, that he might have some certain thing to write to the Emperor. Agrippa's verdict was, "This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds, and might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Caesar." During the voyage from Caesarea to Rome, on the occasion of the shipwreck off the island of Melita, when the soldiers wished to kill the prisoners lest any of them should swim out and escape, we are told that "the centurion, desiring to save Paul, stayed them from their purpose." At Rome, in his address to the chief men of the Jews, Paul said: "I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans: who, when they had examined, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; . . . because of the hope of Israel I am bound with these chains." The closing words of the treatise leave the impression that, though a prisoner, Paul was almost free—"And he abode in his own hired dwelling two whole years, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him." From these instances can be gathered the idea, that Luke in his composition had a certain bias in favour of the Roman authorities, as it is shown to us that these, after minute investigation, invariably found no fault in Paul, and no menace to the State in his propounded doctrine. He (Luke) may have had within himself such an exalted view of the Christ-religion and its power through the great exponent, Paul, that he idealized the Roman mind, imputing to it some such fine element that it was unable to withstand the convincing truth and Paul's eloquence. There certainly was idealizing somewhere, either in his mind or merely in his words, for the fact remains that Paul did suffer at the hands of the Romans, else why that passage in II Cor. concerning treatment which would be unlikely to stand solitary in his history:—"In Damascus the governor under Aretas guarded the city in order to take me; and through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall and escaped his hands." There are other references throughout the epistles to ill-usage by the Romans, and it is certain that they had his death at their door. It seems possible that this book was outlined by Luke during the reign of Domitian, near the end of the first century, when Christians were much persecuted, being treated as rebels and outlaws; and that his trend of thought was toward a vindication of Christianity; hence the prominence given to parts which might show that earlier Roman rulers found in it no pernicious element; and hence the concluding picture—Paul preaching Christ unmolested.

Woven in with this possible tendency we find another thread of thought; that while the Romans found in Christianity nothing anarchical, the Jews saw in this offshoot of their religion, its probable deposer, hence their continued warfare. Just as at Ephesus Demetrius started the riot against Paul, because he saw not only the ultimate ruination of the trade of the shrine-makers, but also the danger "that the temple of the great goddess, Diana, be made of no account, and that she should be deposed from her magnificence whom all Asia and the world worshipped."—which was a great argument in favor of Paul's religion, so none stronger could be offered for Christianity than that given by those old, aristocratic, royally-robed high priests and elders themselves, in their strenuous conflict with the followers of the carpenter of Nazareth.

In chapter IV is found the heart of this Christianity which Luke upheld, the essence of his book, and his inspiration. The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul,—the seal of the Christ upon the lives of those whose highest aim was not simply pure living, but to teach unbelievers "how that they should seek God if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though he is not far from each of us." This community of feeling between Luke and the persecuted followers of Jesus must have been the motive of an open espousal of the principles of christianity at a time when such a course was especially dangerous.

It seems fitting to turn from a consideration of this book of beautiful outline and high precept with a view, not of Luke collecting data or painting great mind pictures, but of the character built up on the bed-rock of Christ, love offering a vindication of this in behalf of his fellows, in the face of possible persecution on a line with his whose expounded and exemplified teaching he lives out,—"I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto me, so that I may accomplish my course . . . to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

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SHERIFF'S SALE,

County of Carleton.

There will be sold at Public Auction in front of the Post Office in the Town of Woodstock in the County of Carleton on Wednesday the 30th day of April next at the hour of eleven of the clock in the forenoon:

All the right, title, interest, claim, property and demand, either at law or in equity, of Daniel Bell late of the Parish of Kent in the County of Carleton, deceased, of, into or out of the following lands and premises, situate, lying and being in the Parishes of Peel and Kent, County of Carleton, Province of New Brunswick, and described as follows:—All that certain piece and parcel of land and premises bounded on the north by the high-way roads leading from Bristol to Glasville, easterly by land owned by Mansfield Bell, southerly by land owned by William A. Bell known as the Snow lot, and westerly by land occupied by John Briggs and known as the Andrew Bell lot and containing one hundred acres more or less. Together with all houses, outhouses, barns, buildings, edifices, improvements and appurtenances to the same belonging or in any manner appertaining.

The same having been seized and taken by me, under and by virtue of a warrant issued by the Secretary Treasurer of the County of Carleton, on application of the Trustees of Schools for School District Number 14 Kent and Peel under the provisions of Chapter 100 of the Consolidated Statutes and Amending Acts.

Dated at Woodstock in the County of Carleton the twenty-first day of January, A. D., 1902.
WILLIAM A. HAYWARD,
Sheriff of Carleton County.

NOTICE.

To former members of THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY, which disbanded a number of years ago, and to all persons interested in its affairs:—

I hereby give notice that there is and has been for several years, on deposit in the BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA, under my care, a certain sum of money which belonged to the above SOCIETY at its dissolution, and that it is my intention to pay the amount of the said fund to the Trustees of THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL, now about being organized in this Town. If any person interested is opposed to such a course, any objections he or she may have, may be sent in to A. B. CONNELL within one month from the date thereof, for my consideration. Dated this twenty-first day of MARCH, A. D. 1902.
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Assessors' Notice.

NOTICE is hereby given that the undersigned have been appointed Assessors of the Rates in and for the Town of Woodstock for the present year. All persons owning property in the Town may within Twenty Days give in a statement of their property and income as provided by law.

Dated at Woodstock, April 2nd, 1902.
**CHARLES COMBEN,
EMERSON L. HAGERMAN,
HARRY NASH.**

That no assessment be changed by this Council after it is placed in the hands of the Town Treasurer, except the ratepayer fully complies with the requirements of the law relating to appeals from assessment.—4-14.
A woman's broken heart mends beautifully if it is attended to at once.—Ex.