"ST. PAUL THE TRAVELLER."

PROF. RAMSAY'S new book[1] and the commentary of Dr. Blass, taken together, mark an epoch in the study of the Acts. Once more it has become possible to approach the literature on that book without a feeling of utter weariness. For some years past it had seemed as though the criticism of the Acts was doomed to waste itself among the sands of sterile hypothesis. It all moved along a single channel, and that a channel which led nowhere. Because literary analysis has won its triumphs in the Old Testament, and because it was employed at least hopefully in the case of the Synoptic Gospels, it was assumed that it could be applied without further qualification, and it was applied with interminable hair-splitting, to the Acts. The first condition of successful literary analysis must be the existence of clearly marked differences of style and of ideas. But in regard to the Acts the differences of style throughout the book were less marked than the identity; and though it was often assumed, it was never proved that such peculiarities as existed in idea and mode of treatment were inconsistent with substantial unity of authorship. I am not concerned to deny the existence of sources—even written sources—in the Acts, but the attempts to discriminate them so far have ended only in failure; the various reconstructions have been each more artificial than the last; and, in fact, hardly a single step in the process has been made good to the satisfaction of any one beyond the critic by whom it was put forward.[2]

[1] *St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen.* (Hodder and Stoughton.)

[2] I find myself in much agreement with the estimate of recent criticism of

The fundamental mistake has been that the critics—in different degrees and with proportionate degrees of ill-success—have approached the Acts in a spirit of suspicion. Here they have seen redaction in one sense, there they have seen redaction in another; the one hypothesis which they have often seemed least willing to entertain is that the author of the Acts meant what he said and had good reasons for saying it.

In this lies the significance, and, as I cannnot but think, the conspicuous superiority of the methods pursued by Dr. Blass and Prof. Ramsay. They have begun by taking their author as he stands. They have approached him with the presumption that he was right and not wrong. They have looked hard at what he said and weighed thoroughly all the surrounding circumstances before they have had recourse to theories of redaction, interested statement, or fiction. In addition to this they have had advantages shared by none of their more recent predecessors. Dr. Blass has had a long training in the severe school of classical philology, and in consequence he has given us a commentary which is before all things the work of a scholar—clear, concise, hitting off the main point in the fewest possible words, and supporting the interpretation adopted by well-selected parallels. I do not by any means always agree with him. I am convinced that the Acts was written after and not before 70 A.D., and I greatly doubt the theory of two recensions of the text both issued by St. Luke himself. But opinions are always less important than the presentation of the *data*, and it is for the presentation of these that Dr. Blass has earned our profound gratitude. His book will remain the commentary on the Acts for many a long day.

the Acts by Dr. O. Zöckler (*Greifswalder Studien*, p. 109 ff.). I differ from him chiefly in the extent to which I am able to accept the textual theories of Dr. Blass. He adopts them *en bloc*.

Prof. Ramsay has much in common with Dr. Blass. He too comes to his subject from the side of classical philology, but it is classical philology in its broadest sense, an intimate knowledge of ancient life. The one man whom he calls master is Mommsen,[1] and like Mommsen he brings to bear on the interpretation of his text a mastery, which is every day becoming more complete, of that which lies behind the text, the framework of the Roman Empire, the deeper roots of ancient civilization. Add to this familiarity with the actual soil which St. Paul trod, the actual roads by which he travelled, the actual sites of the cities in which he stayed; and add again a singular faculty for going to the heart of a problem, vigorous powers of reasoning, and a nervous, masculine style, and I think it will be agreed that Prof. Ramsay brings to his task a very exceptional equipment.

Nothing could be easier than to illustrate this from the volume before us. It simply bristles with points of interest. There is not a page of it from the first to the last that is not fresh, independent, original, grappling with his subject at first hand. The writer's gifts perhaps sometimes disturb the balance of his judgment. He sees his own points so vividly, they stand out from the canvas so boldly, that he cannot see anything besides. The considerations which weigh with others seem to him trivial by comparison. Sometimes, perhaps, they are trivial, but not, I think, always. There are times when I should be tempted myself to put in a plea for arrest of judgment where the case is stated so powerfully as almost to overbear opposition. I propose to give an instance presently. But this again rather enhances than detracts from my admiration for Prof. Ramsay's book. It is not infallible any more than Dr. Blass is infallible; but it shows an extraordinary

[1] A like phrase is also applied to Bishop Lightfoot (*Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 8).

faculty for bringing real questions to a real issue; and that is the surest means of the advance of knowledge.

Necessities of time and space—the time at my own disposal and the amount of space available in a single number of THE EXPOSITOR—prevent me from going through the book, as I should like, point by point, and compel me to select a particular topic which seems most to need discussion. This topic shall be the one on which Prof. Ramsay's views depart most widely from those generally current. The view which has hitherto greatly preponderated is that the visit of St. Paul to Jerusalem described in Galatians ii. 1–10 was on the occasion of the Apostolic Council described in Acts xv. Prof. Ramsay denies this, and identifies it rather with the mission of Barnabas and Paul to convey to Jerusalem the alms collected at Antioch, of which mention is made in Acts xi. 30. This visit, Prof. Ramsay thinks, took place in the year 45, or more probably 46; the Apostolic Council he would place in 49 or 50. Between them would intervene the whole of the first missionary journey (Acts xiii., xiv.) and the founding of what Prof. Ramsay would call the Galatian Churches.

If this view holds good, it will no doubt greatly affect the chronology of the Acts, and not inconsiderably the chronology of the Epistles. For this I am quite prepared, if it shall be necessary. So far as I can see no question of principle is involved. I am ready to be converted to Prof. Ramsay's view if the balance of argument shall be found to lean that way; but he has not as yet succeeded in converting me, and it seems well that a case should be stated on the other side. I do not deny for a moment that Prof. Ramsay's arguments are real arguments. The question only is whether they are decisive, and whether there are not real arguments to be set against them.

I will put in the forefront at once the one consideration which compels me (as at present advised) to adhere to the

older view; and I will then try to weigh the minor arguments for and against the rival hypotheses.

The consideration which to me seems in the strictly Baconian sense "crucial" is that Galatians ii. 1–10 implies a stage in the controversy as to the terms of admission of Gentile converts which had certainly been reached by the date of Acts xv. but which had not been reached at the date of Acts xi. 30.

On the visit of Galatians ii. 1–10, the main point decided was the distinct spheres of labour of the Judæan Apostles, especially St. Peter, and St. Paul. "When they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the Uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the Circumcision (for He that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James, and Cephas, and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision" (Gal. ii. 7–9).

We cannot resist the conclusion that by this time there is a cleavage, a great and deep cleavage, in the Church: the Christians of Gentile origin are on one side, those of Jewish origin on the other. Already there lies behind a period of vigorous mission work, in which the efforts of St. Paul for the Gentiles had been conspicuously crowned by the Divine blessing. This the Judæan Apostles recognise, and they shake hands over the *fait accompli*. Henceforward they will keep for their own province the Jews, and they bid God-speed to St. Paul in the work that lies before him among the Gentiles.

Now this is exactly the state of things which we find in Acts xv. *It is, I would venture to say, as clearly not the state of things which we find in Acts* xi. 30. At that time the preliminary conditions for it did not exist.

The gospel had been preached to a few Gentiles, most probably all of them as yet in some degree of connexion with the synagogue; but no cleavage, no question of principle had as yet arisen. There is no watchword "Jew" and "Gentile," no antithesis of "Circumcision" and "Uncircumcision." Prof. Ramsay himself shows very skilfully how this antithesis arose in the course of the journey of Acts xiii., xiv., but on his theory that journey is still in the future. Hitherto there have been nothing but friendly relations between the Church at Antioch as a whole and the Church of Jerusalem as a whole. The visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem has for its object only to convey the gifts of the one Church to the other. If matters of larger moment had been at stake, I should expect, and from the opinions which he expresses I should have thought that Prof. Ramsay would expect, the historian to take some note of them.

I am aware that in the August EXPOSITOR he has given a different version of the events in question. I venture to place my version side by side with it, and I know that Prof. Ramsay himself will do it justice.

It seems to me, if I may say so, that Prof. Ramsay minimizes too much the amount of friction to which the passage in Galatians bears witness. When he writes, "This visit then belongs to a period before the question had actually come to the front; it was already imminent, but was not yet actually the subject of contention," I cannot recognise this as an adequate description. How, for instance, does it agree with this: "But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:[1] to whom we gave place in the way of sub-

[1] Prof. Ramsay proposes here a rather different translation and punctuation.

jection, no, not for one hour; that the work of the gospel might continue with you"? Is there no contention there? And is there none in the impatient words that follow? "But from those who are reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me," etc. True, the Apostle goes on to say how they shook hands and agreed to go different ways. He was a warm-hearted and generous opponent, and ready enough to close a threatened breach. The tension does not seem to have been directly with the Judæan Apostles, but it is clear that their names had been thrown in his teeth. He stood his ground, and held it; but even as he writes the memory of the scene comes back to him, and something of the spirit of battle imparts itself to his pen.

Surely there are a number of striking coincidences between this narrative and that of Acts xv. The "false brethren privily brought in . . . to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus,"—what are they but the "certain men" who "came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved"? The conflict (or at least the beginnings of it) must have been at Antioch, because the liberty spied upon was that of the Pauline congregations. The accounts I believe to be independent, and the points of view are different, but the situation is essentially the same.

That there was an openly conducted controversy is proved also by the case of Titus. It is not merely that St. Paul is appealing to a precedent drawn from a time of peace in a time of war. "To whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour." The Epistle echoes the war-note as well as the history.

Not only was there controversy on the two occasions, but the course of the controversy was the same. It had the

same subject: the Pauline gospel was concerned; and the question of circumcision was definitely raised. It had the same turning-point. In both cases the argument which carried the day was the appeal of St. Paul to the hand of God as seen in the success of his own missions (Acts xv. 3, 4, 12, 26 = Gal. ii. 7–9). The issue was the same: the fraternizing of the leaders, and the framing of a concordat which left to both sides all the freedom which they needed.

Against all these marked coincidences, what is to be quoted for Acts xi. 30? The single point, "only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do." Prof. Ramsay lays stress on the aorist ἐσπούδασα, and he makes it refer to the alms which Paul and Barnabas had just handed over. But the proof that it does this is anything but stringent. Prof. Ramsay points out the delicate courtesy of the Judæan Apostles in selecting for their one condition the very thing that had brought St. Paul to Jerusalem: "Make it your rule to do what you have been regularly doing." In any case the request is courteously and delicately put, because in any case St. Paul had given proof of his willingness to do what was required of him. But to me it seems distinctly more natural that such a request should be made at a moment when the answer to it was less glaringly obvious. To ask St. Paul to do what he had done before, is one thing; to ask him to do the very thing which he came for the purpose of doing, is another. Action such as that supposed would hardly mark a high sense of what was graceful and fitting.

I confess that to me the coincidences between Acts xv. and Galatians ii. come with great force—with all the more force because the differences which accompany them show that they are wholly undesigned. On these differences Prof. Ramsay would insist; and it is right that we should discuss them.

Before doing so I have one general criticism to make on Prof. Ramsay's book which may come in here as appropriately as anywhere. I am reluctant to make it, because the point to which it is directed is so very much the opposite of the treatment accorded to the Acts of late by most other scholars. And my own sympathies are far more with Prof. Ramsay than with them. I must in candour admit that his treatment of St. Luke as a historian seems to me too optimistic. Not but that I gladly and heartily join in his eulogies, but he seems to me not to allow enough for facts over which St. Luke himself had no control; that is to say, he does not allow enough for the limitations to which St. Luke was inevitably exposed from the nature of his sources.

He writes as if St. Luke had the whole of the facts fully spread out before him, and as if all that he had to do was to make a selection among them. Now I do not doubt that there is selection, and very skilful selection. Prof. Ramsay has brought out this in a way for which we have much reason to be grateful to him. But I conceive that the selection was made within narrower limits, and that it was more largely conditioned by the available information. Let us think of the historian for a moment as he girds himself for the task of writing the two works which have come down to us, as Prof. Ramsay and I believe (though all would not agree with us) about the years 75–80 A.D. I should not, speaking for myself, suppose that he had conceived the idea of chronicling the history of the infant church very much earlier. It would appear from the preface to the Gospel that St. Luke was set upon writing it by the existence of other narratives dealing with the subject. But I do not think that these narratives began to spring up copiously before the decade 60–70 A.D. I believe that St. Paul was dead when St. Luke definitely planned the composition of the Acts. I want something

more than selection to explain the historian's silences. I should find it hard to explain them if he had a first-rate authority always within reach. The materials used I take to be in part written (like the greater part of the sources of the Gospel, and very possibly the source of the early chapters of the Acts), in part oral collected chiefly during the two years that St. Paul was imprisoned at Cæsarea, in part his own recollections and notes—such as those which perhaps lie behind the "We-sections." It is one thing to suppose that St. Luke had directed attention to the events which passed around him, to those before as well as after his own actual discipleship. So much seems to be implied in the παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν of the preface. But it is another thing to assume that St. Luke began with the intention of writing a history, and that he accumulated materials deliberately in view of this intention all through his career. If that had been the case, it seems to me that the narrative of the Acts would have been different from what it is.

We cannot say when or where or how St. Luke met the particular informant from whom he derived the narrative contained in Acts xv. But it seems to me, as I read that chapter, that this informant, whoever he was, gave him a plain, straightforward, consistent story, which differs indeed from that in Galatians ii., but for the single reason that it is told from a wholly different point of view. The person in question was one of the crowd, who saw what other outside spectators saw, and filled up the gaps with what he was told by others in the same position as himself. It was matter of common hearsay that disputes had arisen at Antioch, that these disputes were due to the presence of strict-minded Jews from Jerusalem, that it was decided to appeal to headquarters, and that a formal meeting of the mother-church had been summoned, that at this meeting the leading actors spoke—not at once, but after much

discussion, which is expressly mentioned in Acts xv. 7—summing up the position, and finally ending with a resolution which was carried without open dissent.

This is all that any one standing in the crowd could be expected to see and know; it hangs together perfectly; and, so far as it goes, we may accept it without hesitation. How strongly contrasted with this are the circumstances under which St. Paul is writing to the Galatians! That his account of what happened takes the form of narrative at all is an accident: it is all subordinate to his own purpose, which is to prove the independence of his own teaching. Where St. Luke's informant speaks from common knowledge of facts that might be seen from without, he writes from within, from the innermost of inner circles, of things perhaps in part known only to himself and God.

So long as this is borne in mind there is not a detail that does not seem to me to fall easily and naturally into its place. We do not know at all what the "revelation" was which impelled St. Paul to take the action he did, or how it fits into the chain of events; but Prof. Ramsay, I think, presses this ignorance of ours quite unduly when he takes it as excluding the statements of Acts xv. 3.[1] When I say "unduly," I mean more than we can afford to do if we are to attempt to write the history of events for which the data are so scanty. The juxtaposition in Acts xiii. 2, 3, of Divine prompting with formal commission seems to me sufficiently parallel. Commission seems implied in the laying on of hands, if not in ἀπέλυσας.

In like manner as to the private intercourse which *Epist. Gal.* implies as going on concurrently with, or perhaps as leading up to, the great public meeting recorded in the Acts. Any one who is acquainted with affairs knows that vital controversies are not settled in public meetings. But indeed

[1] *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 155.

on this head I need only quote Prof. Ramsay's own language on page 57: "Another purpose is said in *Epist. Gal.* to have been achieved on this journey, but Paul immediately adds that this other purpose was carried out as a mere private piece of business, and implies thereby that it was not the primary or official purpose of the journey." If Prof. Ramsay can find room for the events of Galatians ii. 1–10 in Acts xi. 30, I may claim to find room for them as well in Acts xv., where they stand indeed in much nearer relation to the main subject.

Weigh in opposite scales the coincidences and the discrepancies in the two accounts, and in my judgment at least there is no doubt which will fall and which will rise.

Only one really serious difficulty seems to me to attend the identification of the incidents in Acts xv. and Galatians ii. That is the one on which in pursuance of his argument Prof. Ramsay naturally insists, that on this theory we identify a visit to Jerusalem which in Galatians is apparently the second, with one which in the Acts is quite indisputably the third. Is this too covered by the special purpose of the two writers? On the view which I am adopting that is the only outlet from the dilemma.

We have to remember that St. Paul in Galatians has nothing really to do with visits to Jerusalem. What he has to do with is the intercourse of St. Paul with the elder Apostles. And we observe that although it is true that the author of the Acts would certainly make the visit of his fifteenth chapter the third, he says nothing whatever which would make it the third occasion of intercourse with the other Apostles. Rather there is what may well be a significant silence in regard to them in the description of the second visit. What St. Luke says about this is compressed into a single verse: "And the disciples [at Antioch] . . . determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa: which also they did, sending it *to the elders* by the

hand of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts xi. 30). I take this as a compendious expression implying not that the Church at Antioch intended its contributions to be delivered to the elders, but that as a matter of fact it was so delivered. But if so, is it purely by accident that there is no mention here of "Apostles"? that whereas elsewhere "the Apostles and elders" are constantly bracketed together as though they formed a single body (Acts xv. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23, xvi. 4; cf. xxi. 18), in this one place the Apostles drop out and the elders stand close? Prof. Ramsay attaches value to the silence of the Acts, even where it extends only to a single word; and so do I attach value to it. I do not think that this marked omission of "the Apostles" was without a reason. Shall we speculate what reason?[1] I had been in the habit of supposing that this mission of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem synchronised with Herod's persecution in the year 44. The graphic picture of Acts xii. 12–17 shows that at this time the leading Apostles were in some sort of hiding. Now we note that the arrival of the two envoys is mentioned in chapter xi. 30, and their departure in chapter xii. 25; and between these two points comes the description of the Herodian persecution. So that the inference does not seem to be forced, that on this occasion the Apostles were not at hand, and the envoys from the Church at Antioch returned without having seen them.[2] On this hypothesis the various statements seem to dovetail neatly into each other. But in any case there is no direct contradiction between the language of the Acts and that of St. Paul on the assumption that the latter is referring to his third visit; and, that being so, I do not

[1] Prof. Ramsay explains the pointed mention of "elders" as due to a nice sense of the duties of different officials.

[2] Prof. Ramsay puts the visit in the year 45, or preferably 46. He thinks that the famine had begun, and that provisions were taken and not money. I believe it to be more probable that money was taken, on the faith of Agabus' prophecy, and that the Judæan Church was left to lay in stores for itself.

feel called upon to manufacture one where we know so little; the whole chapter of accidents is open.

For these reasons I still adhere to the older view, substantially as it was presented by Bishop Lightfoot. It seems to me that in this instance Prof. Ramsay has used the microscope which he has applied with such splendid effect elsewhere, but that he has turned one end of it towards certain of the arguments, and the other end towards others. Hence it is that he speaks with a confidence which the facts do not appear to me to warrant.

I am also inclined to go with Bishop Lightfoot in regard to the place which he assigns to the next section (Gal. ii. 11–14). Prof. Ramsay very ingeniously inserts the scene at Antioch in the series of events which led up to the council. According to him, it would correspond to Acts xv. 1, 2, a position which is rendered possible by throwing back the previous verses, Galatians ii. 1–10, to the latitude of Acts xi. 30. For us this ceases to be tenable, because we cannot invert the order of the two sections, or make the intercourse with St. Peter at Antioch precede what is expressly said to be the second occasion of intercourse with him at Jerusalem.

Thus the one conclusion carries with it the other, and for my own part I must be content to follow in the beaten track instead of taking the devious, but tempting paths opened up by Prof. Ramsay. Just this part of the book seems to me to miss the mark in its attempted reconstruction of the life of the Apostle. But even supposing that the verdict of others should go with me, it would detract but very little from the value of what is probably the freshest and most penetrating study ever made of that life in two of its aspects—"St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen."

W. SANDAY.