

THE WORDS OF AGRIPPA TO ST PAUL.

At the end of his critical note on Acts xxvi 28, after suggesting that possibly πεποιθας should be read for μεπειθεις, Dr Hort adds 'but it is no less possible that the error lies elsewhere'. These words invite suggestions.

Now any one who reads through the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth books of the *Antiquities* of Josephus can hardly fail to be struck by the recurrence of the phrases ἐν ὀλίγῳ ποιῆσθαι and ἐν ὀλίγῳ τίθεσθαι in the sense 'to make light of'. Thus for ἐν ὀλίγῳ ποιῆσθαι :—

οὐ μὴν οἱ φύλακες ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὰς Ἀρχελαίου ἐπιστολὰς ἐποιοῦντο. (*Ant.* xvii 223.)

τὰ φρονήματα ἀνδρῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὸ θανεῖν ποιουμένων. (xvii 256.)

πλήθος ἄπορον ἀνδρῶν πονηρῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὴν σωτηρίαν ποιουμένων
ῥαστώνης χάριτι τῆς εἰς τὸ παρόν. (xviii 367.)

Still more common in these same books is ἐν ὀλίγῳ τίθεσθαι. Thus

θανάτων τε ιδέας ὑπομένειν παρηλλαγμένας ἐν ὀλίγῳ τίθενται καὶ συγγενῶν
τιμωρίας καὶ φίλων ὑπὲρ τοῦ μηδένα ἀνθρωπον προσαγορεύειν
δεσπότην. (xviii 23.)

ὅπως . . . ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὴν ἀχθηδόνα τοῦ παρόντος τιθοῖο. (xviii 20.)

ἀνὴρ ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὸ ψεύδος τιθέμενος. (xviii 85.)

καλῶς ἔχειν ἡγούμενος πᾶσιν ἀσφάλειαν καὶ ἐλευθερίαν ὠνούμενος ἐν
ὀλίγῳ τίθεσθαι τὰ κατὰ τοὺς ἀπολουμένους. (xix 10.)

τοῖς ἐν ὀλίγῳ τιθεμένοις ὅποσα πεπόνθοιεν. (xix 177.)

τὴν μὲν Γαῖου τιμωρίαν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τιθέμενοι. (xix 214.)

In *Ant.* xvii 278 we find οὐκ ἐν μεγάλοις τίθεσθαι τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ ἐπὶ τοιοῦδε ἀνάλωμα γενησόμενον. In *Ant.* ii 128 κέρδους ἀδίκου τὴν πρὸς Ἰωσήπον φιλίαν ἐν δευτέρῳ θέμενοι. This phrase is frequent in the 'Jewish War', e.g. i 100, 150; ii 233, 466; iv 115. Cp. iii 480 (ἐν ἀντιπάλῳ), ii 123 and 146 (ἐν καλῶ).

Polybius writes ἐν μεγάλῳ τίθεσθαι. Thus

ὁ Φάβιος ἐν μεγάλῳ τιθέμενος τὴν ἐπιβολήν, τὰλλα παρεῖς πρὸς ταῖς εἰς
τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ἦν ἐπινοίας. (x 1.)

ἐν μεγάλῳ τιθέμενοι τὸ τῆς ἰσηγορίας καὶ παρρησίας. (vi 9.)

ἐν μεγάλῳ τιθέμενοι καὶ τοῦτον τὸν πόλεμον. (iii 97.)

Cp. πάντ' ἐν ἐλάττωι θέμενοι. (xxxviii 2, iv 6.)

One other passage of Polybius may be quoted to shew how in such phrases *τίθεσθαι* and *ποιεῖσθαι* are interchanged :—

καθ' ὅσον γὰρ ἐν καλῷ τίθενται τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ κρατίστου χρηματισμὸν ('good honest money-making'), κατὰ τοσοῦτο πάλιν ἐν ὀνειδίει ποιοῦνται τὴν ἐκ τῶν ἀπειρημένων πλεονεξίαν. (vi 56.)

If now we turn to Agrippa's words, the suspicion is irresistible that ἐν ὀλίγῳ belongs to *ποιήσαι* taken as the imperative middle, and that St Luke wrote *πείθειν*. Agrippa has come in great state to enjoy an *ἐπίδειξις* from this gifted prisoner, who is in such deadly earnest that he is spoiling it all. Festus has burst out with 'You are mad'. Agrippa suggests that St Paul should not trouble himself about winning him as a convert to Christianity. Let that be quite a subordinate consideration, he urges. They are there to be entertained, and possibly to get material for a favourable report to the Emperor. 'Pray regard winning me for a Christian as a matter of little moment.'

I have not found *πείθειν* with a proleptic accusative to express its result. But such an accusative after *διδάσκειν* is fairly familiar, and *πείθειν καὶ διδάσκειν* is a frequent collocation in Plutarch (e.g. i 161 B, 206 A, 323 E). Pindar writes *νιν φίλον ἔσανεν* (*Pyth.* i 51) 'he wheedled him *into friendship*'. And Josephus has

θεραπεύειν πρότερον (*B. J.* i 507) and παρασκευάζουσι . . . τὰς ψυχὰς ἀλκίμους (*B. J.* iii 102).

St Paul's reply is to the effect that the conversion of Agrippa and all his hearers is to him a wholly adequate object. Whether God be using him that day *only* to effect that conversion or be pleased to make it subordinate to some yet higher purpose, His servant will be equally satisfied. It is not for him to say what is primary and what is secondary with God.

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