Concordia Theological Monthly

Continuing

LEHRE UND WEHRE
MAGAZIN FUER EV.-LUTH. HOMILETIK
THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY-THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. VII February, 1936 No. 2

CONTENTS

Ein Prediger muss nicht allein *weiden*, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den Woelfen *wehren*, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verfuehren und Irrtum einfuehren. — *Luther.*

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behaelt denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24.*

If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? *1 Cor. 14, 8.*

Published for the
Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States
CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, St. Louis, Mo.

Zum Schluß noch ein Zitat aus Luthers Schriften, genommen aus seiner „Predigt, daß man die Kinder zur Schule halten soll", worin er zeigt, warum das heilige Predigtamt und dessen Verwalter von allen Christen hochgehalten werden sollen:

„Ich hoffe ja, daß die Gläubigen, und welche Christen heißen wollen, fast wohl wissen, daß der geistliche Stand sei von Gott eingesetzt und gestiftet, nicht mit Gold oder Silber, sondern mit dem teuren Blute und bittern Tode seines eigenen Sohnes, unsers HErrn JEsu Christi. Denn aus seinen Wunden fließen wahrlich, wie man vorzeiten auf die Briefe malte, die Sakramente, und hat es wahrlich teuer erarnet [erworben], daß man in der ganzen Welt solch Amt hat zu predigen, taufen, lösen, binden, Sakrament reichen, trösten, warnen, vermahnen mit Gottes Wort und was mehr zum Amt der Seelsorger gehöret. Denn auch solch Amt nicht allein hie das zeitliche Leben und alle weltlichen Stände fördert und erhalten hilft, sondern das ewige Leben gibt und vom Tode und Sünden erlöset, welches denn sein eigentlich, vornehmlich Werk ist; und zwar die Welt allzumal stehet und bleibt allein um dieses Standes willen; sonst wäre sie längst zu Boden gegangen."

Courtland, Minn. H. Strasen.

Some Contacts of the Book of Acts with the Every-Day Life of Its Age.

New Testament Christianity, first garbed in the swaddling-clothes of Semitism, soon exchanged its outward dress for the more practical robes of Hellenism. Jesus of Nazareth was active in a little speck of ground on the edge of the mighty Roman Empire; His language was Aramaic, His disciples were Jews, His contacts and the intellectual atmosphere of the men among whom He moved were chiefly Jewish. Yet within a few years after His resurrection Christianity had gone beyond the sphere of distinctly Jewish surroundings and had begun its mission of world conquest. This expansion immediately required an accommodation in the field of language. The gospels were written, not in the "sacred" language of Christ, but in the language which alone could serve a Gospel aiming at universal acceptance: Hellenistic Greek. The greatest missionary and most literary of the apostles, though himself a Jew, was yet a Jew from the Diaspora and as such had rubbed shoulders with the non-Jew from childhood.

The geographical spread of Christianity in the first century of our era is significant for the general direction which it took. "Go West, young man" seems to have been the slogan which the early missionary unconsciously followed. The Mesopotamian Valley, the seat of former mighty empires, receives scant notice in the Acts. But Greek and Roman lands made famous by a Croesus, a Themistocles, a Pericles, a Homer, an Antony, an Augustus, these are the lands which furnish

the stage on which the drama of early Christianity is enacted. A spot map of all geographical places mentioned in Acts superimposed on a map of the Roman Empire of the year 50 A. D. would show very few places outside of Roman boundary lines; and the greatest grouping of such place-names would be found in those lands which we specifically associate with Greek influence: the Balkan Peninsula, Asia Minor, and some of the neighboring islands.

The Book of Acts, which is a record of Christianity's progress from Palestine through the Greco-Roman world by 63 A. D., can be expected to provide numerous contacts with the every-day life of the age. Especially St. Paul and his coworkers found themselves face to face with the courts, the temples, the theaters, the occupations, the means of transportation, the prejudices, the likes and dislikes, and a host of other social factors in the Greco-Roman world, and when the new message dipped into the stream of active life, it could but constantly be touched by the whirl of human activity that circled round it.

In the field of racial and social relationships the Book of Acts is an interesting commentary on what other literature of the age has pointed out concerning the Jew and the Gentile. The dispersion of the Jews away from Palestine can be traced back to the seventh century before Christ. The subsequent Babylonian Captivity, the conquests of Alexander, the inviting rule of the Ptolemies as well as the Seleucid difficulties, the commercial magnet in the Levant and other parts of the Roman Empire, all had lured the Jew away from his homeland and had created that large section of Jewry known as the Diaspora. But even at that time the Jew proved to be the clay that would not mix with the iron of Gentilism; even as now, he was not national, but international. He remained, first and last, a Jew. As a result the Jew and the Gentile of the first century represent antagonistic social groups.

The Book of Acts presents a number of instances in which this racial antagonism comes to the surface. The first attempts of Paul in the synagog at Antioch[1] gave promise of considerable success. "Many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas."[2] A week later, however, contradiction and blasphemy on the part of these Jews met the apostle, and the reason for this change was the fact that Paul and his companions did not observe the expected distinction between Jew and Gentile. Envy over against the Gentile[3] was the motive of this opposition. The same situation meets us in the apostle's work at Thessalonica, where envy of the Jew against the Gentile disturbs the previous peaceful relations.[4]

But the Gentile was ready to pay back in kind. Of this fact the

1) Acts 13, 14—43.
2) Acts 13, 43.
3) Acts 13, 45.
4) Acts 17, 5.

Book of Acts presents a few interesting examples. When Paul was in Corinth, the offended Jews attempted to oust the missionary by haling him before the court of the proconsul Gallio, a Gentile of course.[5] Gallio, however, was not in sympathy with the prosecution and pleaded a lack of jurisdiction in the case. This may have been fair enough; but the next incident shows that even a dignified Roman proconsul could yield to racial prejudice. When the Greeks took the synagog official Sosthenes and brazenly gave him an unlawful beating right before the judgment-seat, Gallio "cared for none of those things." Evidently official connivance at mob activity where the victim belongs to a despised social group is not an American invention.

When the missionary activity of Paul caused the silversmiths at Ephesus to feel an economic pinch,[6] they started an uproar among the people; a rush for the theater resulted, most of the people not knowing what all the excitement meant. But the mob spirit was rife; a scapegoat was found in the person of a Jew named Alexander, and when it was sensed that he was a Jew, repressed emotion gained an outlet in the united cry of the Gentiles; "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."[7] Again we sense a clash at least partly due to racial conflict.

This antagonism of Jew and Gentile as found in the Acts accurately fits into the picture of racial relation as found in secular literature of the age. We know that a fling at some Jewish peculiarity was a welcome jest to be inserted in poetry of the time. But a more interesting and still more direct parallel has been found in the papyri of Egypt, which serves as a commentary to what Josephus has told us of the relation of Jews and Gentiles of first-century Egypt. In 1921 there was found among the papyri of Egypt a letter of the Emperor Claudius, the same man who enters Acts as the emperor who banished the Jews from Rome.[8] In this letter[9] the emperor refers to the troubles that had arisen between Jews and Greeks in Alexandria and warns both parties to live in peace. The situation in Alexandria was this: Alexandria had a large Jewish population,[10] which in the course of time had gained extensive local political advantages; such privileges, coupled with the commercial success of the Jews, seem to have aroused the spirit of envy among the Greek population of Alexandria. When the atmosphere is tense and excitement prevails, it takes only a little spark to ignite trouble. In Alexandria this explosive spark was furnished by a little incident, in itself as unimportant as the act of a student at Serajevo in 1914. In the summer of 38 A. D., Agrippa I, the same man who in Acts 12, 1. 2 appears as the murderer of James, was on his way to Palestine to assume control of his kingdom there. He owed the honor of bearing the royal title to Caius Caligula, the

5) Acts 18. 6) Acts 19. 7) Acts 19, 34. 8) Acts 18, 2.
9) *Pap.*, London, No. 1912 (41 A. D.).
10) Note that Apollos of Acts 18, 24 was from Alexandria.

worthless emperor with whom Agrippa had sowed his wild oats at Rome. Agrippa planned to stop at Alexandria on his way to Palestine, and the Jews of this city would not let the opportunity for a little boastful celebration slip by unheeded. A great demonstration was staged, and we can well imagine that on such an occasion the Jews did not set their light of superiority under a bushel.

This was more than the Greek population could stand. They resorted to a favorite method of racial opposition — ridicule. The Greek population located an idiot of the town, dressed him in the mock garments of a king, placed a guard of honor about him, and hailed this competitive center of attraction with the cries of "King." Mobs have a way of doing a little more sober thinking soon after the excitement has died down, and the Greeks of Alexandria soon realized that the reception which they had given to a favorite of the emperor was not likely to redound to their credit. So a means of showing the proper respect for Caius Caligula had to be found. Some one hit upon the plan of having the emperor's image placed in all the synagogs of the city; in this way two birds could be killed with one stone: the emperor could be appeased and the Jews further insulted. The latter of course resisted the idolatrous attempt; but since the imperial prefect of Egypt, Flaccus, did not interfere, a reign of terror ensued, in which the Jews of Alexandria suffered severely. However, they were ready to fight back; it seems that they were planning to enlist the Jews of Upper Egypt as well as of other countries in a concerted drive on their Greek enemies in Alexandria.

When the news of this disturbance reached Rome, Claudius, who had by this time succeeded Caligula, sent the above-mentioned letter to the Alexandrines, which contains the following section: —

"I tell you [Alexandrines] plainly that, if you do not desist from this baneful and obstinate mutual hostility, I shall perforce be compelled to show what a benevolent prince can be when turned to just indignation. Therefore I conjure you yet once again that on the one side, the Alexandrines show themselves forbearing and kindly towards the Jews, who for many years have dwelt in the same city, and offer no outrage to them in the exercise of their traditional worship, but permit them to observe their customs as in the time of Divus Augustus, which customs I also, after hearing both sides, have confirmed; and, on the other side, I bid the Jews not to busy themselves about anything beyond what they have held hitherto and not henceforth, as if you and they lived in two cities, to send two embassies — a thing such as never occurred before now — nor to have strife in gymnasiarchic or cosmetic games, but to profit by what they possess and enjoy in a city not their own an abundance of all good things; and not to introduce or invite Jews who sail down to Alexandria from Syria or Egypt, thus compelling me to conceive the greater suspicion; otherwise I will by all means take vengeance on them as fomenting a general plague for the whole world."[11]

11) Translation of H. I. Bell.

But the relations between Jews and Gentiles remained strained. By about 117 A. D. another serious disturbance between them had broken out. Regular warfare developed even in the towns of Upper Egypt. Some interesting reverberations of this conflict are found in a number of the papyri unearthed in this region. Reference is made to the *ἀνόσιοι Ἰουδαῖοι* in *Pap.*, Bremen 40, of Trajan's time. In *Pap.*, Giessen 41 (c. 115—117 A. D.), an Apollonios asks for a furlough so that he may set his property in order, which is in a sad state due to *τὴν τῶν ἀνοσίων Ἰουδαίων ἔφοδον*.

Thus the relation between Jew and Gentile regularly appears as strained even as we find it in Acts. No wonder, then, that the problem of Christianity to fuse these two elements into one Church was a difficult one. Yet Paul confidently affirms: "Christ hath made both [Jew and Gentile] one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."[12]

Still the Jew could not quite escape assimilating some things that were definitely non-Jewish. The Book of Acts also shows this in some of the Jewish names. Apollos of Alexandria, a Jew, has a name derived from a Greek god.[13] Another Jew bears the non-Jewish name Alexander. This same tendency of Jews' adopting non-Jewish names can be traced in the papyri. Thus *Pap.*, B. G. U., No. 1151 (13 B. C.), brings us a testament of a *Θεώδορος*, whose father's name is *Νικόδημος* and his brother's *Ἀλέξανδρος*. Since the testament is made *διὰ τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχείου* we are justified in considering all these as Jews.[14] Hence we have here a Jewish family with Greek names.

Since Acts shows us the spread of Christianity in the Gentile world, a large number of contacts with pagan religion and religious life is to be expected. The first definite contact of Paul with heathen religion, as far as Acts gives us the record, is established in the city of Lystra.[15] The miraculous healing of the lame man caused the multitude to suspect that Paul and Barnabas were gods appearing in human form, in other words, that a theophany was taking place. Paul was again considered a god at a later occasion, when the bite of a venomous serpent failed to affect him.[16] The idea of theophanies occurring was a staple idea of the Greek mind. To the Greek the gods were little more than men and women, with some unusual qualifications, chief of which was immortality; to him the gods were made in the image of man. In this theology the appearance of gods in human form was to be expected. We know that in the *Iliad* gods regularly appear in the form of mortals, and the realism of Homer allows them to fight on opposing sides, to carry weapons, and even to be wounded by some insubordinate mortals.

---

12) Eph. 2, 14.
13) Acts 19, 33. 34.
14) Wilcken, *Grundzuege der Papyrusforschung*, 63.
15) Acts 14, 11—13.
16) Acts 28, 6.

The same incident at Lystra touches another feature of Greek religion, the sacrifice. A Greek sacrifice was conducted in the following manner. Garlands (*στέμματα*) were placed on the officiating priest and on the victim or victims. The animal or animals were led to the altar in front of the temple, and those persons taking part in the sacrifice were first purified. This was done by plunging a torch from the altar into a bowl of water and then sprinkling it on those present. Water was a favorite element of religious purification among the Greeks. Then followed a sacred silence for prayers, whereupon grains of barley were sprinkled on and around the victim. Now some hair was cut from the sacrificial animal and thrown into the fire; then the victim was stunned by a blow, its head lifted upward (downward if the sacrifice was rendered to a chthonic god), its throat slashed, the blood sprinkled on an altar and, in an expiatory sacrifice, on the worshipers. Portions of the animal were then burned for the god, and the rest was prepared on spits and eaten by those present. The scene at Lystra shows the preparatory stage for such a sacrifice. There is the priest of Zeus, he has prepared oxen for the sacrifice, the garlands have been brought, and the crowd is ready to join in the sacrificial celebration.

Another feature of religious practise of that time was that of making votive offerings to the gods. Especially in cases of disease, where the worshiper had prayed to Asclepius or some other god for help, it was a custom to dedicate models of the diseased parts to the god. Thus we find arms and legs made of terra-cotta, stone, or even precious metals as votive offerings on the sites of ancient temples. *Pap.*, Giessen 20, presents a *κωλοπλάστης*, a maker of votive limbs, who had been hired to serve the Dioscuroi in a private shrine of Egypt. In the Book of Acts the votive offering appears in connection with the riot of the silversmiths of Ephesus.[17] These silversmiths made *ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς*, little shrines of Artemis. These were not souvenirs such as the modern traveler buys, but votive shrines, which the worshiper bought and deposited at the temple of the great goddess, hoping that she might look upon him with favor.

NOTE. — The matter of eating sacrificial meat raised a question among the early Christians, to which Paul refers in 1 Cor. 10. The question was whether Christians might eat meat that was connected with heathen sacrifices. Paul warns the Christians not to take part in the sacrificial meals conducted at the temples, but urges them not to be overly scrupulous about eating meat which had been sold in the butcher shops, provided that no one would be offended thereby. It is quite possible that the apostle here refers to meat that had been brought from the temple to be sold in the shops. But the question may also have been more complicated. It is entirely likely that some sacrificial rites were observed in connection with the killing of animals even for *private* use. (Stengel, *Die griechischen Kultusaltertuemer*, p. 105.) The casuistic question might therefore come up for the Christian even at the use of meats that had never been presented at the temples, but might be used at any meal in a house.

17) Acts 19.

The matter of silversmiths leads on to another field of contact with every-day life: the field of occupations. Paul's own occupation, that of a tent-maker, is well known; his home country Cilicia produced the goat-hair in such abundance that the cloth made there was known as cilicium. A few other trades appear in Acts. When Peter stayed at Joppa, he was quartered in the house of Simon, the tanner, βυρσεύς.[18] Tanning was a well-known trade, since leather was needed for shields, straps, sandals, and other purposes. But the tanning business did not belong to the *élite* of occupations. It smelled. Pollux,[19] writing in the second century A. D., places the tanning business among those for which a person may be reproached. And Artemidorus, writing about 100 B. C., has this to say about it: "The tanning trade is evil for all; for the tanner touches dead bodies, and he is removed from the city; yet even when hidden, the odor gives him away." A papyrus of 100 A. D.[20] mentions a "hunchbacked tanner," just the occupation which an unfortunate, deformed man would seize upon. Perhaps it is significant that the house of Simon was "by the sea." At any rate, Peter, the missionary, had sought out the lowly in Joppa, as we so often find early Christianity among the lower strata of society.

Another occupation of Acts is represented by a woman, Lydia, seller of purple, πορφυρόπωλις.[21] Purple was the last word in fancy dyes of the ancients. The dye was procured from two kinds of shells found in the Mediterranean. It commanded an enormous price, estimated by Friedlaender at about ten to twelve thousand dollars a pound. But the handling of the dye was not considered so exalted as the wearing of the purple. From 1400 B. C. comes an Egyptian poem which says of the purple-dyer: "His hands stink; they have the smell of putrid fish." And the sedate moralizer Plutarch, in his *Pericles,* has this to say: "We regard the dyers and makers of salves as vulgar and narrow-minded fellows." By accepting the hospitality of Lydia in Philipi, Paul and his companions can hardly have made an impression on the upper social strata of Philippi.

One of the most elaborately described contacts of Acts with the life of the times is found in the remarkable account of the journey and shipwreck in Acts 27 and 28. It can safely be said that no other account of ancient shipping rivals the story for accuracy of detail and vividness of description. It is the finest account of first-century shipping that we have. It is not the writer's purpose to show that the structure of the ship and the problems of navigation as described in these chapters fit so admirably into the picture of what we know from

18) Acts 9, 43.
19) VI, 128.
20) *Pap.*, Fayum, 121.
21) Acts 16, 14.

other sources about shipping at this time.[22] But it is interesting to compare two other accounts of shipping that have come down to us to see the similarities as well as the unquestioned superiority of Luke's book.

Josephus[23] gives us a brief story of a voyage which offers a few interesting parallels to St. Paul's journey. It is a brief account of Herod the Great's trip from Alexandria to Rome for the purpose of gaining the title of king from Antony. "So Herod set sail from thence [Alexandria] to Pamphylia, and falling into a violent storm, he had much ado to escape to Rhodes with the loss of the ship's burden. . . . He also built there a three-decked ship and set sail thence with his friends for Italy and came to the port of Brundisium." Note a storm and a loss of the cargo just as in the case of Paul's journey.

Another account is found in Lucian's *Πλοῖον ἢ εὐχαί*. In this little sketch Lucian speaks of a few friends from Athens going sightseeing to the Piraeus, and upon seeing a mighty ship, their imagination is fired to uttering all kinds of impossible wishes. The ship which they had seen had sailed from Alexandria to the Piraeus. Its destination was Rome, but it had been driven eastward towards Sidon and then westward to Pamphylia, where it was almost wrecked. One of the friends, Samippus, gives vent to his emotions by these words: "What a size that ship was! 180 feet long." "And the lofty stern with the gradual curve and its gilded beak, balanced at the other end by the long, rising sweep of the prow and the figure of her namegoddess Isis on either side."[24] Note that this ship carried the figure of Isis, as the ship which Paul took from Malta carried the Dioscuri.[25]

Coming to more commonplace factors of first-century life, we find that the pieces of clothing mentioned in Acts are such as were commonly worn at this time. As to the style, especially of men's clothing, the garments worn by the ancients of the Hellenistic world impress us as having been extremely simple. Here, as so often, the Greek showed his good taste and practical attitude over against the luxurious Oriental. The undergarment, or foundation garment, so to say, among the Greeks was the *χιτών*. This was simply an oblong piece of cloth folded once, so that the long, open part was on the

22) The voyage and shipwreck are discussed with great detail in J. Smith, *The Voyage and Shipwreck of Paul;* A. T. Robertson, *Luke the Historian in the Light of Research,* chap. XV; W. M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen,* chap. XIV; A. Neuburger, *Technical Arts and Sciences of the Ancients,* 188–9.

23) Josephus, *Ant.,* XIV, 3.

24) Translation of H. W. and F. G. Fowler.

25) Acts 28, 11.

right side of the body. There were openings for the arms, and the garment was hung from the shoulders by fastening the front and back part of the gown with clasps, or *fibulae,* on each shoulder. The garment ordinarily reached about to the knees in the case of men, but a longer style was common for women. We must remember that there was not much difference between the garments used by the two sexes among the Greeks. Thus the essential part of the *chiton* was not unlike a sleeveless nightgown now used. But to make the garment practical for working around, the Greek invariably used a girdle to hold the flowing gown together. This *chiton* with the girdle around it was the garment ordinarily worn around the home and at work.

But the Greek had to observe conventions also in the matter of dress. Just as it was formerly unconventional for a man to be seen outside of his house without a torturesome coat even in the hottest weather, so the Greek would ordinarily consider it a breach of good form to appear on the street only in a *chiton.* So there was a second, more formal, garment, the cloak, or ἱμάτιον. This was an oblong piece of cloth without buttons and without sleeves, worn by both men and women. It was literally "thrown around" a person and was held up by being loosely draped around the shoulders and forearms. Hence the term for putting on this garment was περιβάλλειν, to throw around, while putting on the *chiton* was termed ἐνδύειν, to go into. It must have been quite an art to drape the *himation* around in nicely flowing folds, as any one can convince himself by taking a sheet and trying to make himself look like the famous statue of Sophocles pictured in practically every high-school text on ancient history.

Sandals were also used. These were soles held to the feet by strips of leather (the "latchets" of Luke 3, 16), runnning between the toes and wrapped around the foot and ankle.

Now let us see how the clothing of the age enters the Book of Acts. In Acts 9, 39 the weeping widows stand around the corpse of Tabitha and very humanly show Peter the evidences of her good works, the *chitons* and *himatia* which she had made for others. Both types were garments needed for the common people. In Acts 12, 8 we can fairly watch a man as he is dressing himself. Peter there is asleep in the prison; the angel comes and says: Ζῶσαι καὶ ὑπόδησαι τὰ σανδάλιά σου. This done, the angel continues: Περιβαλοῦ τὸ ἱμάτιόν σου. Peter evidently had retired, taking off his sandals and laying his *himation* and girdle aside. He wears only his *chiton* in bed, ungirdled for greater comfort. Aroused, he first gathers up his loose *chiton* by passing the girdle around his waist, then the sandals are tied on, and since Peter is to go out into the street, the *himation* is thrown around. Note περιβαλοῦ to describe this part.

In Acts 16, 22 Paul and his companions are being prepared for a beating. The text describes this περιρήξαντες αὐτῶν τὰ ἱμάτια ἐκέλευον

ῥαβδίζειν. We see that only the outer garments, *himatia,* were removed for the beating; the *chiton* was kept on. Note the περί in περιρήξαντες to describe the act of taking off the *himation.*

There are other contacts in Acts which touch upon various phases of every-day life. When a letter was written by a Greek, he used a form as stereotyped as our place, date, "Dear Sir," and so forth. A Greek letter regularly began with the name of the writer, followed by the addressee's name; then came the body of the letter, followed by greetings. Deissmann has elaborated this phase of Greek life as paralleled in the New Testament.[26] Here is a sample of a letter written in this age: —

"Irene to Taonnophris and Philon, good cheer. I was grieved and wept as much over the blessed one as I wept for Didymas; and everything that was fitting I did and all who were with me, Epaphroditus and Thermouthion and Philion and Apollonius and Plantas. But, truly, there is nothing any one can do in the face of such things. Do you therefore comfort one another. Farewell, Hathur 1."[27]

The Book of Acts contains two letters, one of the Apostolic Council to the brethren of the Gentiles[28] and one of the χιλίαρχος Claudius Lysias.[29] The first of these follows the regular order of letters of the time. First the writers: "The apostles and elders"; then the addressees: "Unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia"; then the contents of the letter followed by the customary greeting.

Incidentally the decision given by the Apostolic Council is introduced by the same formula used in Athens for the decrees of the legislative body. Acts 15, 22 has the phrase: Ἔδοξε τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις. Athenian decrees began with the words: Ἔδοξε τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ, very much like the customary introduction to our laws: "The people of the State of —— enact."

In Acts 10, 9 we see Peter going to the housetop to pray. It was indeed a Hebrew custom[30] to worship on the roof, but we find ref-

---

26) Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*4.

27) *Pap.*, Oxy. I, 115 (2d century A. D.). This letter is a rather famous document of every-day life in Egypt. It has been treated with exceptional insight in Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* 4, p. 143. As he has pointed out, the letter shows the almost hopeless task of giving comfort in the face of death in the Gentile world. Irene hardly knows what to write to her bereaved friends, Taonnophris and Philon. Hathur at the close is the name of a month.

28) Acts 15, 23—29.

29) Acts 23, 26—30. The letter of Acts 23 has the customary elements of a Greek letter without the greeting at the close in some New Testament manuscripts. It is a case perhaps where the unusual reading (with the omission of the ἔρρωσο) is not the correct one. The thousands of letters found in the sands of Egypt would argue that Claudius Lysias did close his letter with a greeting.

30) Jer. 32, 29; 2 Kings 23, 12.

erence to such worship also among the Greeks of Egypt. Thus *Pap.*, Petr. II, 12 (242 B. C.), mentions altars built on housetops.

Coming to one of the darker shades of Greek life, we find that the Apostolic Council saw it necessary to give special warning to the Gentiles against *πορνεία*, fornication.[31] There was a reason for this. While the Greeks in general looked upon the family as the basis of the idolized state, yet practises were condoned which are directly disruptive of family life. Concubinage was considered offensive only in so far as it might produce offspring who were at a political disadvantage over against legitimate children.[32] The practise of having hetaerae, encouraged by the customary late marriages of men and the utter failure of the Greeks to educate their women to the level of the men, was a recognized institution. In addition, the practise of considering adultery a service to Aphrodite, under whatever names she was honored, a practise so common among the Semite worshipers of Astarte, was not foreign to the Greeks. Strabo, VIII, informs us that the temple of Aphrodite at Corinth had more than a thousand hetaerae, called *ἱερόδουλοι*, who were the ruin of strangers coming to the city. No wonder that Paul had come to Corinth "in weakness and in fear and in much trembling."[33]

The most direct contact of Acts with Greek life might be expected when Paul and his companions came to the center of all that has made the Greek name famous — Athens.[34] Pages could be filled pointing out how the various statements of this chapter arouse associations with that which Greek writers such as Pausanias, ruins such as the Parthenon, and the results of modern archeological excavations have revealed to us about the topography and life of Athens. His one remark that the Athenians are *δεισιδαιμονέστεροι* conjures up associations with the mighty Acropolis and its Parthenon, its temple of Nike, its statue of Athena with the shining helmet, all of which was plainly visible from the spot where Paul spoke to his critical audience on the Areopagus; not to mention the familiar Hermes statues, altars, and temples that were scattered over the rest of Athens. Just a few contacts with Athenian life that are not so evident may be referred to. Acts 17, 17 tells us that Paul "disputed in the market daily with them that met him." This shows what a wide-awake and versatile missionary the apostle was; for a trip to the market, or *ἀγορά*, was as effective a publicity step in Athens as a full-page advertisement in our papers. For the *ἀγορά*, or market, was not only a place to buy and sell, as our word "market" implies, but also the place to which the Athenian regularly resorted for his daily exchange of ideas, for his news, and

31) Acts 15, 20.
32) Bluemner, *Lehrbuch der griechischen Privataltertuemer*, p. 253.
33) 1 Cor. 2, 3. 34) Acts 17.

for his gossip. It was a good substitute for our daily paper. So common and so regular was this use of the market-place that the term *πλήθουσα ἀγορά*, the market is full, was a standing term for the time before noon, and *ἀγορᾶς διάλυσις* was the time when the group broke up to get something to eat at noon.[35] It was a good idea for Paul to get there "daily."

The famous speech of Paul, Acts 17, was made in a more august atmosphere than that of the market. He was taken to Areopagus. Now, the Areopagus was a name both for the place and the court which met there. Here the apostle was indeed in high-class surroundings. The Areopagus as a court was of most ancient origin. At the time when the apostle appeared at Athens this court had the following duties: 1) supervision over private festivals; 2) judicial jurisdiction in matters of counterfeiting; 3) supervision of the training and instruction of youth (possibly this was the reason why Paul, being a teacher, was taken before this group); 4) supervision of building construction and the dedicatory offerings; 5) receiving of correspondence from foreign governments.[36] Such was the group that Paul faced. And although his mentioning of the resurrection provoked the mockery of skeptical Athenians, he had the satisfaction of seeing one of this august body, Dionysius the Areopagite, among those that "clave unto him."[37]

These are some contacts which show that Acts is a book that arose out of the Hellenistic world and reflects the conditions which its chief character, Paul, found. It shows the new faith going forward to its destiny of world conquests; but in its strides it must inevitably brush against the practises, the beliefs, and the daily life of the masses whom it seeks to convince, and herein the great apostle became all things to all men.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Baumeister, August: *Denkmaeler des klassischen Altertums.* 3 vols. R. Oldenburg, Muenchen u. Leipzig. 1887.

Bludau, M.: *Juden und Judenverfolgungen im alten Alexandria.* Muenster i. W. 1906.

Bluemner, Hugo: *Technologie u. Terminologie der Gewerbe und Kuenste bei Griechen u. Roemern.* B. G. Teubner, Leipzig. 1912.

Bluemner, Hugo: *Home Life of the Ancient Greeks.* Translated by Alice Simmern. Cassell & Co., London, 1893.

Buss, Septimius: *Roman Law and History in the New Testament.* Rivington, London. 1901.

Conybeare, W. J. and J. S. Howson: *Life and Epistles of St. Paul.* 2 vols. Scribner's, New York. 1864.

Fairbanks, A.: *A Handbook of Greek Religion.* American Book Co., New York. 1910.

35) Whibley, *Companion to Greek Studies*4, Par. 683.

36) Pauly-Wissowa, *s. v.* *Ἄρειος πάγος.*

37) Acts 17, 34.

Hermann, K. F.: *Lehrbuch der griechischen Antiquitaeten.* 4 vols. J. C. B. Mohr, Freiburg i. B. 1882.

Maas, Ernst: *Die Tagesgoetter in Rom u. den Provinzen.* Weidmann, Berlin. 1902.

Meyer, H. A. W.: *Kritisch-exegetisches Handbuch ueber die Apostelgeschichte.* 4th ed. Goettingen. 1870.

Neuburger, A.: *Technical Arts and Sciences of the Ancients.* Translated by H. L. Brose. Methuen & Co., London. 1929.

Ramsay, W. M.: *The Church in the Roman Empire before A. D. 170.* Hodder & Stoughton, London. 1900.

Ramsay, W. M.: *The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day.* 2d ed. Hodder & Stoughton, New York. 1913.

Robertson, A. T.: *Luke the Historian in the Light of Research.* Scribner's, New York. 1920.

Stengel, Paul: *Die griechischen Kultusaltertuemer,* 3. Aufl. C. H. Beck, Muenchen. 1920.

Whibley, Leonard: *Companion to Greek Studies.* 4th ed. Cambridge University Press. 1931.

Zahn, Theodor: *Introduction to the New Testament.* 3 vols. Scribner's, New York. 1909.

Seward, Nebr. H. O. A. Keïnath.

The First Three Bibles that Entered the Early Life of Martin Luther.

In Luther's second year in the University of Erfurt, 1503, when he was twenty, wandering through the university library, he found a complete Bible. He said: *"Da ich zwanzig Jahre alt war, hatte ich noch keine Bibel gesehen; ich meinte, es waeren keine Evangelien und Epistolen mehr, denn die in den Postillen sind."* Naturally his curiosity was aroused. He was surprised that the Bible contained more than the Gospel- and the Epistle-lessons of the church-year. He was pleased with the story of Hanna and Samuel. But he had not had before, nor did he have now or for the next two years, any predilection for the Bible. We know of no instance nor occasion during the years of his adolescence when he ever expressed a desire or eagerness to study the Scriptures.

In the first week of January, 1505, Luther was made Magister Artium. In compliance with his father's wish he began the study of law May 20, 1505. In June he spent some days with his parents at Mansfeld. On his return, when he was near Stotterheim, July 2, 1505, a flash of lightning struck at his side. Anguish and fear of death overpowered him. If God's burning wrath had directed this thunderbolt into his sinful body, what would he have pleaded before God? In fear and trembling he vowed: "I will become a monk." Of his hasty vow he said in later life that it was a sudden and in-