

APOLLOS.

ACTS xviii. 24-28.—A certain Jew named Apollos.

THIS person is mentioned but twice in The Acts, seven times in I Corinthians, once in Titus. Why, where so many thousands of names of devoted believers do not, does this one's name appear? Perhaps to mention him, was important to the illustration of certain facts in the history of the primitive churches. He comes into the notice of the reader, here, for the first time; and, as "a certain Jew," as never before heard of. From whence does he come? Nobody knows. It is stated, to be sure, that he was "born at Alexandria:" but it was long before this: for he appears as an educated, eloquent, full-grown man, "mighty in the Scriptures:" and had arrived at Ephesus, instructed in the way of the Lord; but knowing only the baptism of John: i. e. the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Being mighty in the Scriptures, he did not stumble at the teaching of John, that in Messiah's day, a great spiritual change to the condition of the "new heart," would be required. Nicodemus, mighty in the traditions that made the word of God of none effect, was not so apt a scholar as this Scripture-versed Apollos. "Being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord * * * And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue." Now there is something interesting in this unpretending incident. Who had given authority to preach the things (*ta*) of the Lord (*peri tou Ieesou* is the better reading) to this man who knew "only the baptism of John?" Most assuredly not the apostles. Where then did his authority originate? "Being fervent

in the spirit," he spake what he knew, he taught what he knew; and that in the synagogue; where another "certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla," heard him; both heard him; and, pleased with his eloquence, and boldness; but perceiving his very defective knowledge; "they took him unto them." He went home with this good man and his wife; these companions, hosts, fellow laborers at tent-making, of the illustrious and learned Paul. Apollos went with those, at whose house, the great apostle had lodged and labored, during the opening of his ministry at Corinth: who had sailed with him thence into Syria, and were left by him at Ephesus, where they had found Apollos preaching in the synagogue. Aquila and Priscilla being so well acquainted with the learned Paul, from their more than eighteen months' familiar intercourse with him, knew all that was known in their day of the doctrine and order of the Christian congregations, or churches; and we listen attentively to the sacred historian, as he proceeds with his narrative. Well, as he had no authority to preach from the apostles, for such a supposition is absurd, do they rebuke him for such irregular proceeding? Do they express any astonishment at his impertinence and foolhardiness in running before he was sent? Do they send him off in search of an apostle, to be instructed and ordained? Do they represent to him the enormity of parading about the country, as an unordained minister? Not a word of the kind. They took him home with them, "and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

Here is the first theological student, Apollos; the first theological professors, Aquila and Priscilla, a layman and his wife; and the building occupied, was their own tent-makers' shop, where, possibly, Paul had reposed his weary head, before he had left these worthy

professors in Ephesus. Professor Aquila and Professor Priscilla, in all probability, taught the same branch, as the theology of that day had not departed so exuberantly as this of our times. The tongues of Pentecost were wonderfully departed, but every part spoke the same simple, sublime story. The grand theology of that day was that Jesus was risen from the dead, and was Lord and Christ, and whosoever believeth in him shall have remission of sins. At all events, this layman and his wife understood "the way of God;" taught it to Apollos; and what then? Did they not send him off, now, when graduated in theology, to an apostle, to be ordained, legitimately inducted into an order of the clergy; made a deacon, elder, bishop, or something? Nothing of the sort. But, "when he was disposed to pass (*boulomenou de autou dielthein*) into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting (*protepsamenoï*, urging) the disciples to receive him." The brethren, the saints, the believers at Ephesus, wrote, exhorting the disciples in Achaia to receive this unordained man; whom they had not sent; but who was disposed to go, chose to go, "being fervent in the spirit," feeling an impulse to itinerate, and therefore, unordained as he was, he went. And when he arrived, he "helped them much which had believed through grace: for he mightily (*eutonoos*, intensely) convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." The professors had done their work well; and their accomplished theologian, though without apostolic ordination or sanction, built up in their most holy faith, the believers in Achaia, showing by the Scriptures, in which he was so mighty (*dunatos*), even previous to his theological course under the grand proto-professors at Ephesus; that, notwithstanding the Jewish traditional objections, Jesus the loving Saviour, was the Christ. An argument this in favor of teaching theology, by

those who understand it, to those who do not, and who propose to preach "the things of the Lord." The mistake, if any, of Apollos, was not preaching without ordination; for nothing in the whole incident, intimates any necessity for this in the primitive church; but his commencing with his defective knowledge. Who knows, but that those imperfect disciples, found soon after by Paul at Ephesus (*Acts* xix. 1-12), who had not heard of the Holy Ghost, were the fruits of the ministry of Apollos, before his good professors graduated him; there being no proof that he preached in that city, after his instruction, before he was "disposed to pass into Achaia:" and if he did, we cannot know that the disciples referred to heard him. It is better that preachers should understand "the things of the Lord," before they commence preaching. The brief history of Apollos shows this, in connection with his curriculum under the supervision of these two of the laity, the proto-professors of Christian theology; whose graduate, awakened such an attention at Corinth, as even to peril the laurels of the wonderful Paul; I Cor. iii. 4-11.

Our aim, thus far, has been to show, that the divine history does not exhibit the apostles, as the source of authority for preaching the word: this Apollos arriving and preaching at Ephesus, and then at Corinth, under circumstances absolutely forbidding such a hypothesis. Like the thousands "scattered abroad" by the "great persecution," *Acts* viii., who "went everywhere preaching the word" without any ecclesiastical authority; so itinerated Apollos; with one grand item in favor of the thousands, they were better instructed: and this makes the case of Apollos to be very remarkable.

But, if he had no authority from the apostles to preach, had they any control over him after his having been instructed by the layman and his intelligent wife? There is very little more of his history given, but that

little bears important testimony on this very point. At *I Cor.* xvi. 12, Paul informs the Corinthians, to many of whom Apollos was very dear, "As touching *our* brother Apollos (*peri de Apolloo tou adelphou*, but as to Apollos the brother, brother Apollos), I greatly desired him (*polla parekalesa auton*, I besought him, I urged many pleas that he should go, "I greatly desired" not being strong enough to indicate that Paul entreated him) to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; (*kai pantoos ouk een theleema hina nun eltheei*, but wholly not was a will that now he should come. He would not listen to, i. e. heed, the entreaties of Paul: he had not the least idea of going to Corinth at that time;) "but he will come when he shall have convenient time" (*hotan eukaireeseei*). As the time then suited Paul, "the convenient time" of the passage refers to the plans of Apollos; and indicates his independence of the apostle, not only as to his authority to preach, but also as to projecting and accomplishing his plans of ministration. Surely Paul was not the man to decide that it was very important, to have Apollos go then to Corinth; and having authority to send him, waste his time in vain entreaties (*polla parekalesa auton*). He would have said, Go; and Apollos would have hurried his going. It looks very likely that the difference between a centurion and an apostle was marked out by the One Master, when he affirmed, "But it shall not be so among you." *Matth.* xx. 26. So far as the record goes, it is clear, that Paul had no more authority to send Apollos to Corinth, or anywhere else; than Apollos, to send Paul. Read again, "but he will come when he shall have convenient time;" and it must be admitted, that this sounds very like, "but he will come when it shall suit him." Apollos possibly, we might say, probably, very likely, had his plan of operation

adjusted according to his own views of duty ; and was unwilling, wholly and positively (*pantoos*) unwilling to have Paul or any other interrupt him : and, so, he would not be interrupted.

There is but one more incident to be mentioned ; that at Titus iii. 13. The apostle writing to Titus, directs him, near the close of his letter, "Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them." Probably, Zenas and Apollos intended journeying in company : to what point is left unmentioned : but Paul having knowledge of the intention of Zenas, and of this man who went when he was "disposed to go," *Acts* xviii. 27, and when "his will was not at all to come at this time," staid where he was until it suited him to go elsewhere ; desires Titus, who was to Paul as a son (*Titus* i. 4), to show the lawyer and the preacher great and equal respect. For so we are to understand, "Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently (*spoudaioos propempson*), that nothing be wanting to them." This word *propempoo*, is defined, "In N. T. to send forward on one's journey, to bring one on his way, to accompany for some distance in token of respect and honor." *Robinson*. Of Zenas we know nothing, but what is contained in this brief verse: he was a lawyer ; probably was about to travel with Apollos ; and Paul directs Titus, "his own son after the common faith," to show him marked respect and honor. But our knowledge of Apollos, though limited, exceeds this by so far, that we know that he was a preacher of "the things of the Lord," without having understood them properly, and, of course, without any authority from any apostle ; unordained ; better informed by the judicious interference and instruction of Aquila and Priscilla ; carrying letters from the brethren at Ephesus to those of Corinth, where he labored so efficiently as to rival Paul

in the esteem of the saints ; refusing flatly and persistently to be at the disposal of an apostle, independently judging for himself in coming and going ; and now we see Paul writing to Titus, to pay great respect and honor to this wilful, unordained itinerant. So closes the scene with our interesting, talented Apollos.

But this was the olden time ; in which we have been searching for the true Christian antiquity ; which is not to be found this side The Acts. That men have the right, now, to wander about, at other people's expense, under pretense of preaching the word, though unordained, unauthorized by any Christian body ; by no means follows from the facts we have been discussing. We have been seeking to explore the church facts of the divine history : that we may not be imposed upon by certain matters of ritual claimed to have their warrant in those facts. So, that we may cheerfully accept the plea of our Christian brethren, to suit themselves in such matters, as they have a right to do : but when they claim our adhesion to them, on the plea of antiquity, that we may decline with a smile, affirming that we know better ; we know their pretended antiquities to be novelties, as is proved by the record.

But the order of the church with which one is connected, he is bound in honor to conform to, as an orderly, decent member. He may properly consider and discuss the order ; but while it exists, he should carefully and respectfully conform to it ; as being the product of the common judgment ; and the man who roams about preaching without the authority of his church ; gives very strong evidence, that he is unfit to be entrusted with such functions. No peer of Apollos would, in our day, suddenly appear as " a certain somebody," preaching to Aquilas and Priscillas understanding the gospel so much better than himself ; as to be compelled by mere pity, to take him home with them and teach him his alphabet : i. e. the alphabet of the gospel.

WAS AGRIPPA ALMOST PERSUADED?

ACTS xxvi. 28, 29.—Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

VERY able critics have objected to this reading; but we think the defense displays at least equal, if not greater ability. It is thought that the king was not at all impressed by Paul's defense; or if somewhat so at first, he soon dismissed the case with the sneering remark, that it was with a little argument that Paul was persuading him to be a Christian. The force of *en oligooi* in contrast with *en megalooi*, which is held to be a reading preferred to *en pollooi*, is urged as supporting the hypothesis that the words were "spoken ironically and in contempt." *Conyb. and How.* ii. 306. But Chrysostom, who preached in Greek, and certainly understood the force of *en oligooi*, decides against this. Suppose we proceed thus: *oligooi* being an adjective, the phrase *en oligooi me peitheis* (in a little thou persuadest me), is elliptical, and a masculine or neuter noun is to be supplied to complete the expression. Let us then supply *merai*, dative of *meros*, meaning a *part*. In that case, Agrippa meant to admit that some impression had been made upon him by Paul's discourse: he was persuaded to some extent to be a Christian; in a little part at least. This gives occasion to Paul to affirm his prayer "that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both to some little extent, and to a great extent such as I am, except these bonds." Chrysostom's almost and altogether, as in our Version, agree, certainly, better with Paul's conclusion, than our *meros*,

or the alleged irony: and such a man as Paul merits that construction upon his words, which makes them consist with his conclusion. It is evident that he wished Agrippa and all who heard him, to be altogether such as himself was, "except these bonds." They were the only difference he desired to exist between them and himself: so that, of necessity, we must understand *kai en oligoōi kai en pollooī* (or *en megalooī*, if we prefer that reading) to make up the sense "altogether such as I am."

Add, too, the consultation. "And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them (the chief captains, and principal men of the city): and when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying this man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar." This does not comport with a sneer, or irony, on the part of Agrippa, or the council. They hear his plea with intense attention; Festus is so carried away with it, that he thought the prisoner's astonishing erudition had deranged his mind, and caused him to imagine the wondrous vision of the way to Damascus, sustaining him in his affirmation, that "one Jesus, who was dead, was again alive;" and then they retired, consulted together, and unanimously acquitted him of anything worthy of death, or even of bonds. No room here for any sneer or irony. Everything has the air of seriousness and respect. The heathen Festus, was serious in his amazement at the recital of wonders beyond his comprehension. Agrippa was serious, hearing only statements, that agreed with the prophets whose writings he believed. The magnates of the army and city were serious, listened attentively, consulted respectfully, and sedately voted him innocent. Then said Agrippa, "This man

might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar:" and he seems to have spoken the mind of the whole council.

Conybeare and Howson, in *The Life and Epistles of Saint Paul*, p. 675, render, "Thou wilt soon persuade me to be a Christian." And add, "The words were doubtless spoken ironically and in contempt: but Paul took them as though they had been spoken in earnest, and made that noble answer, which expresses, as no other words ever expressed them, that union of enthusiastic zeal with genuine courtesy, which is the true characteristic of 'a Christian.' I would to God, that whether soon or late, not only thou, but also all who hear me to-day, were such as I am; excepting these chains." In a foot note, "The phrase here cannot mean '*almost*,' as it is in the Authorized Version. It might mean either '*in few words*' (Eph. iii. 3), or '*in a small measure*,' or '*in a small time*.' The latter (last) meaning agrees best with the following, '*in little or in much*.' We might render the passage thus: 'Thou thinkest to make me a Christian with little persuasion.' We should observe that the verb is in the present tense, and that the title 'Christian' was one of contempt. See I Pet. iv. 16." Thus we have four modes in which the passage might be rendered, of which the respected critics have chosen, as they say, the equivalent of the best, "Thou wilt soon persuade," etc. Yet, why "*almost*" is impossible, or why their four modes are possible, they assign no reason. Nor do they seem to notice their impossible rendering of *euxameen an tooi Theooi kai en oligooi kai en megalooi*, "I would to God, that whether soon or late:" making Paul to pray for one or the other of two preliminaries; whereas the construction *kai . . . kai* requires us to understand him to pray for both. "The formula *kai . . . kai* is used when the writer from the very first conceives both members as co-ordinate, *et . . .*

et (both . . . and ; as well . . . as).” *Winer*, 439. “The copulative is often used with both of the connected members : thus *kai . . . kai* ; *kai kata geen kai kata thalassan* both by land and by sea” *Hadley*, 309. “In the N. T. *kai* is never put for *ee* (or).” *Winer*, 440. So we judge “soon or late” to be inadmissible : while “both soon and late” would be manifestly absurd.

But, what real difference is there between “thou wilt soon persuade me to be a Christian,” and “almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian ?” As we are reminded to “observe that the verb (*peitheis*) is in the present tense,” the latter would appear to be the preferable rendering : though we think no stress need be laid upon the tense of the verb.

That the words were spoken ironically and in contempt, we have already shown to be inconsistent with the detailed facts of the occasion : but that Paul mistook the import of Agrippa’s words, is utterly unlikely. He was present, earnestly regarding the king’s countenance, tone of voice, entire manner, and was quite capable of understanding his utterance. Why then should these scholarly critics, venture the opinion, that the king doubtless spoke ironically and in contempt ; but Paul took the words as though they had been spoken in earnest ?

Can it be that C. and H. mean, that Paul knew, to be sure, that the words were ironical and contemptuous, but overlooking that fact, cunningly took them as though they had been spoken in earnest ? What then becomes of the critic’s compliment to the apostle ? Was such a trick as they charge upon him, a “noble answer, which expresses, as no other words ever expressed them, that union of enthusiastic zeal with genuine courtesy, which is the true characteristic of a Christian ?” They could not have meant to charge the apostle with such a paltry trick ; but considered him to have mistaken the import

of the king's words. On what ground, they do not state. Certainly he was not incapable of understanding them; there is nothing to warrant a suspicion that he was not earnestly attending to them; and he had the fullest opportunity for a correct judgment in the case; while we, at least, are quite sure, that it is by far more likely that the mistake in the case, is on the part of C. and H., who were absent; than on the part of the chained prisoner, who was present. If Agrippa's *en oligooi me peitheis Christianon genesthai*, was merely a contemptuous POOH! the solemn council and decision ensuing were absurdities.

But, there is a word to be said upon a point not yet examined. Upon the hypothesis of sneer and irony, it would be necessary to suppose, that Paul's speech was an effort, to persuade Agrippa to be a Christian. "With little effort (with feeble means) thou persuadest me to become (*genesthai*) a Christian." *Lange*. But Paul's argument was nothing of the sort. There is no evidence that he intended or attempted such a thing. It was in his own behalf, by permission of Festus, and at the request of Agrippa. "Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him." And on that morrow, the council assembled with great pomp, and Paul was brought before them. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself." Thou art permitted to defend thyself from the accusations of thy people. "Then Paul * * * answered for himself; I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews: especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently." Here we have his plan; his statement of what would be the aim of his discourse: to

answer for himself; to refute the charges brought against him by the Jews, charges of crime that demanded his life as a righteous forfeit, they said: but not a word of any intention to persuade Agrippa, or any one else, to be a Christian. And, moreover, it is clear that he proceeded regularly and logically, to carry out his intention; declaring that he had said "none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." At this point, Festus, to whom the rising from the dead was incomprehensible, interrupted Paul; saying in a loud voice, Paul thou art beside thyself, much learning doth make thee mad. Paul, having respectfully denied the madness, and affirmed the truth and soberness of the argument, he had presented in his defense against the Jews; appealed to Agrippa for a verification of his facts and argument.

Then it was that Agrippa said to Paul, "*en oligoioi me peitheis Christianon genesthai.*" Translate this, now, "With little effort (with feeble means) thou persuadest me to be a Christian," and what relevancy is there, to what had occurred? The point was not whether Paul with little or great or any effort had persuaded the king to be a Christian; but whether the prisoner before him, had uttered madness, or "words of truth and soberness." How any one can see a consistency of such a hypothesis with the facts of the incident, we cannot conceive.

Take then the present rendering, "Almost thou persuadest ME to be a Christian:" i. e. you have not only exonerated yourself from the accusation of the Jews, of hostility to and subversion of the sacred Oracles of your country, but you have so clearly pointed out your doctrine of a suffering Christ and his rising from the dead,

that you have almost persuaded ME to be a Christian like thyself. Upon which Paul exclaimed, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am (i. e. a Christian), except these bonds." Upon which the council retires, considers the case, acquits the prisoner, and the king is so convinced of the truth of Paul's defense, that he declares it would be useless to detain him further, but for his own appeal.

The remark of Agrippa, and Paul's comment are entirely incidental. This is clear. The speech was not an effort to persuade the king to be a Christian, but to defend the prisoner, accused by the Jews, his countrymen, of high crimes against their laws, and in whose "customs and questions," Agrippa was expert. It is not likely that Luke gives us the entire speech. Such an orator, in such a case, with such profound and vast knowledge, his life in peril, and the splendid auditory assembled especially to hear his defense of himself; doubtless he expatiated on the points, condensed by the historian into a proper and satisfactory summary. This is the case with speeches given by historians: they gathering the records of statements of what was said, as to substance, and framing a speech accordingly. We are to suppose, therefore, that Paul, in such a presence, the king acquainted with and respecting the writings of the prophets, enlarged into details where Luke gives mere points; and upon this fact grounded his appeal to the king, for the truth and soberness of his argument, when the governor in ignorance of the prophets had affirmed such arguments to be the ravings of insanity. This was all that was proposed by Paul to Agrippa. "The king before whom I speak freely knoweth of these things;" he knows that I have presented a fair argument, founded upon the accredited predictions of the prophets and of our great leader Moses; all demonstrating, that, in being

a Christian, I am so far from being a heretic, that I must be acknowledged to be intelligently orthodox, and guilty of no crime against the Jews. If the king chose to respond to this appeal, there was nothing required but to give his testimony pro or con, as to the prisoner's claim to consistency with the prophets and Moses. The fair construction of his reply, taken in connection with Paul's remark upon it, is, that he so fully admits the appeal, that the able, complete argument of the prisoner being in such strict conformity to the prophets and Moses, had not only vindicated the accused, but had almost made a Christian of himself. Would to God, exclaims Paul, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, a Christian, but not in bonds. All this is natural, reasonable.

Let us now test another rendering: "With little effort thou persuadest me to become a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both with little effort and great such as I am, except these bonds." There had been no effort to make a Christian of the king; the effort of the prisoner was to vindicate himself: and yet the king is made to declare himself *persuaded* to become a Christian! For this is the force of *peithoo*, as may be satisfactorily proved. Its very first occurrence in the N. T. shows this; "But the chief priests and elders persuaded (*epeisan*) the multitude that they should ask Barabbas," etc. *Matth.* xxvii. 20. At *ver.* 43 of the same chapter, we have, "He trusted (*pepoithen*) in God; let him deliver," etc. And again, "And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade (*peisomen*) him, and secure you." *Matth.* xxviii. 14. We pass on to The Acts; "Theudas * * * who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him (*epeithonto autooi*, were persuaded by him), were scattered," etc. *Acts* v. 36.

“Judas * * * also perished ; and all, even as many as obeyed him (*epeithonto autooi*), were dispersed.” *Acts* v. 37. “And to him (Gamaliel) they agreed (*epeistheesan de autooi*) : and when they had called the apostles,” etc. *Ibid.* 40. Passing several similar instances, we cite, “And when he (Paul) would not be persuaded (*mee peithomenou de autou*), we ceased (beseeching him, *ver.* 12,) saying, The will of the Lord be done.” *Acts* xxi. 14. The reader will notice, that Luke does not write, that his friends persuaded Paul “not to go up to Jerusalem,” but “both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem ; and that Paul “would not be persuaded :” which distinguishes very clearly between “besought” (*parekaloumen*), and “persuaded” (*peithomenou*). “Paul’s sister’s son,” having informed the “chief captain” of the plot for murdering his uncle, part of which was that the Jews would request that officer to bring down his prisoner into the council, as if for a further examination, urges, “But do not thou yield (*mee peistheeis*) unto them,” etc. *Acts* xxiii. 21. This, surely, is sufficient to exhibit the force of the king’s “persuadest,” and our hypthotic reading, makes him to rate the apostle’s speech as a “little effort,” and yet quite enough to convince himself of the propriety of becoming a Christian ; leaving us to infer, that, as it required such “little effort” to determine him, he was “almost persuaded” before the “little effort” commenced. Not very likely, to judge from the history. And then, if the king was “persuaded” by the “little effort,” what sense is there in the prisoner’s final remark ? See also *Xen. Op. V. 294*.

Then, another of the proposed readings : “But slightly (that is, not at all) do you persuade me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I wish you were not only slightly, but largely (that is, entirely) a Christian.” But Paul does not put the acme of his wish that the king

should be "largely a Christian;" but "such as I am, except these bonds;" and no one can speak or even think of Paul as "largely (that is, entirely) a Christian." Largely is far from entirely: it cannot mean entirely. And we cannot consent to such a changing of the terms: there must be a consistency in the reading; which would require it to be; "But slightly (that is, not at all) do you persuade me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both but slightly (that is, not at all) and largely (that is, entirely) such as I am, except these bonds." A reading certainly indefensible. How could thou and also all that hear me this day, be both not at all and entirely such as I am, except these bonds? Paul never expressed such a wish; or, such a prayer. His speech had made a deep impression upon the king, the governor, and the other members of the council. They were convinced that any further investigation would be unnecessary. In the most serious manner they withdrew to take counsel together; and declared unanimously, that the prisoner had vindicated himself triumphantly: the king adding his decided opinion, that the accused might be set at liberty, without holding him for trial at all, had he not appealed to the high court of Cæsar. So we dismiss this reading also, as unallowable.

Dr. Robinson, Lex. of the N. T., defines *oligos*, as meaning time, a measure of time, little time, in this passage: saying, "Also *en oligooi* sc. *chronooi* Acts xxvi. 28, 29." The objection to this, that it requires *persuade* to be in the future, might be overcome by referring to John xiii. 6, "Lord, dost thou wash (*nipteis*) my feet:" where the Lord was about to wash; the washing was in the future, but the verb, *nipteis*, is in the present. But the idea of time does not come very naturally and easy, into Paul's remark upon the king's expression: "I

would * * * that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both in a little time and much time such as I am," etc. This reading could not well be pronounced Pauline.

Our old friend Dr. Parkhurst, Lex. to the N. T., defines *oligos*; "II. *en oligooi*, within a little, almost, well nigh, *propemodum*. Acts xxvi. 28, 29. So Chrysostom *para mikron*; though I am well aware that in the Greek writers (see Wetstein) *en oligooi* generally signifies *in a little* or *short* time, *chronooi* being understood: but its being opposed, in *ver.* 29, to *en pollooi*, determines its meaning; and see *Raphelius*, *Wolfius*, and *Doddridge* on Acts xxvi. 28, and *Plato* Apol. Socrat. § 7, p. 71, edit. *Forster*, where *en oligooi* may mean *almost, nearly*, as *toiouton ti* following seems to shew. See *Forster's* note. I add, that in *ver.* 29, the modern Greek version explains *en oligooi* by *par' oligon*." This is old time scholarship, but holds good, we think, against some that is more modern and showy. Chrysostom's authority is entitled to much consideration, in seeking the meaning of a Greek, N. T., word; and as *oligos* has various meanings in the sacred writings; such as *few, little, awhile, small, a season, briefly, short*, referring to number, quantity, time; in any one case its meaning must be sought, in its local connection, and accordant with the current sense of the passage. So, as Dr. P. hints, the Greek writers may not generally use *en oligooi* as Luke evidently does here; but that would only prove the latter inaccurate as to that standard, which would not be at all wonderful; and which is mitigated by the passage cited from Plato, in which *en oligooi* may mean *almost, nearly*.

We must remember, too, the N. T. force of *peithoo*, as differing very widely from *parakaleoo*. The king not saying, "*en oligooi* thou beseechest me to be a Christian:" but, *en oligooi* thou persuadest me to be a Christian. In addition, we examine a few passages, that we

may see how the preference of *megalooi* for *pollooi* helps the objection to the reading of our Version, "Almost," etc. Of one hearing the gospel and not doing, it is said that he "is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great (*mega*)." *Luke* vi. 49. The sense is, the house was "altogether" ruined. "To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest (*apo mikrou heos megalou*), saying," etc. *Acts* viii. 10. The phrase "from the least to the greatest" embraces the whole multitude, its lower and its higher class; as *oligos* and *megas* embrace the two stages of persuasion, the "almost and altogether." Indeed we have a similar expression in this very *ch.* xxvi. 22; "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great (*mikrooi te kai megalooi*), saying," etc. Here by *small*, the apostle refers to a part of his hearers, and by *great* to the remainder of them; the two words signifying all who heard his extensive preaching. But if it be objected that *mikrós* and not *oligos* is used in these places; we inquire for the difference between these terms.

Mikros means little, and in relation to *magnitude, quantity, number, time, dignity, or authority*; and though there is a difference between it and *oligos*, it is not such as to interfere at all with our argument. For if *oligos* be used as signifying little relative to number, quantity, and time; and *mikros* as signifying little relative to number, quantity, time, and dignity; they must be synonymous: and therefore, *en oligooi kai en megalooi*, must mean in *ver.* 28, about what *mikrooi te kai megalooi* means in *ver.* 22. But in the latter *mikrooi* refers to one part of the hearers, and *megalooi* to the remainder; so, therefore, in the former, does *oligooi* refer to one part of the persuasion, and *megalooi* to the remainder. Besides, we have seen in *Luke* vi. 49, that the *reegma mega* signifies an utter ruin.

But if *polloi* be the correct reading, then it is easy to cite uses of that word signifying *all*: as, "for if through the offense of one many (*polloi*) be dead," etc. *Rom.* v. 15. And "For as by one man's disobedience many (*polloi*) were made sinners," etc. *Ib.* ver. 19. So, that this demonstrated use of *polus*, gives the greatest countenance to the reading of our Version. In fact, when we take into the account the opinion of the Greek father Chrysostom; the fact that the king's remark was entirely incidental, there having been no effort to make him a Christian.; the N. T. force of *peithoo*, persuade; and the fact that the rendering of our Version is the only one that consists fairly and squarely with all the items of the passage; we cannot be far, if at all, wrong in our withdrawing from the whole company of the distinguished objectors referred to, and ranging ourselves with those who read the passage, "Almost thou persuadedest me to be a Christian."
