

**PAUL THE APOSTLE:
AS VIEWED
BY A LAYMAN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649668502

Paul the Apostle: As Viewed by a Layman by Edward H. Hall

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EDWARD H. HALL

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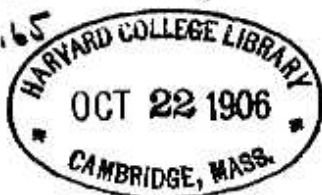
AUTHOR OF "PAUL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES"

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

1906

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B: 2226.5.65
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Published October, 1906

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PAUL THE APOSTLE

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CHAPTER I

THE CONVERT

IN the nebulous hours which mark the birth of Christianity one figure alone, apart from the founder himself, stands out with any degree of definiteness. The immediate companions of Jesus who had received first-hand impressions of his personality have left little trace. The twelve Apostles, except for a few vague traditions concerning Peter, and still vaguer concerning John,¹ are hardly more than names. The more interest attaches therefore to the one actor whose individuality has in any sense survived. Without extravagant

¹ The opening chapters of Acts give much prominence to Peter, with slight allusions to John; otherwise nothing is known of either beside vague traditions from unknown sources. The two Epistles ascribed to Peter, and the three ascribed to John, are too doubtful to throw much light upon the two apostles.

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claims for the Apostle Paul as compared with other historic characters of the time, his career has an inexhaustible charm for those who care for the spiritual side of human history or for its religious beginnings. Viewing him simply as a contributor to the world's higher growth it is worth our while, though the ground has been so often travelled before, to see how his figure bears the light of modern investigation.

What we know of Paul is drawn from two sources: the few and brief letters which have survived from his own hand, and the fragmentary narrative of the early church, under the name of *The Acts of the Apostles*, which has come down to us from the second century.¹ Writings from so in-

¹ *The Acts* is plainly a composite writing drawn from sources of different dates. As none of the early Christian writers shows any clear acquaintance with it before A. D. 170 (Irenaeus, *Haer.* iii. 12, 9) and the first distinct mention of it by name is in a Scripture canon of the latter part of the second century, (Muratori Fragment, chap. 2) it cannot be placed with any certainty before A. D. 100. Probably it was much later. Among the primitive documents used by the author are the so-called "we-passages," fragments of an itinerary kept by some unknown companion of Paul (A. xvi. 10-xvii. 1; xx. 5-xxi. 18;

choate a period, during the preliminary stages of church organization, and before the notion of historic archives or the demand for them had arisen, cannot have the precise outlines of later literature, and we must not demand too much of these scanty remains. It should always be borne in mind that the exalted mood in which the Christian communities lived for a full generation, however dramatic in itself, was necessarily fatal to the composition of permanent chronicles. While awaiting hourly the coming catastrophe in which all existing institutions were to disappear, little heed could be paid to passing events. Indeed, why hand down memorials of an epoch so soon to end; whose closing scenes those then upon the stage were themselves to wit-

xxvii. 1-xxviii. 16). As an early tradition ascribes the book, as well as the third Gospel, to Luke, an otherwise unknown personage, it is quite possible that the writer of these passages was actually Luke, and that his name when the book was finally admitted to the Canon, was given to the whole.

Holtzmann places Acts somewhere between A. D. 80 and the middle of the second century (Hand-Commentar, i. 312, 322; Einleitung, 405); Jülicher gives 100-105 (Eint. 262); Harnack, 80-83 (Chronol. 250); Renan, about 80 (Les Apotr. xxii.); Pfeiderer, later than 100 (Urchr. i. 547).